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**THE EFFECT OF ONE-SIDED AND TWO-SIDED ARGUMENTS
ON
CHANGE OF OPINION**

**A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies through the
Department of Psychology in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts at Assumption
University of Windsor**

by

**PETER D. FREEL
B.A., Assumption University of Windsor, 1960**

**Windsor, Ontario, Canada
1962**

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ABSTRACT

This study was undertaken to test the hypothesis originally advanced by Hovland (1949) that one-sided arguments are more effective than two-sided arguments for subjects initially opposed to the position taken by the communicator. With this purpose in mind, Hovland's (1949) experiment was in part repeated with, however, a more specific theoretical orientation (learning theory), a more refined measure of attitude (a Guttman type scale) and a more sensitive test of statistical significance of results (analysis of variance) than Hovland provided in his (1949) research. A further hypothesis was also investigated, that the behaviour of subjects who were favourably disposed to the topic of the communication would behave differently than subjects unfavourable disposed to that topic.

One hundred and twelve introductory psychology students were used as Ss, 28 being assigned to each of the four experimental conditions: pro subjects receiving one-sided con arguments, pro subjects receiving two-sided con arguments, con subjects receiving one-sided pro arguments, and con subjects receiving two-sided pro arguments. The topic chosen was movies as entertainment, with each of the four arguments being presented by tape recording. A Guttman-type attitude scale was administered to all Ss a month prior to and again immediately following presentation of the arguments.

Analysis of Variance showed that there was no significant difference between one-sided and two-sided arguments for either pro or con subjects. A

significant difference, however, was found in the behaviour of pro and con subjects.

Within the limits of this experimentation, it may be concluded that two-sided arguments are not more effective than one-sided arguments in changing the opinion of those initially opposed to the position taken by the communicator. This conclusion is tempered by the confounding of the length and of the one- and two-sidedness of the arguments. Furthermore, subjects initially favourable to the topic changed less than subjects who were initially opposed to the topic, regardless of whether the arguments were one-sided or two-sided. This conclusion is also tempered by the confounding of initial opinion with the position taken in the argument: con initial position with pro argument and vice versa.

PREFACE

This study originated from an interest in mass communication inspired in the author by Rev. C. P. Crowley, CSB, Ph.D. and Rev. J. A. Malone, CSB, Ph.D. The author wishes to express his appreciation to Dr. V. B. Cervin, under whose direction this study was undertaken; to Brother R. Philip, FSC, Ph.D., and to Dr. G. A. Padley, whose patience and guidance assisted greatly in its execution.

The author is also indebted to Mr. John Tyrrell of Radio Station CBE for spending many hours in preparing the persuasive arguments and to Dr. A. A. Smith and Mr. Meyer Starr for guiding the author through an intricate statistical analysis.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of Related Research

In recent years, the evaluation of the effectiveness of communication has become one of the major concerns of psychological research. In one of the original experiments in this area, Hovland (1949) found that in attempting to change people's opinions with a persuasive communication, presenting arguments on both sides of an issue, but giving them a desired slant, was more effective than stating only the arguments supporting one point of view opposed to the audience's original point of view. He also found that better-educated men (those having completed high school) changed their opinion to a greater degree in the intended direction after hearing two-sided arguments than did less well-educated men.

Lumsdaine and Janis, using a slightly different design, tested the effects of one-sided and two-sided presentations as inoculators against subsequent counterpropaganda. The two-sided presentations better inoculated the audience against counterpropaganda. Hovland (1953) summarized these two experiments as follows:

1. A two-sided presentation is more effective in the long run than a one-sided one a) when regardless of initial opinion, the audience is exposed to subsequent counterpropaganda, or b) when, regardless of subsequent exposure to counterpropaganda, the audience initially disagrees with the communicator's position.
2. A two-sided presentation is less effective than a one-sided one if the audience initially agrees with the communicator's position and is not exposed to later counterpropaganda.

Of these conclusions, the second (b) is of more importance because it has been the basis for a great many other communication studies. For clarity, however, it could better be stated: a two-sided presentation is more effective than a one-sided one if the audience initially disagrees with the communicator's position and is not exposed to subsequent counterpropaganda.

