

SRINIVASAN COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE

(Affiliated to Bharathidasan University, Trichy)

PERAMBALUR - 621 212.

DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM & MASS COMMUNICATION

I-B.A., JMC - II SEMESTER (EVEN)

A COURSE MATERIAL ON:

**Mass Communication Theories
16ACCJM4**

Prepared By:

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Syllabus

Objective:

This course will facilitate to understand the fundamental functions of model and theory to apply theoretical perspectives in addressing demands in their personal and professional lives.

UNIT I

Communication models and theories – Basic concepts; SMCR- Sender, Message, channel, receiver, feedback .

UNIT II

Growth of Communication models –Lasswell’s model, Berlo’s SMCR model, Gerbner’s model, Shannon and Weavers Mathematical model – Osgood and Schramm model.

UNIT III

Bullet theory, Hypodermic needle theory, Agenda setting theory , spiral of silence, two step flow theory

UNIT IV

Mass media effects theory- catharsis, narcosis, reinforcement, incidental, uses and gratification theory, cultivation theory,

UNIT V

Press theories: Authoritarian, Libertarian, social responsibility, soviet media theory, development communication theory and democratisation theory.

Reference Books:

1. Mass Communication Theory — Denis McQuail. New Delhi: Vistaar Publications, 2005.
2. Essentials Of Mass Communication Theory — Arthur Asa Berger. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1995.
3. Mass Communication In India — Keval J. Kumar. Chennai: Jaico Publishing, 2000.
4. A Dictionary Of Communication & Media Studies — James Watson & Anne Hill. New Delhi:

UNIT I

Communication Models and Theories

Communication models are systematic representations of the process which helps in understanding how communication works can be done. Models show the process metaphorically and in symbols. They form general perspectives on communication by breaking communication from complex to simple and keep the components in order. Communication models can sometimes encourage traditional thinking and stereotyping but can also omit some major aspects of human communication.

Methods and channels of communication to be used and the purpose of communication, must be considered before choosing a specific communication model. Models are used by business companies and other firms to foster their communication, explore their options and to evaluate their own situations. It is also used to understand how the receivers will interpret the message.

Types of Communication Model

There are three general types of communication models in which all other communication models are mostly categorized.

Features, advantages and disadvantages of linear, transactional and interactive model.

Linear Model of Communication

Linear model of communication is a simple one way communication model. The message flows in a straight line from sender to the receiver. There is no concept of feedback. The only task that a receiver does here is to receive the message. Different models that follow linear model of communication are:

Lasswell's Model

Aristotle's Model

Shannon Weaver Model

Berlo's S-M-C-R Model

Transactional Model of Communication

In transactional model, senders and receivers both are known as communicators and both play equally important role in communication. Transactional model relates communication with social reality, cultural up-bringing and relational context (relationships). Non-verbal feedback like

gestures, body language, is also considered as feedback in this model. Different models that follow transactional model of communication are:

Barnlund's Transactional Model

Helical Model

Becker's Mosaic Model

Interactive Model of Communication

Interactive model or convergence model is similar to transactional model as they are both two way communication model. But, interactive model is mostly used for new media like internet. Here, people can respond to any mass communications like videos, news, etc. People can exchange their views and ideas. Different models that follow interactive model of communication are:

Schramm's Interactive Model

Other Communication Models

Dance's Helical Spiral of Communication

In 1967, Dance made a communication model based on a helix known as helical model. He explains how a child learns to communicate and the child grows up and continues to communicate. Communication depends on previous experiences and activities of the speaker according to this model.

Westley and MacLean's Conceptual Model

Westley and MacLean's model explains the difference between interpersonal and mass communication as feedback. Feedback can be direct in interpersonal communication whereas indirect in mass communication. According to this model, communication starts from the environment and not when the message is spoken or shown.

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Berlo's SMCR MODEL

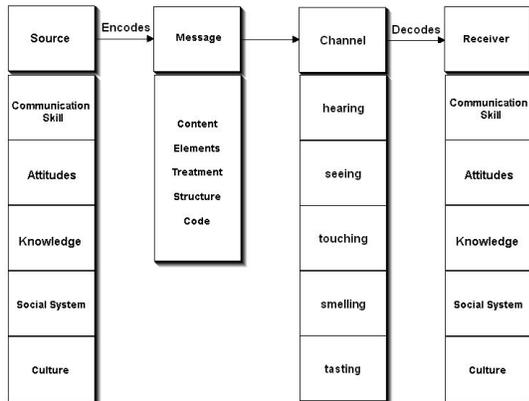
In 1960, David Berlo postulated Berlo's Sender-Message-Channel-Receiver (SMCR) model of communication from Shannon Weaver's Model of Communication (1949). He described factors affecting the individual components in the communication making the communication more efficient.

The model also focuses on encoding and decoding which happens before sender sends the message and before receiver receives the message respectively.

Berlo's Model has mainly, four components to describe the communication process. They are sender, message, channel and receiver. Each of the component is affected by many factors.

berlo's model of communication

Berlo's Model of Communication



A Source encodes a message for a channel to a receiver who decodes the message:
S-M-C-R Model.

Components of Berlo's Model of Communication

S -Sender

Sender is the source of the message or the person who originates the message. The person or source sends the message to the receiver. The following are the factor related to sender and is also the same in the case of receiver.

Communication Skills

Communication skills of a person is a factor that affects the communication process. If the sender has good communication skills, the message will be communicated better than if the sender's communication skills are not good. Similarly, if the receiver can not grasp the message, then the communication will not be effective. Communication skills include the skills to speak, present, read, write, listening, etc.

Attitude

The attitude of the sender and the receiver creates the effect of the message. The person's attitude towards self, the receiver and the environment changes the meaning and effect of the message.

Knowledge

Familiarity with the subject of the message makes the communicated message have its effect more. Knowledge on the subject matter makes the communicator send the message effectively.

Social Systems

Values, beliefs, laws, rules, religion and many other social factors affect the sender's way of communicating the message. It creates difference in the generation of message. Place and situation also fall under social systems.

Culture

Cultural differences make messages different. A person from one culture might find something offensive which is very much accepted in another culture.

M-Message

A message is the substance that is being sent by the sender to the receiver. It might be in the form of voice, audio, text, video or other media. The key factors affecting the message are

Content

Content is the thing that is in the message. The whole message from beginning to end is the content.

Elements

Elements are the non verbal things that tag along with the content like gestures, signs, language, etc.

Treatment

Treatment is the way in which the message is conveyed to the receiver. Treatment also effects the feedback of the receiver.

Structure

The structure of the message or the way it has been structured or arranged, affects the effectiveness of the message.

Code

Code is the form in which the message is sent. It might be in the form of language, text, video, etc.

