

The evolution of media effects theory

Department of Communication
Studies, University of Michigan,
Ann Arbor



I. Persuasion Theories (1944–1963)

1. Voting research (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, & Gaudet, 1944; Campbell et al., 1960);
2. Shannon linear model (Shannon & Weaver, 1948);
3. Lasswell linear model (Lasswell, 1948);
4. Persuasion/attitude change (Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953; McGuire, 1969);
5. Social learning (Bandura & Walters, 1963).

II. Active Audience Theories (1944–1986)

- 6.** Attribution theory (Heider, 1958; Kelley, 1967);
- 7.** Uses & gratifications (Herzog, 1944; Katz, Blumler, & Gurevitch, 1974);
- 8.** Parasocial theory (Horton & Wohl, 1956);
- 9.** Cognitive dissonance/social identity (Festinger, 1957; Tajfel, 1982);
- 10.** Minimal effects (Klapper, 1960);
- 11.** Selective exposure (Sears & Freedman, 1967).

III. Active Audience Theories (1944–1986)

12. Disposition theory (Zillmann & Cantor, 1976);

13. Media dependency (Ball-Rokeach & De Fleur, 1976);

14. Elaboration likelihood model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986).

IV. Social Context Theories (1955–1983)

- 15.** Two-step flow (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955);
- 16.** Diffusion theory (Rogers, 1962);
- 17.** Knowledge gap theory (Tichenor, Donohue, & Olien, 1970);
- 18.** Social networks/social capital (Granovetter, 1973; Putnam, 1995);
- 19.** Spiral of silence (Noelle-Neumann, 1974);
- 20.** Third person theory (Davison, 1983).

V. Societal & Media Theories (1933–1978)

21. Media hegemony/public sphere (Gramsci, 1933; Habermas, [1962] 1989);
22. Channel effects (McLuhan, 1964);
23. Social construction of reality (Berger & Luckman, 1966);
Jackson-Beeck, Jeffries-Fox, & Signorielli
24. Differential media exposure (Clarke & Fredin, 1978);
25. Cultivation theory (Gerbner, Gross, Jackson-Beeck, Jeffries-Fox, & Signorielli, 1978)

VI. Interpretive Effects Theories (1972–1987)

- 26. Agenda setting (McCombs & Shaw, 1972);
- 27. Priming (Iyengar et al., 1982);
- 28. Framing theory (Iyengar et al., 1987).

VII. New Media Theories (1996)

- 29. Computer-mediated communication (Walther, 1996).