

Chapter 1: Launching Your Study of Communication Theory

Set of Hunches

- Set of systematic, informed hunches about the way things work.
- Burgoon makes it clear that a theory is not just one inspired thought or an isolated idea.
- Theory construction involves multiple hunches

Images of Theory

- Theories as Nets
 - Karl Popper- cast to catch what we call the world
 - Possibility that our freedom to choose some actions and reject others.
- Theories as Lenses
 - Like the lens of a camera opposed to a mirror that accurately reflects the world out there.
 - Theories shape our perception by focusing attention on some features of communication while ignoring other features.
 - Do not lose what is real and true.
- Theories as Maps
 - We need theory to guide us through unfamiliar territory.
 - Static theory like a still photograph can never fully portray the richness of interaction between people that is constantly changing always more varied and inevitably more complicated.

What is Communication?

- Messages
 - Communication is the relational process of creating and interpreting messages that elicit a response.
 - Frank Dance first communication theory book.
 - Core of communication studies
 - Robert Craig doing anything that involves messages in any medium or situation.
 - Text is a synonym for message that can be studied, regardless of the medium.
Examples- this book, conversation, silent youtube video.
- Creation of Messages
 - Communicator is usually making a conscious choice of message form and substance.
 - Friend texts other than seeing face to face.
 - Preprogramed responses- speaking, writing in mindless ways like on cruise control.

- Interpretation of Messages
 - o Messages do not interpret themselves
 - o Words don't mean things, people mean things.
 - o Herbert Blumer- Symbolic interactionist.
 - o Words and other symbols are polysemic- open to multiple interpretations.
- Rational Process
 - o Flow of communication is always in a flux, never completed the same.
 - o Can be described with reference to what went before and what is yet to come.
 - o Communication is a relational process- between two or more people and affects the nature of the connections among these people.
- Messages that Elicit a Response
 - o Needs cognitive, emotional, or behavioral reaction.
 - o Communication is the relational process of creating and interpreting messages that elicit a response.

Chapter 2: Talk About Theory

Glenn: An Objective Approach

- Source Credibility Theory- Carl Hovland and Walter Weiss.
 - o Suggest that expertise and trustworthiness are the two main ingredients of perceived credibility.
 - o Central premise is that people we view as trusted experts will be much more effective in their attempts to persuade us than sources we distrust or regard as incompetent.
- Identification- perceived role that affects self-image and attitudes.

Marty: An Interpretive Approach

- Burke's dramatistic pentad- 5 pronged method of theatrical criticism to analyze a speaker's strategy, act, scene, etc.
 - o Peyton Manning MasterCard ad, he is the agent. Everyday scenes appear, coaches people in proper attitude is what he does in each scene-act. Jargon and gestures of football coach is the vehicle-agency. The use of the MasterCard- purpose.
- Interpretive approach- linguistic work of assigning meaning or value to communicative texts; assumes that multiple meanings or truths are possible.

Objective or Interpretive Worldviews: Sorting Out the Labels

- Glenn is a social scientist who works hard to be objective
- Marty is a rhetorical critic who does interpretive study.
- All rhetorical critics do interpretive analysis, but not all interpretive scholars are rhetoricians.
- Humanistic Scholarship- study of what it is like to be another person in a specific time and place.

Ways of Knowing: Discovering Truth or Creating Multiple Realities

- Epistemology- the study of origin, nature, method, and limits of knowledge.
- Truth is singular and largely subjective.
- Scientists consider good theories to be those that are faithful representations of underlying reality- mirrors of nature.
- Glenn believes the credibility of a message source can explain why other media messages succeed/fail.

Human Nature: Determinism or Free Will

- Determinism- the assumption that behavior is caused by heredity and environment.
- Active-free, passive-determinism
- Interpretive scholars- (Marty) attribute a person's action to conscious intent.
- Behavioral scientists- (Glenn) occurring *because of* forces outside the individual's awareness.

The Highest Value: Objectivity or Emancipation?

- Values are the traffic lights of our lives that guide what we think, feel, and do.
- As a behavioral scientist, Glenn works hard to maintain his objectivity- strong moral and spiritual convictions, but does not want personal values to distort reality.
- Empirical evidence- data collected through direct observation.
- Marty aware of his own ideology and is not afraid to bring his values to bear upon a communication text and come under scrutiny.
 - o Creates an awareness that is more than a humorous, feel-good spot.
 - o Let's the evidence speak for itself.
- Emancipation- Liberation from any form of political, economic, racial, religious, or sexual oppression; empowerment.
- Stan Deetz- general communication theory, two principles- effectiveness- concerned with successfully communicating information, ideas, meanings, and persuasion. Participation- concerned with increasing the possibility that all points of view will affect collective decisions and individuals being open to new ideas. It also encourages difference, opposition, and independence.