C-Channel

Channel is the medium used to send the message. In mass communication and other forms of communication, technical machines might be used as a channel like telephone, internet, etc. But in general communication, the five senses of a human being is the channel for the communication flow and it affects the effectiveness of the channel.

Hearing – We receive the message through hearing.

Seeing – We perceive through seeing. We also get non-verbal messages by seeing.

Touching – Many of the non-verbal communication happens from touching like holding hands.

Smelling – We collect information from smelling.

Tasting – Taste also provides the information to be sent as a message.

R- Receiver

Receiver is the person who gets the message sent in the process. This model believes that the thinking pattern and all other factors mentioned above must be in sync to that of the sender for the communication to be effective. The message might not have the same effect as intended if the receiver and sender are not similar. The receiver must also have a very good listening skill. Other factors are similar to that of the sender.

Feedback in communication

Receivers are not just passive absorbers of messages; they receive the message and respond to them. This response of a receiver to sender's message is called Feedback. Sometimes a feedback could be a non-verbal smiles, sighs etc. Sometimes it is oral, as when you react to a colleague's ideas with questions or comments. Feedback can also be written like - replying to an e-mail, etc.

Feedback is your audience's response; it enables you to evaluate the effectiveness of your message. If your audience doesn't understand what you mean, you can tell by the response and then refine the message accordingly.

Giving your audience a chance to provide feedback is crucial for maintaining an open communication climate. The manager must create an environment that encourages feedback. For example after explaining the job to the subordinated he must ask them whether they have understood it or not. He should ask questions like "Do you understand?", "Do you have any doubts?" etc. At the same time he must allow his subordinated to express their views also.

Feedback is essential in communication so as to know whether the recipient has understood the message in the same terms as intended by the sender and whether he agrees to that message or not.



UNIT II

Growth of communication models

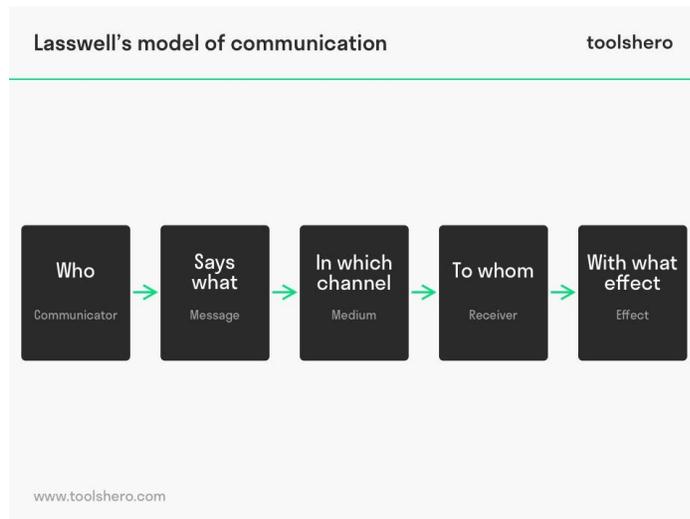
Lasswell models

The Lasswell Communication Model describes verbal communication and consists of five elements. Who says What, in Which channel, to Whom, with What effect? This model is also called a 'linear model of communication', 'uni-directional process' or 'action model, because it describes a one-way process within communication.

What is the Lasswell Communication Model?

American sociologist and psychologist, Harold Lasswell is best known for his linear model of communication that he developed in 1948. The Lasswell model of communication (also known as Lasswell's communication model) describes who is saying something, which channel is used to convey the messages, who the message is aimed at and what effect the message has.

Communication sciences and public relations still often use this model, making this a classic sender receiver model.



Lasswell Communication Model : five components

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The Lasswell Communication Model consists of the basic questions below, aimed at a component and the gaining of an analysis:

Who?

Component: This is the communicator, also called the sender, who formulates and spreads a message. The sender can also be an intermediary.

Analysis: This is about a management and audit analysis, that helps the sender to have the power to communicate.

What?

Component: This is the content of the message or the message that the sender spreads.

Analysis: The content analysis is related to the aim of the message and/or the secondary intent.

Which channel?

Component: The channel describes the medium or media that is/are used to convey and spread the message. The medium can consist of several communication tools, mass media and social media.

Analysis: The media analysis shows which medium is best used to convey a message to the receivers as effectively as possible.

To whom?

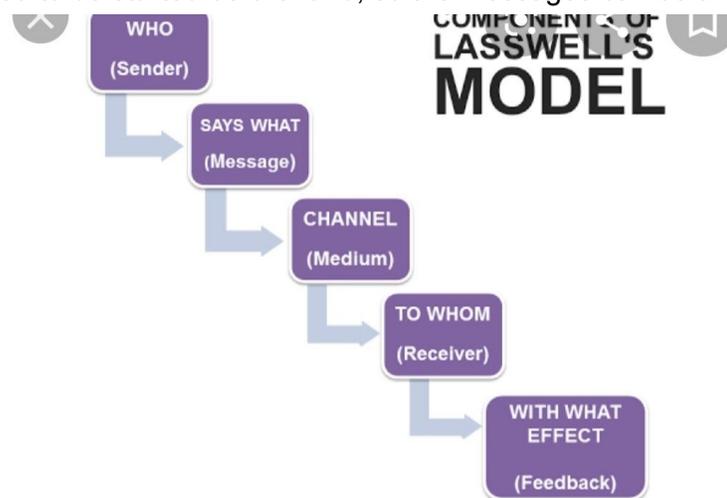
Component: This describes the receiver(s), such as a target group or an individual. With mass communication, there's an audience.

Analysis: The target analysis shows who the message is meant for and how they are best reached and/or influenced.

Which effect?

Component: The effect is the result the message leads to. The so-called triangle of success 'knowledge, attitude, behaviour' is often used to describe the desired effect.

Analysis: The effect analysis will need to be started beforehand, so the messages can be aimed



at and fitted to the target audience.

Berlo's SMCR MODEL

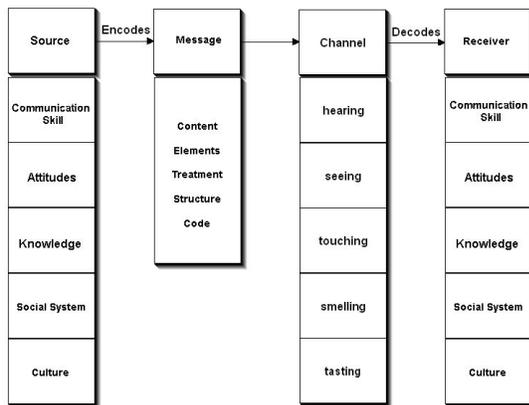
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Gerbners model of communication.

In his work Gerbner proposed two dimensions in the communication process of communication, Perceptual Dimension and Means and control dimension. Perpetual Dimension:- In this Dimension E is an event in real life and it is perceived by M man or machine.

