• I. Carl Iver Hovland
  • A. Led to
    • 1. the tradition of micro-level studies of individual attitude change
    • 2. tremendous research literature on persuasion
  • II. Similar to Lazarsfeld
    • A. Inspired subdiscipline of interpersonal communication
    • B. Steered CR towards studying of effects
      • 1. Lazarsfeld's surveys of media audience (?)
    • C. BUT, unlike Lazarsfeld, who found minimal effects in their survey research on media audiences
      • 1. Hovland was finding 1/3 to 1/2 of his respondents influenced by a single exposure to a persuasive message
  • III. Persuasion
    • A. Any instance which an active attempt is made to change a person's mind, an attitude change
    • B. Intentional communication, a one-way attempt to bring about an effect on a receiver
      • 1. But interpersonal nature of communication means there will be back-and-forth interaction
  • IV. Yale University
    • A. Carl attended Northwestern and obtained his degree and masters
    • B. Joined PhD program at Yale University
    • C. Dominant and strong in academic psychology
      • 1. Because of the Institute of Human Relations
  • V. Institute of Human Relations
    • A. Funded by Rockefeller Foundation
    • B. Adopts an interdisciplinary approach to social problems
      • 1. Use knowledge from multiple perspective to improve understanding
      • 2. Assumed that a better a problem is understood, the more easily it can be solved
      • 3. People were looking for solutions to social problems from these study groups, but none were coming
        • a) Entered a period of questioning and self-doubt
  • VI. Hull joined the IHR
    • A. Proposed to study motivation
      • 1. Claims it cuts across all social problems and academic disciplines
      • 2. Might provide the common ground that the Institute sought
    • B. Hull's speciality was hypnosis,
VI. Hull joined the IHR

B. Hull's speciality was hypnosis,

1. Very Freudian, not well-received

2. Thus looking for new scholarly direction

C. Influenced by Pavlov's theory of conditioning and...

1. Dewey's functional behaviourism

2. Freudian psychoanalysis

   a) Drives

   b) Aggression is produced by frustration

D. Organised interdisciplinary seminars on motivation

1. And introduced Freudian's psychoanalytic theory

E. Built a behaviouristic approach to human motivation and learning

1. S-R models

VII. World War II and Hovland

A. Named Chief Psychologist (and later Director of Experimental Studies)

1. in Research Branch of the Information and Education Division, U.S. Dept. of War

B. Hired by Samuel Stouffer

1. Expert at survey research methods, less experienced in experimental research

2. But still held experimentation in high regard

3. Hired Hovland because he was an excellent experimenter

C. Initial reactions of army brass towards research unreceptive

1. Policy-relevant research findings helped the Research Branch sell itself to the military authorities

2. Stouffer also has access to top brass and clearer away resistance

D. Two units at the Research Branch

1. Survey research unit, headed by Leonard Cottrell

   a) Consists mainly of Stouffer's doctoral students at Chicago University

2. Experimental unit, headed by Hovland

   a) Consists mainly of Yale psychologists or doctoral students there

E. Charged with training inductees and maintaining morale of troops

VIII. Attitude as core conceptual variable

A. Core conceptual variable in Hovland's wartime study: attitude

B. Attitude as main concept in social psychology

1. Positive/negative feeling toward some individual/object that serves as predisposition to action

   a) Attitude, if known, can predict overt behaviour/action by that individual at a later time

C. However, evidence suggests otherwise

1. But do happen under certain circumstances

D. Thus important to find out when they do, and when they do not
IX. "Why We Fight" Film Series

A. During WW2, needed to train 15 million citizens into soldiers
   1. Diverse and ignorant pose a challenge
   2. Film, then a relatively new medium, seen as best medium to help accomplish
      a) Educational, and
         i) Impart factual knowledge
      b) Motivational purposes
         i) Shape beliefs and opinions
            a) War as a just cause
            b) Confidence in own abilities
            c) Integrity of allies (e.g. Britain)
            d) Resentment of the enemy
            e) Military victory will make for a better world
         ii) Motivate people to enlist and serve

