Situational Co-audience Perceptions as a Moderator of Entertainment Experiences

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Entertainment experience: the typical link

Analysis of mass media entertainment could be enriched by broadening the focus from individualistic experiences to mass-communication-specific experiences (e.g. Brosius, 2003; cf. Perloff, 2002, p. 502; Bryant & Miron, 2002, p. 574)

Communication product / media offering (e.g. a television movie, characters/personae)

- e.g. empathy (Nathanson, 2003)
- presence (Lee, 2004)
- PSI (Hartmann et al., 2004)

- e.g. pleasure as meta-emotion (Vorderer, Klimmt, & Ritterfeld, 2004)

"being in control"

e.g. excitatory/arousal inducing properties; intervention potential; hedonic valence (e.g. Zillmann & Bryant, 1985)

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Mass communication through the eyes of a user

**Communicator / producer**
(e.g. entertainment company)

**Communication product / media offering**
(e.g. a television movie, characters/personae)

**Anonymous (mass)-audience**
(e.g. all individuals watching the movie)

**Effects**
(e.g. entertainment experience)

**Communicator perceptions**

**Media perceptions; “typical link”**

**Co-audience perceptions**
Model of co-audience perceptions
(Hartmann & Dohle, in press)

Determinants

Anticipated aspects

Effects / experiences

Naive media theory

„Hints“ of the media offer

Size

Simultaneity

Social structure

Experiences of exposure

Co-audience perception

Top-of-mind

Cognitive

Affective

Behavioral

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Model of co-audience perceptions
(Hartmann & Dohle, in press)

Determinants
- Naive media theory
- “Hints” of the media offer

Anticipated aspects
- Size
- Simultaneity
- Social structure
- Experiences of exposure

Co-audience perception

Effects / experiences
- Cognitive
- Affective
- Behavioral

Experiences of exposure
Hypotheses (1 of 3)

Outgroup!

Social structure
Experiences of exposure

Co-audience perception

Top-of-mind

Downward comparison that breeds enjoyment while interpreting media content (e.g. daily talks; daily soaps)

Dohle & Hartmann, 2005
Hypotheses (2 of 3)

Outgroup!

Size
Social structure
Experiences of exposure

Co-audience perception

Top-of-mind

Negative third-person effect that reduces enjoyment while interpreting media content (e.g. violent or pornographic contents)
Hypotheses (3 of 3)

Event!

- Size
- Simultaneity

Co-audience perception

Top-of-mind

Suspense that strengthens enjoyment

(e.g. TV-shows; sports)
Discussion

• Results of exploratory studies support the importance of the co-audience perception model in general

→ Concept must be examined in greater detail and tested empirically

• Concept can be seen as a suitable frame to examine existing entertainment theories from a different perspective

• Top of mind phenomena: Under which circumstances (media, media offering, reception motives, ...) are co-audience perceptions relevant?
Thank you very much for your attention!

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References (I)


References (II)