Mr. Gerbner is one of the pioneers of communication research. In 1956, he attempted the general purpose of communication model. He stressed the dynamic nature of communication in his work and also the factor affecting the reliability of communication

In his work Gerbner proposed two dimensions in the communication process of communication, Perceptual Dimension and Means and control dimension.

Perpetual Dimension:- In this Dimension E is an event in real life and it is perceived by M man or machine. The event perceived by M becomes E1 which is only a portion of the event because M has perceived it as according to his mood, attitude, culture etc. This is known as “Perceptual Dimension.” There are three factors that involve between M and E in perceptual dimension, selection, context and availability.

- o M selects the interesting or needed content from the entire event E and filters out the others.

- o The event occurs in a certain context and Availability is based on M’s mood, attitude, culture and personality.

- o For Eg. How a journalist perceives message from an event and he cannot focus on the entire event so, he filters out the excess information from the event. This filtered event is not the same as the real event it is just a representation of the entire event because the journalist has edited the event based on his attitude, mood, culture, personality or press policies.

Means and Control Dimension:- In this dimension E2 is the new event content drawn by M. Here M becomes the source to send the message about E to someone else. M creates signals or statements about the message S and Gerbner terms it as SE2. Here S(form or signals) take E2(M’s content). Here E2 is structured or formed by M and it can communicate in a number of ways or based on the way structured.

M has to use channels to communicate and the channels is more or less controlled by M. The question of control relates to M’s skill in using communication channels.

This process can be extended to infinitum by adding other receivers (M2, M3...) who have further perceptions (SE2, SE3...) of the statements about perceived events.

Main themes and advantages of Gerbner’s Model are:-

A message is structured and the structured message is not equivalent to the original event.

The model also focuses on

- o How a message is created?

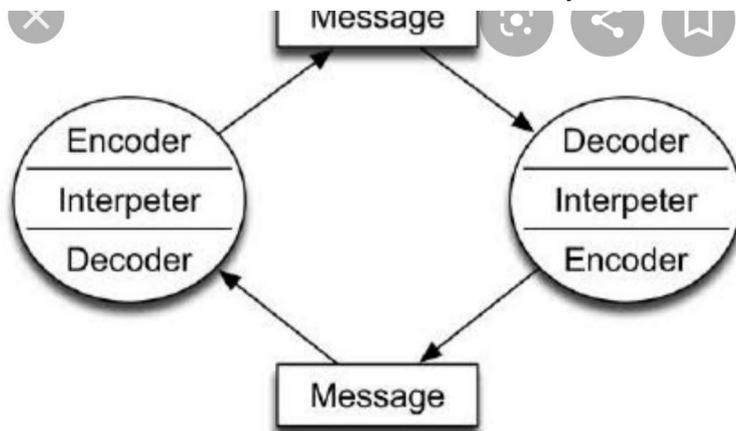
- o How a message is controlled?

Gerbner’s model has helped to make the communication process more insightful because it has added two dimensions perceptual and means and control dimension.

The Osgood-Schramm model of communication

The Osgood-Schramm model of communication is a circular, rather than linear, experience that involves a sender, who encodes a message, and a recipient, who decodes it. The sender and

the receiver hold both roles in the model. ... In this way, the idea of interpretation is central to



this model.

UNIT III

Bullet Theory of Mass Communication

Mass means, a group of people and communication means, a process by which we can share our ideas, Our thoughts, our views and our knowledge so, mass communication means, A

process, by which we can share our ideas, our views, our knowledge and our thoughts in a heterogeneous, anonymous masses of receives.

There are many theories of mass communication by which we can develop our communication skills. Bullet theory is one of them.

According to this theory, communication plays a very important role in the process of communication.

Mainly, the communication decides, the size, the form, the necessity and the medium or a message or a information. Receives do not play any role in communication process.

For example:-

In an advertising agency, these are three main people.

1. Produces
2. Consumer
3. Marketing Agent.

According to this theory the marketing agent, generally, do not advertise according to the necessity of consumer, but they try to generate, the necessity of consumers, with the help of producer.

In other words, we can say, mass communication try to move the interest of receive according to their message.

We all are familiar, with the example of close up in which they said, "Kya apke toothpaste me namak hai".

Before this advertisement, we were not thinking that the salt is important for our teeth but after this, we are aware about this that salt is very important so we have to use the close-up.

Bullet means, message direct attracts on receives like a bullet.

The Hypothesis of this theory is that receive is inactive, and he accept all the things or all the information which we give to him. He is new and he has no his personal thought limitations of this theory.

According to this theory receives do not play any important role in communication process, he is inactive but receives is a human being and he has his own ideas, his views, and he gives a special meaning to all the information which he received.

Who proposed magic bullet theory?

Harold Lasswell

Hypodermic Needle Theory, also known as Magic Bullet Theory (hypodermic syringe model or transmission-belt model) was promulgated by Harold Lasswell in 1920s. It was written in the

book "Propaganda Technique" in the World War. The theory is a linear model of communication and talks about media's power on audience.

BULLET THEORY DEFINITION

The "Magic Bullet" theory graphically assumes that the media's message is a bullet fired from the "media gun" into the viewer's "head". Similarly, the "Hypodermic Needle Model" uses the same idea of the "shooting" paradigm. It suggests that the media injects its messages straight into the passive audience.

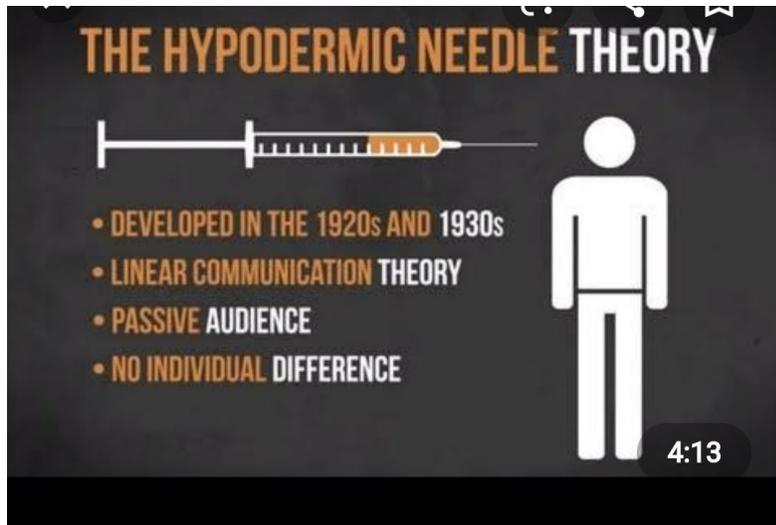
HYPODERMIC NEEDLE THEORY

The hypodermic needle model (known as the hypodermic-syringe model, transmission-belt model, or magic bullet theory) is a model of communication suggesting that an intended message is directly received and wholly accepted by the receiver. The model was originally rooted in 1930s behaviourism and largely considered obsolete for a long time, but big data analytics-based mass customisation has led to a modern revival of the basic idea.