Another factor involved in two-sided presentation was investigated by Janis and Feierabend (1957). They manipulated the order of presenting the arguments favouring the communicator (pro) and those not favouring the communicator (con). To one audience, pro arguments were stated first, followed by the con arguments. To another, con arguments were presented first, followed by pro arguments. They found that the pro-first order of presentation was more effective than the con-first if the audience were initially unfamiliar with the con argument or, for some reason, failed to recall it.

Thistlethwaite and Kamenetzky (1955) tested the effect of refuting and elaborating the audience's possible counter-arguments. The arguments not favouring the communicator's position were considered as the audience's possible counter-arguments. The communications included the arguments favouring the communicator's position and the audience's possible counter-arguments. With one audience, these counter-arguments were explicitly refuted; with another, they were stated without refutation; with a third, the counter-arguments were elaborated; and with a fourth, not elaborated. It was found that refutation was more effective than non-refutation and elaboration was less effective than non-elaboration.

In these experiments, methodological procedures were similar. First, a scale to determine initial position was administered. Following this,

the experimental communication, in the form of a taped or printed programme was presented to the various groups. The communication received by a control group was innocuous (concerned a topic other than that involving the opinion to be changed). Then, the opinion scale was readministered to the groups to determine the opinion change, if any.

No systematic theory of persuasive communication governed the choice of variables in these experiments. Hovland (1953) operationally defined opinion as the verbal answers that an individual gives in response to a stimulus situation in which some general question that cannot be resolved by direct observation is raised. An individual has a consistent opinion on an issue if he gives the same answer whenever the pertinent question is raised, about which there may be differences of opinion. In a very general sense, opinions are interpretations, expectations and evaluations of situations or objects. An attitude, on the other hand, is an approach to, or avoidance of, a given object, person, group, or symbol, and may be unconscious, that is, non-verbalizable. There is a high degree of mutual interaction between attitudes and opinions since changes in approach and avoidance (attitude) may affect one's expectations (opinions) on a number of issues and vice versa: changes in opinions may modify one's general attitudes. Persuasive communication is a statement containing a suggested and reinforced response to a stimulus. An important assumption made by Hovland in opinion change research is that opinions are mostly implicit verbal responses, covertly expressed by the individual in inner speech. To investigate implicit responses, they first must be made overt and observable. To accomplish this, the questionnaire technique is used.

Opinions, like other learned habits, tend to persist unless the

individual undergoes some new learning experience. Exposing an individual to a persuasive communication which successfully induces him to accept a new opinion constitutes a learning experience in which a new verbal habit is acquired. In Hovland's words, "The individual now thinks of and prefers the new answer suggested by the communication to the old one held prior to exposure to the communication." To be persuasive, therefore, a communication must be framed in such a way that it poses a question and either implicitly or explicitly states a conclusion (suggests a specific response) which is approved by the communicator.

The results of the above experiments all point toward a greater effectiveness of two-sided versus one-sided arguments in changing opinions of those in the audience initially opposed to the communicator's position. However, Abelson (1959) recommends that one-sided arguments can be effectively used if the goal is only to accomplish immediate and temporary opinion change. Moreover, in Hovland's (1949) study, one-sided arguments were found to be more effective than two-sided arguments in changing the opinions of those in the audience who had not completed high school.

A critical examination of the evidence for the conclusions cited above shows several flaws. The support for the greater effectiveness of two-sided presentations comes mainly from Hovland's (1949) study. The other studies examined other variables associated with order effects in two-sided presentations, the effects of subsequent counter-propaganda, and the effects of refutation and elaboration of the audience's possible counter-arguments. But even Hovland's (1949) study leaves much to be desired. It was carried out during the war and was directed to the solution of a specific problem in military training schemes. Although

Hovland's study has been the model for most communication studies, it has limitations which provide grounds for questioning its conclusions. The first of these involves the derivation of the hypothesis from a purely practical problem of military training, with no underlying theoretical structure. This lack of theoretical structure limits the degree to which results can be generalized, and does not allow even an adequate statement of the problem in the light of present knowledge of the learning aspects of persuasive communication.

