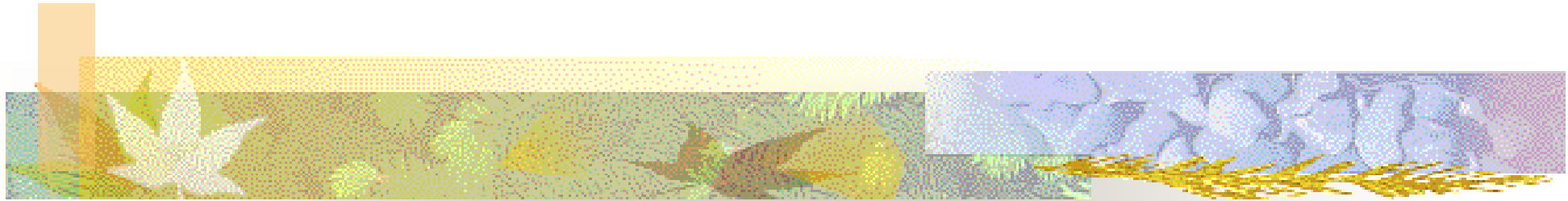


Cultivation Effects



Theories of Media Effects



George Gerbner

- **Impacts of Television**
- **Strong media effect again**
- **Historical Trends between media and government**



Media & Socialization

- **Massive exposure to the media contributes to the lifelong process of learning & socialization**
- **Cultivation Theory: The media form the mainstream of the common symbolic environment that cultivates the most widely shared conceptions of reality.**
- **Increasingly, media-cultivated facts and values become standards by which we judge.**



A Theory of Television Effects

- **Originated from the concerns about television violence effects**
- **Across channels and genres, television provide homogeneous & uniform contents saturated with violence & sex**
- **People habitually and non-selectively watch television, so there is little room for active reflection or resistance on the audience side.**



Message System Analysis

- Analysis of how the media symbolically represent the real world (with the focus on violence)
- The Violence Index: Content analysis of prime time television contents in terms of physical & verbal violence
- More than 2/3 of prime time programs contained some violence



Cultivation Analysis

- **The mean world index: analysis of the audience's perception of the world**
- **Heavy viewers versus light viewers**
 - **Estimates of victims, perpetrators, policemen, etc.**
 - **General trust in other people**
 - **Fear of violence and victimization**
- **Heavy viewers are more likely to perceive the world as a mean and fearful place to live.**



Mainstreaming & resonance

- **Mainstreaming**: Media create dominant sets of attitudes, beliefs, and values across different segments of people in a society
- **Resonance**: When direct experience is in agreement with media message, cultivation effects can be amplified.



Mechanisms of Cultivation Effects

- Learning of television reality
→ construction of real reality
- 1st level
- 2nd level



Beyond Violence: Cultural Indicators

- Effects of a broader range of cultural indicators on television

- Media stereotypes and cultivation effects
 - Stereotypes: a general set of expectations for specific groups of people, roles, activities, etc.
 - Gender roles, body images, racial and ethnic stereotypes, political stereotypes, and so on
 - Implicit but persistent patterns of media coverage

Knowledge Gap Theory

Prof. Kim, Sung Tae

History...

- was first proposed by Tichenor, Donohue and Olien in the 70s.
- Increase of TV impacts on people and society
- Anti-Utopian(Distopian) Perspective

Assumptions...

- They believe that the increase of information in society is not evenly acquired by every member of society
- people with higher socioeconomic status tend to have better ability to acquire information



Assumptions...

Lower socio-economic status (SES) people, have little or no knowledge about public affairs issues, are disconnected from news events and important new media, and usually aren't concerned about their lack of knowledge.

The Great Catharsis Debate

Anybody can become angry—that is easy, but to be angry with the right person, and to the right degree, and at the right time, and for the right purpose, and in the right way—that is not within everybody's power and is not easy. ARISTOTLE

I. Theoretical Debate: Modeling Hypothesis vs. Catharsis Hypothesis

A. Modeling Hypothesis

1. Social learning approach: children learn by observing; they model the behavior of others
2. Prediction: TV violence leads to an increase in aggressive behavior

B. Catharsis Hypothesis

1. Historical roots (Aristotle; Freud's psychodynamic model)
2. Prediction: TV violence leads to a decrease in aggressive behavior

The notion that one can purge one's emotions by expressing them has been labeled the *catharsis hypothesis*. Freudian psychologists, of course, applauded this idea. They assumed that when people shout at someone who annoys them or view a violent film, they are blowing off steam. According to the "pressure-cooker" theory, they should be *less* angry and aggressive than before.

In 1979, Thomas Scheff (1979) proposed an updated version of the hypothesis, arguing that catharsis is a therapeutic process for two reasons: (a) Repressed emotions such as fear and anger are discharged by laughing and crying; mood is improved and tension is reduced; and (b) in psychotherapy and drama, people gain a sense of clarity.

Catharsis and Frustration

Conditions Affecting Catharsis

However, subsequent research, much of it by social psychologists, shows that a catharsis effect can be realized only under very limited conditions:

1. People must be angry and aroused at the time they are given an opportunity to retaliate (Bramel, Taub, & Blum, 1968); Doob, 1970).
2. They must have the chance to retaliate against the person who “caused” their problem; if he or she was arbitrary, malevolent, and aggressive, so much the better (Konecni, 1984).
3. The victim must get the retaliation deserved, no more and no less. If one goes overboard, one may feel guilty later (Konecni, 1984; Hatfield, Walster, & Bercheid, 1978; Hatfield, et al., 1984).
4. The target must be non-intimidating—so that subjects do not feel anxious afterward (Hokanson & Burgess, 1962a).