Concept of Hypodermic Needle Theory

The "Magic Bullet" or "Hypodermic Needle Theory" of direct influence effects was based on early observations of the effect of mass media, as used by Nazi propaganda and the effects of Hollywood in the 1930s and 1940s. People were assumed to be "uniformly controlled by their biologically based 'instincts' and that they react more or less uniformly to whatever 'stimuli' came along". The "Magic Bullet" theory graphically assumes that the media's message is a bullet fired from the "media gun" into the viewer's "head". Similarly, the "Hypodermic Needle Model" uses the same idea of the "shooting" paradigm. It suggests that the media injects its messages straight into the passive audience. This passive audience is immediately affected by these messages. The public essentially cannot escape from the media's influence, and is therefore considered a "sitting duck". Both models suggest that the public is vulnerable to the messages shot at them because of the limited communication tools and the studies of the media's effects on the masses at the time. It means the media explores information in such a way that it injects in the mind of audiences as bullets.

The "magic bullet" and "hypodermic needle" models originate from Harold Lasswell's 1927 book, Propaganda Technique in the World War. Recent work in the history of communication studies have documented how the two models may have served as strawman theory or fallacy or even a "myth". Others have documented the possible medical origins of the metaphor of the magic bullet model.



Agenda-setting theory

Agenda-setting theory describes the “ability [of the news media] to influence the salience of topics on the public agenda. ” That is, if a news item is covered frequently, the audience will regard the issue as more important. In reality, mass media only shows the audience what it comprehends as an important issue.

Agenda setting is the media’s ability to transfer salience issues through their new agenda. This way, the public agenda can form an understanding of the salience issues.

Two basic assumptions underlie most research on agenda setting:

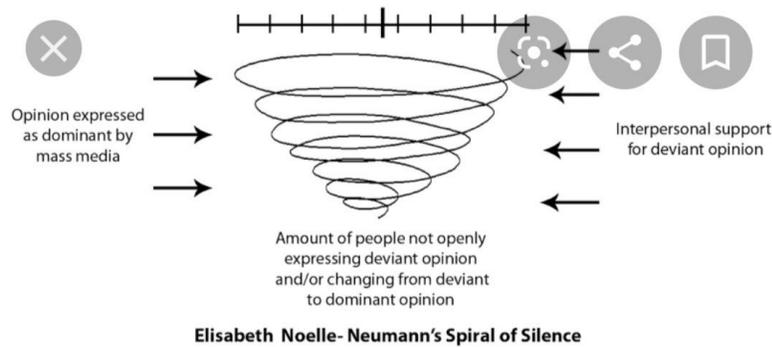
- (1) the press and the media do not reflect reality; they filter and shape it;
- (2) media concentration on a few issues and subjects leads the public to perceive those issues as more important than other issues.



Spiral of Silence

The spiral of silence theory is a political science and mass communication theory proposed by the German political scientist Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann. It states that a social group or society might isolate or exclude members due to the members' opinions. This stipulates that individuals have a fear of isolation. This fear of isolation consequently leads to remaining silent instead of voicing opinions. Media is an important factor that influences both the dominant idea and people's perception of what the dominant idea is. The assessment of one's

social environment may not always correlate with reality.

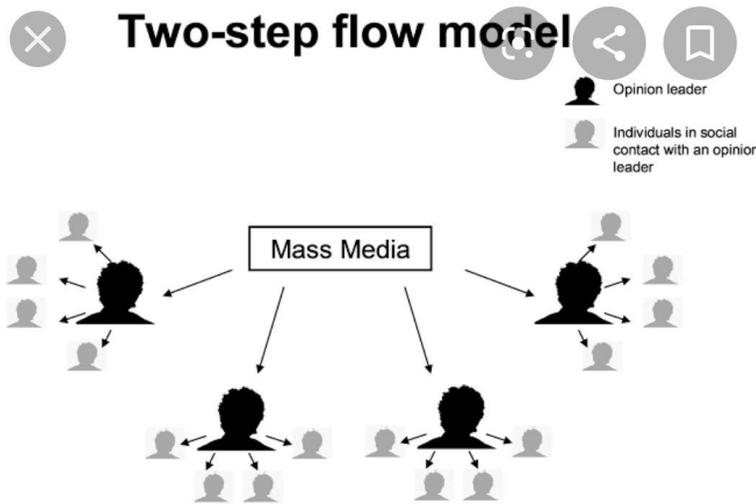


Two Step Flow Theory

The Two Step Flow Theory suggests that opinion leaders pay close attention to the mass media and pass on their interpretation of media messages to others. Unlike the Hypodermic Needle Theory, The Two Step Flow Theory maintains that audiences are active participants in the communication process.

The Two Step Flow Theory of communication is superior to the Hypodermic Needle Theory in a number of ways. First, it acknowledges that audiences are composed of individuals who are part of a society. They actively interpret media messages and are influenced by people around them. Of course, this theory has some limitations as well. When we're thinking about modern communication, it's very likely that there's more than two steps in the flow of communication. Nevertheless, the Two Step Flow Theory is still an interesting way to think about communication and media influence.

The Two Step Flow Theory is also of interest to the advertising industry. A long time ago, advertisers realized that word of mouth and recommendations are a powerful way to sell products. Books like *The Anatomy of Buzz* are all about how important word of mouth is to advertising campaigns. A lot of campaigns set out to use personal influence by targeting opinion leaders. Anecdotally, this is something we can probably all relate to – we're more likely to buy a product if it's been recommended by a friend or someone that we trust.



UNIT IV

A brief history of media effects

Historically, media effects had tended to emphasize a three- or four-phase model with each phase characterized by either “significant” or “minimal” media effects (see Bryant & Thompson, 2002; McQuail, 2010; Noelle-Neumann, 1973; Wartella & Middlestadt, 1991). The boundaries of each phase are fluid but are generally defined by emerging media technologies, the cultural milieu, and the types of methods, perspectives, and ideologies used by each phase’s researchers. The first phase—a significant effects phase—begins in the 1920s and 1930s and often incorporates “magic bullet” or “hypo-dermic needle” metaphors, as if messengers shoot messages and effects into receivers.

In this initial stage, as the enormous popularity of press, film, and radio intruded into everyday life, media were credited with immense power in shaping opinion, attitudes, and behavior. During this phase citizens and researchers alike were fearful of the wide, overarching effects that emerging media like film and radio could have on society.