Another difficulty presented by this study was the inadequacy of its analytical and measuring techniques. The results are stated only in terms of percentages and no estimate of statistical significance is presented. In addition, the type of questionnaire used to measure opinion has not been defined, preventing others from validating it. Also, Hovland administered arguments to people, some of whom were already in agreement with the position being advocated by the communicator. (This has not been done in the present study, for it seems pointless to present persuasive arguments to those who agree with them.) Finally, Hovland did not investigate change of opinion in different directions on the same issue.

Purpose of Present Research

In the opinion of the writer, Hovland's results should be regarded as a hypothesis: two-sided arguments are more effective than one-sided arguments in changing opinions of educated people who initially disagree with the position being advocated by the communication.

Reinforcement theory provides a more specific theoretical structure for the learning aspect of persuasive communication. Operationally defined, a

change in opinion is the difference between the answers checked on an attitude scale before and after the persuasive communication has been presented. This change in opinion can be described in terms of the concepts of instrumental conditioning. The individual's initial opinion is a response elicited by a discriminative stimulus which is the topic under consideration. A closed system is defined by classifying all responses into two groups, pro and con. Statements by the communicator approving or disapproving certain model verbal responses constitute positive and negative reinforcers respectively.

The negative reinforcers are intended to decrease the number of responses constituting the individual's present opinion and the positive reinforcers to increase the number of responses constituting the new opinion being advocated by the communicator. Both one-sided and two-sided communications were composed of statements having these reinforcing properties. Assumed original responses of the audience were mentioned in two-sided arguments but were then negatively reinforced in the argument; this constituted their refutation. Specifically, the new response suggested and reinforced by the communicator competed with the old response constituting the initial opinion of the audience.

Learning (opinion change) taking place during persuasive communication is assumed to follow the proactive inhibition model: introducing competing responses after some previous learning had occurred (as measured by the first administration of the attitude scale), reinforcing them in the argument, and then testing for them in the succeeding administration of the attitude scale. This succeeding administration of the scale tested for the number of new responses, suggested by the argument that had been learned by the members of the audience.

In this study, a scale of the Guttman type, based on an equal appearing interval scale (Thurstone, 1959) was used (Edwards, 1957). A Guttman type scale possesses the property of unidimensionality which means that every subject with a higher score than another subject on the same scale must also rank just as high or higher than he on every single statement below in the set. Ordering the statements along a single continuum makes possible the ordering of a subject's scores along a single pro-con continuum with a measurable amount of confidence.

In the present study the problem of relative change of pro and con subjects was also investigated by presenting persuasive communication to groups of subjects who scored both high and low on the preliminary administration of the attitude scale. Subjects having a favourable attitude toward the issue studied were presented with communications advocating an unfavourable attitude; and subjects with an unfavourable attitude were presented with a communication advocating a favourable attitude.

The topic "movies as entertainment" was chosen because it was felt to be reasonably controversial. The source of statements used in the construction of the Guttman type scale was Thurstone's (1949) scale on attitudes toward the movies.

Thus, the hypotheses of this study were: 1) Two-sided arguments are more effective than one-sided arguments in changing opinion of those initially opposed to the position taken by the communicator toward movies as entertainment; 2) The amount of relative change from pro to con and from con to pro may be different on the issue "movies as entertainment".

The present study differed from previous studies in this area in that more refined measures of attitude were used, a more specific theoretical structure was provided, and a more sensitive test of statistical significance of results was applied.

CHAPTER II
METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

The Attitude Scale

The attitudes of subjects toward the movies were measured by a Guttman-type scale based on equal appearing interval scale. Thurstone's scale consisted of forty statements about the movies, with scale values ranging from 0.0 to 4.7. The total score for each subject was determined by adding the scale values of those statements checked positively. This scale is given in Appendix A.