B. Hired famous Hollywood filmmaker, Frank Capra
   1. Capra wanted to counter pro-Hitler film Triumph of the Will
   2. Utilised a great deal of available news footage about the events leading to U.S. involvement

C. Made seven 50-minutes documentaries
   1. Meant to inform and persuade

D. Impact evaluated by Research Branch
   X. Hovland's Research on the Films

A. Designed field experiments on
   1. one-sided versus two-sided messages
   2. impact of fear appeals
   3. effect of source credibility

B. Dependent variables measured through pencil-and-paper techniques
   1. Knowledge of film content
   2. Attitude change
      a) e.g. increased willingness to fight

C. Constrained by film messages, which is fixed

D. But a great deal of control at the same time
   1. Provided nearly ideal circumstances for field experimentation with random assignment to experimental
      and control conditions
   2. "Captive audience" of participants
   3. Access to personal records
4. Cost not a real concern

E. Pretest-posttest control group design
   1. Parallel forms for pretest and posttest
   2. Used equivalent forms to prevent sensitisation to measurements
   3. Anonymous: no need to fear retribution for "wrong" answers
   4. Fact-quiz question (?)
   5. Opinion items (?)
   6. Distractor or "camouflage" questions

F. Did not depend entirely on highly structured and quantitative methods
   1. Enlisted Merton at Columbia University's Bureau of Applied Social Research to conduct focus interviews after filling in their survey responses
      a) Used Lazarsfeld-Stanton Program-Analyser
   2. Quantitative design helped determine aggregate effects, but not what is it about the film's content that might have produced the observed effects
      a) Helped Hovland interpret the experimental results and suggest new hypotheses for future studies

XI. Basic findings

A. Findings fit hierarchy of effects model: knowledge -> attitude -> behaviour
   1. Huge increase in soldiers' knowledge of the events leading to World War 2
   2. Influenced opinions and interpretations
   3. Small effect on general attitudes
   4. But no measurable effects on individuals' motivation to serve as soldiers (ultimate objectives) (38% vs 41%)

XII. Implications

A. Research properly conducted, films well produced, but did not achieve all their goals
   1. Contamination of control groups (?)
   2. Complexity of motivation
      a) Most difficult to change
   3. Individual differences (e.g. belief systems) (?)
   4. Possibility of 'sleeper' effects (?)

B. Changing people's behaviour is hard

XIII. Message-Learning Approach (MLA)

A. Hovland returns to Yale and builds upon his wartime research

B. MLA to attitude change
   1. Explain dependent variables in persuasion/attitude change
   2. Independent variables based on Claude Shannon-type linear model of communications (SMCR)
XIII. Message-Learning Approach (MLA)

B. MLA to attitude change

2. Independent variables based on Claude Shannon-type linear model of communications (SMCR)

a) Source

- (1) Number of sources
  - i) Unanimity
- (2) Intent to persuade
- (3) Attractiveness
- (4) Similarity to receiver
- (5) Power
- (6) Credibility
  - i) Positive influence but fades over time (sleeper effect)

b) Message

- (1) Comprehensibility
- (2) One-sided/two-sided messages
- (3) Number of arguments
- (4) Rewards within
- (5) Arousal and reduction of fear
- (6) Organisation
  - i) Order of presentation
  - ii) Repetition
- (7) Style of presentation

c) Channel

- (1) Modality (which channel)
  - i) Face-to-face versus mass media
- (2) Other attributes of the channel
  - i) Auditory vs visual vs audio-visual
  - ii) Textual vs pictorial
  - iii) Interactivity (nowadays)
- (3) Context
  - i) solitary vs group experience

d) Receiver

- (1) Demographic
  - i) Gender differences
  - ii) Age
  - iii) Ethnicity
- (2) Psychographics (individual differences)
- i) Intelligence
  - (a) Higher intelligence receive two-sided message better; lower intelligence receive one-sided message better
- ii) Self-esteem
  - (a) Lower self-esteem more likely to have attitude change
- iii) Personality