The mass propaganda campaigns that started during World War I further fueled these concerns. Harold Lasswell (1927) is often cited as the main figure of the first phase of media effects. Lasswell used the arguments of Freudian psychology, pragmatism, and political science to argue that society and individuals could be effectively controlled by a minority through propaganda.

Even as these theories were developing, a second and more minimal phase was already beginning in the 1930s. This phase was marked by the development of more sophisticated scientific methods in communications theory (McQuail, 2010). This sophistication resulted in studies and experiments that increasingly called into question theorists’ earlier assumptions. In this phase, the theory of “personal influence” (Katz & Lazarsfeld, 1955) began to define media effects theory, and the phase culminated in the work of Lazarsfeld’s student Joseph Klapper (1960), who argued that the effects of mass communication merely reinforced predispositions and did not directly influence them. During this phase, researchers considered there was no direct or one-to-one link between media stimulus and audience response. As more media effects research was produced, and as scientific methods became more advanced, it was determined that media effects were not as direct as initially thought. This approach became known as the limited effects model.

The next and third phase coincided with the rise of television in the period after World War II. While it was no longer feasible to return to the theories of Lasswell and his contemporaries, it was again possible to explore the long-term effects of media as significant. The focus was on cumulative change, and media effects theory emphasized direct effects models (McQuail, 2010). Noelle-Neumann (1973), who later developed the spiral of silence theory, was one of the phase’s researchers who called for a “return to powerful mass media.” In this phase, the arrival of TV in the 1950s and 1960s did bring forth a return to the concept of powerful mass media. The renewal of research helped transfer attention to long-term influence, cultural patterns, and institutional behavior to break the “no effect” myth. These researchers criticized the older, psychology-oriented

methods, and instead favored methods that took long-term media effects into account, also referred to as cumulative effects.

Beginning in the 1990s, a potential fourth phase has emerged (McQuail, 2010). The new phase marks a return to the minimal models of media effects and places special emphasis on constructivist models (McQuail, 2010). By this time a more egalitarian approach to media effects had grown in popularity, and this has been referred to as the social constructivist approach. This approach argues that much of what the media do involves the construction of reality, with the public deciding whether or not to adopt the media's world view. Many contemporary theorists still refer to media effects as having just three phases, and the history of media effects remains a contested space, especially as new theories and methods call into doubt the findings of earlier researchers.

Theorists have increasingly propounded alternative models of media effects theory in order to expand and call into question the various iterations of the phase model. Lang and Lang (1993) argue against the phase model and instead propound a model that emphasizes investigations of cumulative effects. Perse (2001) posits an alternative model based on four types of media effects: direct, conditional, cumulative, and cognitive transactional. Perse's model seeks to demonstrate a more nuanced understanding of the interplay of media content variables and audience variables regardless of time period or media. Neuman and Guggenheim (2011) analyzed 50 years of communications research and argued that media effects theory is characterized not by phases but by six broad theoretical areas: persuasion theories, active audience theories, social context theories, societal and media theories, interpretive effects theories, and new media theories. These theoretical areas overlap substantially and demonstrate the diverse and fractured approaches used by media effects researchers.

Catharsis Theory

The catharsis theory regarding media violence holds that watching violent programs allows the viewer the opportunity for emotional release, or catharsis—from the Greek word *katharsis*, which literally translated means cleansing or purging.

Narcosis Theory

Narcotizing dysfunction is a theory that as mass media inundate people on a particular issue, they become apathetic to it, substituting knowledge for action. It is suggested that the vast supply of communication Americans receive may elicit only a superficial concern with the problems of society. This would result in real societal action being neglected, while superficiality covers up mass apathy. Thus, it is termed "dysfunctional" as it indicates the inherent dysfunction of both mass media and social media during controversial incidents and events. The theory assumes that it is not in the best interests of people to form a social mass that is politically apathetic and inert. The term narcotizing dysfunction was identified in the article "Mass Communication, Popular Taste and Organized Social Action", by Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and Robert K. Merton.

Mass media's overwhelming flow of information has caused the populace to become passive in their social activism. Because the individual is assailed with information about a huge range of issues and problems and they are knowledgeable about or able to discuss these issues, they believe they are helping to resolve these issues. As more time is spent educating oneself on current issues, there is a decrease in time available to take organized social action. Courses of action may be discussed, but they are rather internalized and rarely come to fruition. In short, people have unwittingly substituted knowledge for action. People's consciences are clear, as they think they have done something to address the issue. However, being informed and concerned is not a replacement for action. Even though there are increasing numbers of political messages, information, and advertisements available through traditional media and online media, political participation continues to decline. People pay close attention to the media, but there is an overexposure of messages that can get confusing and contradictory so people do not get involved in the political process.

Brief overview of theories

There are several important theories that fall under the umbrella of "media effects." It is beyond the scope of this entry to elaborate on all of them. Below is a brief overview of some of these theories

Cultivation theory

Given the role of television as a wide-reaching, shared cultural experience, it is no surprise that the study of television has had profound implications for media effects research. Therefore, the premise of George Gerbner's cultivation theory is that heavy viewers of television are more likely to think that real life is similar to realities portrayed on television. Furthermore, these "heavy" viewers are presumed to have the same sort of beliefs and world views, leading to a societal homogenization effect referred to as "mainstreaming." The most commonly cited cultivation effect deals with the large amount of violence on television, which convinces heavy television consumers that the world is a more violent place than it actually is. The phenomenon is typically referred to as "mean world syndrome" (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, Signorielli, & Shahnahan, 2002).

Exemplification theory

The gathering and categorization of information necessary for survival or success (referred to here as "exemplars") have taken place in some form for millennia. But since the dawn of mass media, human beings have relied on this sort of important information to be mediated to them, as opposed to it being learned from first-hand experience. Despite these changes, exemplification theory argues that the gathering of simple experiential knowledge serves us better than knowledge that comes from an abstract event. In addition, particularly salient events will stick better in the minds of individuals than irrelevant ones, and human beings do categorize similar events for the purpose of assessing the true import of information. Finally, the cognitive process that occurs when retrieving "exemplars" relies on events that remain most in one's memory, as well as the categorizations of simple versus abstract experiential knowledge (Zillman, 2002).

Uses and gratifications

Implicit in the theory of uses and gratifications is the belief that while mass media have had and do have a significant impact on society, there are many forces at work when it comes to influencing individuals to change their beliefs or behaviors. Aside from mass media, individual environments, needs or desires, preconceived notions of society and/or media, and real-life consequences as a result of behavior, all influence societies and the individuals within those societies. This view contradicts the classic direct effects approach to media effects; it suggests that people engage with particular media messages purposefully, that they have agency when it comes to consuming media, and that their social environment inevitably changes how they interact with media. Further more, mass media must constantly compete with other forms of communicative stimuli such as interpersonal communication.