To determine the adequacy of this scale, it was administered to fifty students of psychology in junior and senior years. The Cornell technique of scalogram analysis (Edwards, 1957) when applied to the results, revealed that, of the forty items, only nineteen discriminated between subjects. Of these nineteen, ten statements ordered on a unidimensional continuum were selected which dealt with the more restricted topic, movies as entertainment. The coefficient of reproducibility for these ten items according to the Cornell technique was .81. These statements formed the revised Guttman-type scale of attitude toward movies as entertainment and were used for the study.

The scale items were of the form: "A movie once in a while is a good thing for everybody." Or, "I'd never miss the movies if we didn't have them." Subjects were asked to check the one of the five response categories which best fitted their opinion about the statement. The response categories and their weights are: 1 Highly agree; 2 Agree; 3 Doubtful; 4 Disagree; and 5 Highly disagree. The

scale was scored by adding the weights checked by the subject in all ten statements, according to the Likert Summated Ratings technique (Edwards, 1957). A low total score indicated that the subjects favoured the movies as entertainment and a high total score indicated that the subjects were opposed to movies as entertainment.

Sample of Subjects

The Guttman-type scale was administered to 132 students of an introductory psychology class at Assumption University of Windsor. Using the scores obtained on this scale, the subjects were assigned to two groups, one for those who were in favour of movies as entertainment (pro) and one for those who were opposed (con). The lowest sixty and the highest sixty subjects were taken to form two groups, one pro and one con. Each of these groups was then randomly divided into two sub-groups of thirty each, using a table of random numbers; thus there were four experimental groups, two pro and two con. All other variables, including age, sex, intelligence etc., except the attitude variable, were randomized by this technique.

The Persuasive Communications

Four persuasive arguments were constructed on a learning theory model using the statements in the scale as discriminative stimuli. In the two-sided argument, positive or negative statements followed each discriminative stimulus, depending on the subject's initial position (original responses). Furthermore, negative reinforcement for the subject's original responses were provided

by refuting his original responses. In one-sided argument only statements opposite to the position held by the subjects were presented with approval by the communicator.

For this reason, two-sided arguments were approximately twice as long as one-sided arguments, which resulted in the confounding of the length of argument variable with that of the one-sided versus two-sidedness. Statements from the attitude scale provided the basis for the discussion, and were elaborated with statements from Schulberg's (1949) article about movies. The complete text of each of the four arguments can be found in Appendix B.

The arguments were then tape-recorded by a professional radio announcer to hold presentation factors constant. The recording was made in the radio studios at Assumption University on an Ampex 601 tape recorder. The pro one-sided argument was five minutes, thirty seconds in length; the pro two-sided argument was eleven minutes in length. The con one-sided argument was six minutes in length and the con two-sided argument was ten minutes, thirty seconds in length.

Relative persuasiveness of the pro and con arguments was not measured, although this may be desirable. Since pro arguments were administered only to an initially con audience and con arguments were administered only to an initially pro audience, the effect of these two variables (argument and original position) is confounded in the results.

Experimental Treatment

To determine initial opinions and to divide the groups, the attitude

scale was administered as described above. One month later, each group heard the persuasive arguments and immediately following, completed the attitude scale again. Thus subjects were their own controls, all groups having been presented with arguments, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Administration of Arguments

Group	Initial Position	Argument
I	Pro	Con: One-sided
II	Pro	Con: Two-sided
III	Con	Pro: One-sided
IV	Con	Pro: Two-sided

Prior to the administration of the arguments, each group was given the same instructions. They were told that they were about to hear a short talk on the movies as entertainment and were asked to give it their attention. Following the arguments, they were asked to complete the attitude scale as quickly as possible. Nine one-hour test sessions, during which all four groups received their assigned arguments, were required. Eight subjects failed to appear for any test sessions and were dropped from the experiment, leaving 28 subjects in each group.

Experimental Design

To test the significance of the effects of the experimental treatment, an analysis of variance design, Type III (Lindquist, 1953), was applied to the data.

This design controls the individual differences in evaluating the main effects of the before and after measures, the one-sided and two-sided arguments, and pro and con initial opinion.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

The distribution of pre-treatment attitude scores, with the cut-off points for pro and con movies-as-entertainment groups, is given in Fig. 1.

