Limited Effects Theory

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Propaganda
Research- Cantril, Gaudet, Herzog

War of the Worlds- Orson Welles
1938
Research Findings

- The people who panicked didn't take time to listen carefully or fully, to thoroughly evaluate the program.

- There were few car radios/no portable radios

- Word of mouth spread the news through neighborhoods rapidly

- MOST people did not panic, only 1/6 listeners believed it
Psychological Traits make one susceptible to media influence:

- Fatalism
- Phobic personality
- Emotional insecurity
- Lack of self confidence
Paradigm Shift

- People are influenced by others; NOT the Media
- The public is very resistant to persuasion and manipulation

- Led to MORE research...
  - Lazarfeld & Hoveland
  - Surveys, Experiments
  - Scientific Method
  - Political Example
Limited Effects Theory

MEDIA’S INFLUENCE IS LIMITED BY PEOPLE’S INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES, SOCIAL CATEGORIES, AND PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS
Limited Effects Theory

- Media influence is rare
- Two step flow:
  - Strong opinions/affiliations
  - Media effects are modest
YOUR Views

Examples of Media formulated to two different viewpoints.

Are these targeted to those who already have set opinions?

Will these articles influence your opinion?

one-sided messages work best with people who agree with the message already (to increase attitude, etc.)
Can You Believe Everything You Hear?

- Tabloids
- Blogs/ Social media
- Media hoaxes
Relevance in Today’s Media

Student Hoaxes World's Media on Wikipedia
BREAKING NEWS!

- Watched for two hours
- Authorities said to have known the balloon was empty
- Media hype based on the word of a small child
Questions?

Leave Britney Alone!