UNIT V

Theories of Press

Mass media does not operate in a vacuum; the press always takes on the form and coloration of the social and political structures within which it operates. Normative theories were first proposed by Fred, Peterson and Wilbur Schramm in their book called "Four Theories of the Press". At first the word "Normative Theory" was pronounced in USA during the height of 'cold war' with communism and soviet. Often it called as western theories of mass media.

A Normative theory describes an ideal way for a media system to be controlled and operated by the government, authority, leader and public. These theories are basically different from other communication theories because normative theories of press are not providing any scientific explanations or prediction. At the same these "four theories of the press" came from many sources rather than a single source. Sometimes media practitioners, social critics and academics also involved to develop these normative theories. Normative theories are more focused in the relationship between Press and the Government than press and the audience. These theories are more concern about the ownership of the media and who controls the press or media in the country.

By contrast, normative statements affirm how things should or ought to be, how to value them, which things are good or bad. Normative theories are divided into the following categories:

1. Authoritarian:

Long before the democratic societies could think of matters pertaining to freedom of speech, there existed a thought that the emergence of media should not challenge the writ of the government which were more in dictatorial form and less they looked like democracies. The media was forced to remain under state control. It had following features which, in non-democratic governments still rule on media:

- a) Direct governmental control of the media. Typical to pre-democratic societies, where the government consists of very small ruling-class.
- b) No printing that could undermine the established authority or offense to existing political set up.
- c) The government may punish anyone who questions the state's ideology and the Media professionals are not allowed to have any independence within the media organization.
- d) Registration of the media by the state.

This theory developed in the 16th and 17th centuries and was mainly based on absolute power of the monarchy (truth). It was essential that the Press supports monarchy and couldn't criticise it. This approach was designed to protect the established social order, setting clear limits to media freedom and ensure that it is not the media which must talk about people and their

problems in any manner. According to this theory, mass media, though not under the direct control of the State, had to follow its bidding.

This Theory Envisages:

- i. The government consists of a very limited and small ruling-class and media are not allowed to print or broadcast anything which could undermine the established authority of the government.
- ii. Any offense to the existing political values should be avoided and the government may punish anyone who questions the state's ideology.
- iii. The government is infallible and the media professionals are therefore not allowed to have any independence within the media organization.
- iv. Foreign media are subordinate to the established authority, in that all imported media products are controlled by the state.

Steps were taken to control the freedom of expression. The result was advocacy of complete dictatorship. The theory promoted zealous obedience to a hierarchical superior and reliance on threat and punishment to those who did not follow the censorship rules or did not respect authority. Censorship of the press was justified on the ground that the State always took precedence over the individual's right to freedom of expression.

This theory stemmed from the authoritarian philosophy of Plato (407 - 327 B.C), who thought that the State was safe only in the hands of a few wise men. Thomas Hobbes (1588 - 1679), a British academician, argued that the power to maintain order was sovereign and individual objections were to be ignored. Engel, a German thinker further reinforced the theory by stating that freedom came into its supreme right only under Authoritarianism. The world has been witness to authoritarian means of control over media by both dictatorial and democratic governments.

This theory essentially applies to authoritarian societies, but can surface in less authoritarian societies (particularly in times of war, terrorism). It depends on the medium/ media of press subject to a greater control in some countries. There are certain assumptions attached to the Authoritarian approach, which are as follows:

- a) Press should do nothing to undermine vested power and interests;
- b) Press should be subordinate to vested power and authority;
- c) Press should avoid acting in contravention of prevailing moral and political values;
- d) Censorship justified in the application of these principles;
- e) Criminalisation of editorial attacks on vested power, deviations from official policy, violation of moral codes.
- f) Media is an instrument/ mouthpiece to publicise and propagandise government ideology and actions.
- g) Absolute power of state versus subservience of the individual $\tilde{\alpha}$ press.

These assumptions in turn help us in understanding the basic premise of the theory. It explains the principles on which this theory is based and the approach which the authoritarian society used to follow. The biggest examples of this theory are: Fascist regimes, some African countries, communist countries, Aspects of apartheid etc.

2. Libertarian Theory:

This theory is just in contrast to the authoritarian approach to media. The founding fathers of this theory (Milton, Locke, Mills) propounded that Press informs, entertains, sells and helps in discovering the truth. It is a free marketplace of ideas where anyone can publish his/ her views and expressions but cannot defame or be obscene. There shall be minimum checks and balances by the government. The libertarians had a very modern approach which was quintessential to serve the purposes of the modern society based on rise of democracy, religious freedom, expansion of economic freedom, philosophical climate of the enlightenment, undermined authoritarianism $\tilde{\alpha}$ emphasis on personal freedom and democracy. The reason behind the said philosophy was that people are rational and can distinguish between truth and falsehood, and between good and evil and therefore, be allowed to express their views and expressions.

Here media enjoys an absolute freedom of expression. Its prominent features are as follows:

- a) Competitive exposure of alternative viewpoints.
- b) Attacks on the government's policies are accepted and even encouraged: the media as a watchdog.
- c) Journalists and media professionals ought to have full autonomy within the media organization.
- d) There is no explicit connection between the government and the media.
- e) The press is free from censorship
- f) It is accountable to the law for any consequences of its activities that infringe other individuals' rights or the legitimate claims of the society.
- g) In rebelling against authoritarian theory early libertarians argued that there should be no laws governing media operations. Free press means that all forms of media must be totally unregulated.

The Early Libertarians argued that if individuals could be freed from arbitrary limits on communication imposed by church and state, they would "naturally" follow the dictates of their conscience, seek truth, engage in public debate, and ultimately create a better life for themselves and others. They believed strongly in the power of unrestricted public debate and discussion to create more natural way of structuring society. In AEROPAGETICA, a powerful libertarian published in 1644 by , John Milton asserted that: "In a fair debate good and truthful arguments will always win out over lies and deceit. If this is true it followed, then a new and better social order could be forged using public debate."

These libertarian principles were also adopted in the "Bill of Rights". (First 10 amendments to U.S. constitution). It asserted that all individuals have natural rights no government, community,

or group can unduly infringe upon or take away. The ability to exercise dissent, to band together with others to resist laws that people find to be wrong, to print or broadcast ideas, opinions and beliefs- all of these rights are proclaimed as central to democratic self-government.

Unfortunately, most early libertarians had a unrealistic view of how long it would take to find the "truth" and establish an ideal social order. In the 18th century it became clear that "truth" couldn't be quickly or easily established, some libertarians became discouraged. They drifted between libertarian and authoritarian views. But despite the priority given to communication freedom, one sees number of restrictions on communication, accepted by media practitioners and media consumers. Examples can be : Libel - laws to check the publication of information that will damage reputations; Laws against offensive language, pornography, information that would interfere with a defendant's right to a fair trial etc. Whenever new media technologies are invented, it is necessary to decide how they should be regulated.