**C. Developed model of attitude change (?)**
1. Attention -> Comprehension -> Yielding -> Retention
2. Process must be completed for change

**XIV. William McGuire extend Hovland's MLA model**

**A. McGuire's Matrix Model (?) !!**
1. Extension of MLA
2. Inputs (IV) elaborated upon
   a) From attention, comprehension, yielding to retention to
      1) Exposure
      2) Attention
      3) Comprehension
      4) Liking
      5) Skill acquisition
      6) Yielding
      7) Storage (retention?)
      8) Retrieval
      9) Decision
      10) Action
      11) Reinforcement
      12) Consolidation

**B. Added Target (?)**

**C. Inputs can affect all stages/outputs**
1. Differ from Schramm's single-component
2. Crossing IVs and DVs create matrix

**D. Conditional probabilities limit success (?)**

**E. Model extensively used, especially in health communication campaigns and research**

**XV. Hovland's Source Credibility Study**

**A. Artificial situation preventing interpersonal communication**
1. Respondents not allowed to communicate with one another after receiving the messages
• 2. Aided internal validity
  • a) Controlled the effect of extraneous variables
• 3. But hurt external validity
  • a) Limited the generalisability of the results to actual situations where individuals are persuaded by credible sources

• B. Did not prevent strong basis for generalisability to other individuals in other circumstances
  • 1. But a major intellectual contribution to communication study

• C. Short-term vs long-term effects
  • 1. Forgetting factual material
  • 2. Both decreases and increases in opinion change
  • 3. The so-called sleeper effect (?)

• XVI. Sleeper effect

• A. Effect of source credibility fade is maximum at the time of communication but fades with passage of time
  • 1. Greater immediate attitude change result from higher-credibility sources
  • 2. But differences between attitude change from higher- and lower-credibility sources disappear over time

• B. People tend to forget untrustworthiness of low-credibility source over time
  • 1. Remembering the message but not the dubious source

• XVII. Fear appeals

• A. Grew out of work of Irving Janis, Hovland's colleague in Pentagon and later at Yale

• B. Moderate level of fear appeal was more persuasive
  • 1. Use of strong fear appeal against milder one is likely to leave audience in emotional tension
  • a) Not fully relieved by rehearsing the reassuring recommendations contained
  •   (1) Audience motivated to ignore or minimise the importance of the threat

• C. Milder fear appeals can grab audience attention, and need not be counterproductive in bringing attitude change

• XVIII. Sources of Hovland's influence

• A. Freudian psychoanalytic theory
  • 1. From Clark Hull

• B. Behaviourist approach to behavioural change
  • 1. Also from Hull

• C. Lewin's field theory and group psychology studies
  • 1. Despite his mentor's dislike of Lewin's theory
A. High credibility sources
1. lead to more attitude change immediately following the communication act, but sleeper effect occurs when the source is forgotten over time

B. Mild fear appeals
1. lead to more attitude change than strong fear appeals, which may interfere with intended persuasion attempt

C. One-sided messages
1. lead to more attitude change with audience of lower education and intelligence
2. but more educated/intelligent audience expect two sides to a persuasive argument

D. Stating conclusion in message
1. leads to more attitude change; clarity adds to persuasiveness

E. Socially inadequate/low self-esteem individuals
1. experience more attitude change; people with strong self-concepts are more resistant

F. Active participants
1. have more attitude change than do more passive participants
2. similar to Lewin's sweetbreads study: individuals more involved in the communication process are more likely to change their attitudes and behaviours

G. Individuals having a strong group identity
1. have less attitude change to issue contrary to group standards
2. similar to Lewin's group cohesion finding: encourages individual members to conform to group's norm

XX. Limitations

A. Oversimplification of the communication process
1. Using linear one-way communication acts as opposed to interactive, back-and-forth nature of communication

B. Single component approach to studying
1. e.g. the MLA, dependent variables within a single component of independent variable (i.e. SMCR)
2. Rules out the study of interaction effects among the components to act together to influence attitude change