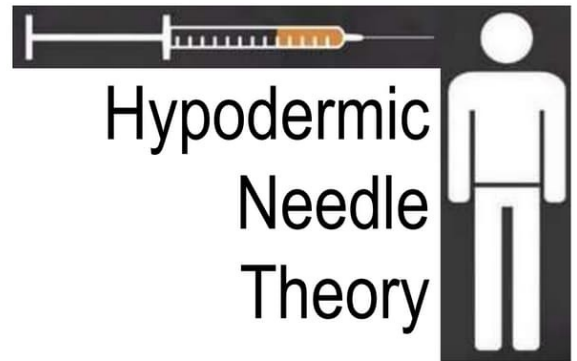


THE HYPODERMIC NEEDLE THEORY



Communication Theories

Communication theories are ways of conceptualising media and audiences. Since the early days of mass communication, people have attempted to describe the process of communication and media influence.

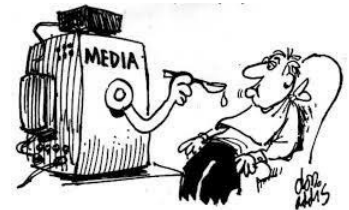
THE HYPODERMIC NEEDLE THEORY (Magic Bullet Theory)

Content:

Definition

History

example



What's the HYPODERMIC NEEDLE THEORY?

The hypodermic needle **theory** is an approach to studying the **effects** of the media on **behavior**. It believed that the media 'injected' its content into the audience's lives directly, subsequently influencing their behavior. The theory views the audience as passive, homogeneous, and impressionable.

The Hypodermic Needle Theory suggests that the media has a direct and **powerful** influence on audiences.

Who formulated the Magic Bullet theory?

Harold Lasswell is the person who formulated the

Magic Bullet theory in 1927. Through his theory,

Lasswell argued that the originator of the message

had the power to manipulate the intended audience's perception.

Propaganda is the management of collective attitudes by the manipulation of significant symbols

Harold Lasswell



When was the theory developed?

It was developed in the 1920s and 1930s after researchers observed the effect of **propaganda** during World War I and incidents such as Orson Welles' War of the Worlds broadcast. It became the dominant way of thinking about media influence during the subsequent decades.

The hypodermic needle theory evolved as a model upon the observations of the use of mass media by the Nazis and the impact of Hollywood around the same time. It has its roots in behaviorism and its origin in the Propaganda Technique in the World War by Harold Lasswell (1927).

The Hypodermic Needle theory is a **linear communication** theory which suggests that a media message is injected directly into the brain of a passive, homogeneous audience. This theory suggests that media texts are closed and audiences are influenced in the same way. The Hypodermic Needle Theory is no longer accepted by media theorists as a valid

explanation of communication and media influence. Indeed, some dispute whether early media theorists gave the idea serious attention.

Examples

The War of the Worlds

The most notable incident that is cited as evidence for the hypodermic needle theory comprises The War of the Worlds broadcast in 1938 and the widespread panic it created.

This was a fictional account of Martians invading the earth and massacring many people. The show resembled a typical evening radio programming format containing periodic news bulletins.

Some listeners, who started listening to the show after the introduction, thought that they were receiving actual news reports. They were thrown into panic by what they heard, and they packed their vehicles and escaped to the country.

Discussion

- What do communication theories conceptualize?
- What is the main idea of the hypodermic theory?
- Give five terminology of the theory.
- What are the characteristics of the audience as defined by the theory?
- How is the influence in this theory?



Translation

- Translate underlined words to Arabic?
- Translate to English:

التأثير الفوري- تأثير موحّد- الطلقة السحرية-المتلقي السلبي- الطلقة السحرية



Give the correct aspect for each definition?

Uniform impact - Direct influence- Passive audience

-: The media could shape public opinion by “shooting” messages directly to viewers.
-: All audience members are affected in the same way.
-: Audiences are viewed as passive recipients with little to no critical resistance.

Writing task

Is Magic Bullet theory still relevant today?

Write a text in which you answer the question asked, with explanation and examples.

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