The debate over communication freedom never ends, sometimes the balance shifts toward expanding freedom and other times, freedom is curtailed. The question is why it is necessary to place limits on communication freedom, What happens when groups attempt to stir up hatred and resentment against racial or ethnic minorities, Should media practitioners be allowed to invade our homes, publish erroneous information or deceive public with false advertising, Do media professionals have the right to produce and distribute anything that will earn profits, or should some limits be placed on them. The protection of dignity, reputation, property, privacy, moral development of individuals, groups, minorities, evens the security of the state no infringement accepted from media. Such an extensive freedom is also a problem as all people have the right to speak and receive information freely, but no one takes responsibility of the wrong doings. The ethics in multicultural or pluralistic societies vary from place to place; hence there is always complaint against the media of each other's society. This movement is based on the right of an individual, and advocates absence of restraint. The basis of this theory dates back to 17th century England when the printing press made it possible to print several copies of a book or pamphlet at cheap rates. The State was thought of as a major source of interference on the rights of an individual and his property. Libertarians regarded taxation as institutional theft. Popular will (vox populi) was granted precedence over the power of State.

Advocates of this theory were Lao Tzu, an early 16th century philosopher, John Locke of Great Britain in the 17th century, John Milton and John Stuart Mill. Milton referred to a self-righting process if free expression is permitted "let truth and falsehood grapple." In 1789, the French, in their Declaration of the Rights of Man, wrote "Every citizen may speak, write and publish freely." Out of such doctrines came the idea of a "free marketplace of ideas." George Orwell defined libertarianism as "allowing people to say things you do not want to hear". Libertarians argued that the press should be seen as the Fourth Estate reflecting public opinion. What the theory offers, in sum, is power without social responsibility?

Classical liberal perspective envisages the following:

a) Free market as foundation of free media;

- b) Freedom to publish without prior restriction $\tilde{\alpha}$ independence from government;
- c) Public has access to wide diversity of opinion (only limitation on freedom to publish is public willingness to pay);
- d) Market-based diversity promotes public rationality $\tilde{\alpha}$ free marketplace of ideas and information as a self-righting mechanism, minimises bias and exposes weak arguments and evidence.

Another strand in liberal tradition presents Media as representative agency or as a watchdog protecting the public (individuals rights), overseeing the state. Wherein the Watchdog reveals and abuses in the exercise of state authority. This role overrides all other functions of the media and dictates the form in which the media should be organised, i.e. the free market. As newspapers gradually lost their party affiliations, journalists worked to establish their independence as searchers after objective truth. Independence from government control and influence $\tilde{\alpha}$ if media is subject to public regulation it will lose its bite as a watchdog.

Press is source of information and platform for expression of a range of divergent opinions; enables people to monitor government and form ideas about policy. But, society seen as an aggregation of individuals $\tilde{\alpha}$ media. As representative role conceived primarily in terms of articulating public opinion, which is the sum of individual opinion. How should media relate to representative structures as distinct from individuals $\tilde{\alpha}$ role of media in mediating class and other conflict in society.

However, Freedom of press can be abused. Absolute freedom is anarchy. Abolition of censorship; but, also the introduction of press laws designed to protect individual rights (protection of reputation, privacy, moral development of individuals or groups, security of the state) $\tilde{\alpha}$ could override the right of the press.

Lastly, this theory also entails certain ASSUMPTIONS that help in understanding the basic premise of this theory:

- a) Press should be free from any external censorship;
- b) Publication and distribution should be accessible to any individual or group with a permit or license;
- c) Attacks on governments or parties should not be punishable;
- d) No coercion to publish anything;
- e) Freedom of access to information.
- f) libertarian view rests on the idea that the individual should be free to publish whatever he or she likes attacks on the government's policies are fully accepted and even encouraged
- g) no restrictions on import or export of media messages across the national frontiers
- h) journalists and media professionals have full autonomy within the media organization.

3. Soviet Communism

With the revolution in Russia in 1917, and practice of Marxism, there appeared a very different approach to deal with media. The media was tied to overall communist ideas and defined in a very different way. The theory to control media possessed following features:

- a) Closely tied to the communist ideology.
- b) The media is collective agitator, propagandist and educator in the building of communism.
- c) No private ownership of the media.
- d) The government is superior to the media institutions.
- e) The media is supposed to be serious.
- f) The soviet theory does not favour free expression, but proposes a positive role for the media, the society and the world.
- g) Press contributes to success of the state.
- h) Only legal party members can publish and no one can criticize party.
- i) Government has "influence" over the press.
- j) closely tied to a specific ideology—the communist
- k) media organizations in this system are not intended to be privately owned and are to serve the interests of the working class
- l) both the soviet and the authoritarian acknowledge the government as superior to the media institutions.
- m) The mass media in the Soviet model are expected to be self-regulatory with regard to the content of their messages

The Soviet theory differs from the authoritarian theory in that the media organizations have a certain responsibility to meet the wishes of their audience. This theory is derived from the ideologies of Marx and Engel that "the ideas of the ruling classes are the ruling ideas". It was thought that the entire mass media was saturated with bourgeois ideology. Lenin thought of private ownership as being incompatible with freedom of press and that modern technological means of information must be controlled for enjoying effective freedom of press. The theory advocated that the sole purpose of mass media was to educate the great masses of workers and not to give out information. The public was encouraged to give feedback as it was the only way the media would be able to cater to its interests.

4. Social Responsibility Theory:

This theory keeps certain areas free for the Press but at the same time puts lot of responsibility on media. As discussed in the beginning that the media is not just seen as an enterprise like others in the business sector of any society, but due to its unique nature, society expects a particular role which media must play in getting rid of social evils, educating people, criticizing government policies and exposing other wrong doings in a society. The sense of responsibility has been emphasized more in this theory as compared to any other. The basic premise of the theory is as follows:

- a) Media has certain obligations to society.
- b) It must show truth, accuracy, objectivity, and balance.

- c) The media should be free but self-regulated (codes of conduct, and ethics)
- d) The media according to this theory is pluralistic: diversity of society, various points of view, forum for ideas.
- e) The media ownership is a public trust. Therefore, a journalist is accountable to his audience / readers.

