

Chapter One: Thinking About Communication

Communication: a social process in which individuals employ symbols to establish and interpret meaning in their environment

- Communication is always changing and always evolving
- Socially: There are no definite beginnings or endings
- Meaning is created

Concrete Symbols: objects, things you can see, touch

- Ex. Cup, chair

Abstract: things we know exist but are not concrete

- ex. Love, hate, harmony

Original communications model is linear: sender receiver

Transactional understanding of communication:

- Sender → receiver
- Nonverbal and verbal components
- Message
- Channel - all of the senses and technology
- Noise - things that interfere with the message
 - Semantic: words ex. Another language, connotations with another meaning (i.e. abortion, fuck)
 - Physical: ex. Fire alarm goes off
 - Physiological: ex. Nauseas, broken ankle
 - Psychological: thoughts inhibiting communication
- Feedback: responses to communication
- Field of experience: everything you have gone through affects how you receive the message

.....the process now becomes more circular

Powloauto Group study at Stanford: intention does not have to be in place to create communication of some sort

Transaction of Comm.:

- There are no definite beginnings and endings
- Communication is continuous and simultaneous
- All communicators play roles

Even when you are not there you are communicating.

Ethics: create a framework in which to make decisions about ethical behaviors

National Comm. Association's *Principles of Ethical Comm:*

- Advocate truthfulness, accuracy, honesty and reason
- Endorse freedom of expression, diversity of perspective and tolerance of dissent
- Understand and respect other communicators
- Promote access to communication resources and opportunities
- Communication climates of caring and mutual understanding
- Condemn communication that degrades
- Committed to courageous expression of convictions
- Advocate sharing info, opinions, and feelings while respecting privacy and confidentiality
- Accept responsibility for short and long term consequences of our own communication

Why do we study theory?

- Fosters critical thinking skills
- Aids in understand the scope of research
- Helps us understand life experiences
- Essential to becoming aware of who we are and how we function in the world

Chapter Two; Thinking About the Field (Tradition and Context)

Robert Craig believed separating the study of theory into different traditions would help us understand the complex nature of theory development

Rhetorical Tradition: focuses on most types of public speaking or public address and their roles in society

- Include any elements that relate to language and the audience
- Ex. studying the speeches of George Bush in 1988 political campaign
- Ex. Persuasion in public address
- Ex. The effects of emotions on audiences

Semiotic Tradition: deals with the study of signs and their role in society as the primary focus of meaning creation

- Common language is created and shared among people
- CMM is operating from the semiotic tradition
- How words change as people using them change
- Ex. Dork → penis changed meaning
- *Multiple meanings of words and how they come about*

Phenomenological Tradition: looks at a message or communicative situation from a personal perspective

- Works to eliminate biases
- Ex. How people from different backgrounds interpret message
- Ex. How gender impacts communicative style
- Ex. Taking a type of music and having two types of people listen to it...recording their interpretations

Cybernetic Tradition: communication as an information science

- Information flow
- How information is relayed through various channels
- How noise interferes with message understanding/processing
- Ex. How technical ability influences communication in computer-mediated situations
- Ex. People in the 70's using Match.com vs. people in their 20's using the same site

Socio-Psychological Tradition: seeks to understand the causes of behavior as a result of some aspect of comm.

- Focuses mainly on the underlying relationships between variables that exist and how those variables differ depending on the individual situation
- Ex. Trying to understand how people are affected in certain situations
 - "You made the football team, well your dad was the captain."
- Ex. How message construction influences recall of message
- Ex. How entertainment choices influences mood

Socio-Cultural Tradition: how existing shared culture and social structures which are already in place influence communication

- Advocate for the co-creation of social reality to encourage individual points of view
- Breaking through the established patterns of comm. to highlight individual experience in the comm. process
- Ex. Studying the development of "cliques" in schools
- Ex. How FSU orientation leaders influence a sense of spirit among the new freshman students

Critical Tradition: focuses on the current social order in society and how it negatively impacts society

- Seeks to expose the underlying beliefs and values within a society that impact decision-making and actions
- Looks at everything as "power"
- Challenges what is perceived as "negative balances of power"
- Finding the underlying beliefs that impact decision making
- Ex. how consolidation of media ownership impacts entertainment choices
- Ex. Finding examples in everyday life that are anti-feminist...he vs. she...and challenging them

Contexts: the environment in which some type of communication takes place and is limited by