MCQUAIL has further enlisted certain other premises of this theory, which are as follows/
THEORY IN POINTS:

- a) Media have important function to fulfil in society (support democratic political principles);
- b) Media are under obligation to fulfil their social functions (transmission of information and creation of a forum for different viewpoints);
- c) Independence of media emphasised in relation to their responsibility towards society;
- d) Media should meet certain standards.
- e) Media should accept responsibilities towards society;
- f) Media should fulfil responsibilities by setting professional standards with regards to the supply of information and the truth, accuracy, objectivity and balance of their reporting;
- g) Media should apply self-regulation;
- h) Media should avoid publicising information that can lead to crime, violence or social disruption, as well as information that can offend ethnic or religious minorities;
- i) Media collectively should represent all social groups and reflect the diversity of society by giving people access to a variety of viewpoints and opportunity to react to them. Society is entitled to high standards and intervention justifiable if the media fail to meet these standards.
- j) Everyone should have access to press (letters, opinions)

According to the theory media must be controlled by community opinion and ethics. Media cannot violate people's rights. Press can be free and be comprehensive and objective but at the same time must be socially responsible. The social responsibility theory is an outgrowth of the libertarian theory. However, social responsibility goes beyond "objective" reporting to "interpretive" reporting. media has certain obligations to society which it must fulfil in all circumstances:

· Informativeness · Truth · Accuracy · Objectivity · Balance

Media as a whole is pluralized, indicating "a reflection of the diversity of society as well as access to various points of view". A truthful, complete account of the news is not necessarily enough today, notes the Commission on the Freedom of the Press: "It is no longer enough to report the fact truthfully. It is now necessary to report the truth about the fact." Today's complex world often necessitates analysis, explanation, and interpretation. The emerging theory does not deny the rationality of man, although it puts far less confidence in it than the libertarian theory, but it does seem to deny that man is innately motivated to search for truth and to accept it as his guide. Under the social responsibility theory, man is viewed not so much irrational as lethargic. He is capable of using his reason but he is loath to do so. If man is to remain free, he must live by reason instead of passively accepting what he sees, hears, and feels. Therefore, the more alert elements of the community must goad him into the exercise of his reason. Without such goading man is not likely to be moved to seek truth. The languor which keeps him from using his gift of reason extends to all public discussion. Man's aim is not to find truth but to satisfy his immediate needs and desires.

It is the press, therefore, that must be the "more alert element" and keep the public informed, for an informed populace is the cornerstone of democracy. Today's large media conglomerates, however, may not function naturally as a public forum, where all ideas are shared and available. "The owners and managers of the press determine which persons, which facts, which versions of these facts, shall reach the public," writes the Commission. In this same light, Siebert, Peterson and Schramm warn:

"...the power and near monopoly position of the media impose on them an obligation to be socially responsible, to see that all sides are fairly presented and that the public has enough information to decide; and that if the media do not take on themselves such responsibility it may be necessary for some other agency of the public to enforce it."

The Canons of Journalism, adopted by the American Society of Newspaper Editors addresses these same obligations when it calls on newspapers to practice responsibility to the general welfare, sincerity, truthfulness, impartiality, fair play, decency, and respect for the individual's privacy. Siebert, Peterson and Schramm also note that "freedom of expression under the social responsibility theory is not an absolute right, as under pure libertarian theory....One's right to free expression must be balanced against the private rights of others and against vital social interests."

Western media are controlled by capitalist economic interests (prevent them from publishing the Marxist truth). Communist press is equivalent to no profit motive. But it does not mean that it did not foreground special and elite interests in Soviet society. This theory at all times upholds the principle of social responsibility and works in the interest of public at large. It may therefore be understood that:

a) Media should act in the interests of and be controlled by the working class;

b) Media should not be under private control;

c) Media should perform positive functions for society, such as socialisation (to make people conform to desirable norms), education, the supply of information, motivation and mobilisation of the masses;

d) Media should respond to the desire and needs of their recipients;

e) Society has right to use censorship and other legal measures to prevent and punish antisocial publication;

f) Media should reflect complete and objective view of world and society in terms of Marxist-Leninist principles;

g) Media should support communist movements everywhere.

A brief critique of libertarian and social responsibility theories/ A political critique:

a) Journalism in capitalist societies functions in the interests not of society as a whole, but of dominant groups and classes.

b) Concepts like free press, democracy, the public interest, objectivity, neutrality seen as myths.

c) All research processes $\tilde{\alpha}$ including journalism $\tilde{\alpha}$ seen as value-laden and methodological decisions political.

d) There is Concentration of ownership and control of media (lack of diversity), and the declining vitality of publicly funded media/cultural institutions like public broadcasters (due to privatisation).

There are a number of other problems with modern media:

- Lack of democracy within media organisations;

- Governmental secrecy;

- Institutionalised racist and patriarchal codes;

- Commodification of culture

- The democratic process requires the participation of ordinary citizens as much as those who are prominent.

- Bias against independent thinking.

- Journalists have to remain impartial and value neutral & therefore no longer the need nor the opportunity to develop a critical perspective from which to assess the events, the issues, the personalities he or she is assigned to cover.
- Bias against the journalist: Objectivity in journalism effectively erodes the very foundation on which rests a responsible press.

It is utmost essential to understand that news is never a mere recording or reporting of the world but a synthetic, value-laden account which carries within it dominant assumptions and ideas of the society within which it is produced. Media practices do not reflect a genuine public spiritedness but rather a concern to boost sales or improve ratings. The increasing media emphasis on infotainment has accompanied the depoliticising of civil society. For example, it likely would not be socially responsible to report how the terrorist, using some new method, evaded security measures and smuggled a bomb onto a commercial airline.

Idealism and Press Theories

Many of these theories have reflected Western idealism and championship of a Western perspective of democracy. The work of Picard (1985) is no exception. He reviewed previous categories of state–press relations and added a further concept, that of the democratic socialist theory of the press. This theory argued that the press’s purposes are to provide an avenue for expression of public views and to fuel the political and social debates necessary for the continued development of democratic governance. Under the umbrella of the theory, the role of the state is to ensure the ability of citizens to use the press and to preserve and promote media plurality.

HATCHEN’S addition:

Hachten also proposed five theories or concepts of the press emphasizing politics and economics: authoritarian, Western, Communist, revolutionary, and developmental or third world. His conception of authoritarianism was similar to that of Siebert and Lowenstein. However, his Western concept encompassed both the libertarian and social-responsibility models with its defining characteristic being that it is relatively free of arbitrary government controls. Under the Communist concept, media are tools that serve as implements of revelation (by revealing purposes and goals of party leaders) as well as instruments of unity and consensus. The main difference between authoritarian and Communist systems is ownership. In authoritarian systems, press can be privately owned as opposed to state ownership in Communist systems. Hachten defined the revolutionary concept as being illegal and subversive mass communication utilizing the press. Finally, the developmental model was seen to have arisen out of a combination of Communist ideas, anti-Americanism, and social-responsibility ideals.

Hachten saw the defining characteristic of this concept as being the idea that individual rights must be subordinated to the larger goals of nation-building and thus must support authority. This concept is also seen to be a negative response to the Western model. However, his

classification never yields a clear distinction of the press systems, for the analytical dimensions are defined both under the system of the state (authoritarian, Western, Communist) and the functions of the media (revolutionary and developmental).