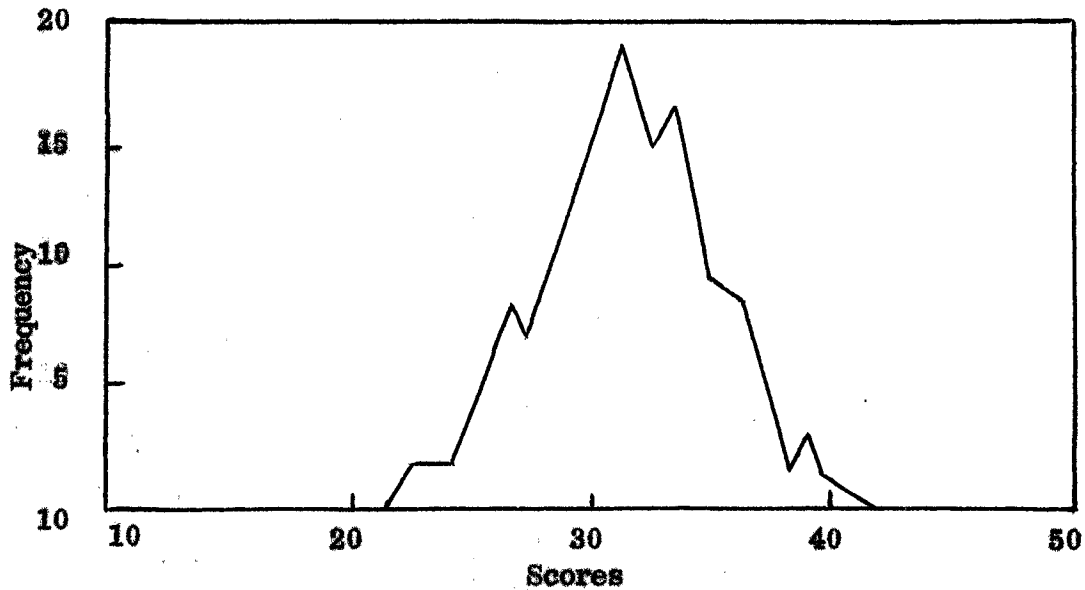


Fig. 1. Distribution of pre-treatment attitude scores in experimental sample and the cut-off points for Pro and Con experimental groups.

Scores in the pro group ranged from 22 to 30, and in the con group ranged from 31 to 42. The means and differences between means for all groups before and after treatment and under the four treatment conditions are shown in Table 2.

The difference between the means of the before and the after scores for pro subjects receiving the one-sided argument was .61; for pro subjects receiving the two-sided argument it was 1.64. For con subjects receiving one-sided

arguments the difference between the means of the before and after scores was 3.32 and for con subjects receiving two-sided arguments it was 4.60. In every case except that of the pro group receiving the one-sided argument, the means shifted in the expected direction. These changes are illustrated in Fig. 2.

Table 2

Results in Terms of Means and Mean Differences

Groups and Arguments	Before Mean	After Mean	Difference between before and after means	Combined before and after means
Pro (one-sided)	26.93	26.32	.61	26.64
Pro (two-sided)	28.07	29.71	-1.64	28.89
Con (one-sided)	33.96	30.64	3.32*	32.30
Con (two-sided)	33.39	28.79	4.60*	31.09

Combined Pro Means	27.50	28.01	-.51	27.73
Combined Con Means	33.68	29.71	3.97*	31.70
Difference between Pro and Con Means	6.18*	1.70		3.97*

Combined One-sided Means	30.44	28.48	1.96	29.97
Combined Two-sided Means	30.73	29.33	1.40	29.99
Difference between Combined One- and Two-sided Means	.29	.85		.02

* Significant at the $p = .01$ level.				

From Fig. 2 it can be seen that the two-sided argument shifted the pro subjects slightly in the expected direction, while the one-sided argument had negligible effect. For con subjects, a somewhat greater shift in opinion occurred, with the two-sided argument again being slightly more effective than the one-sided argument.

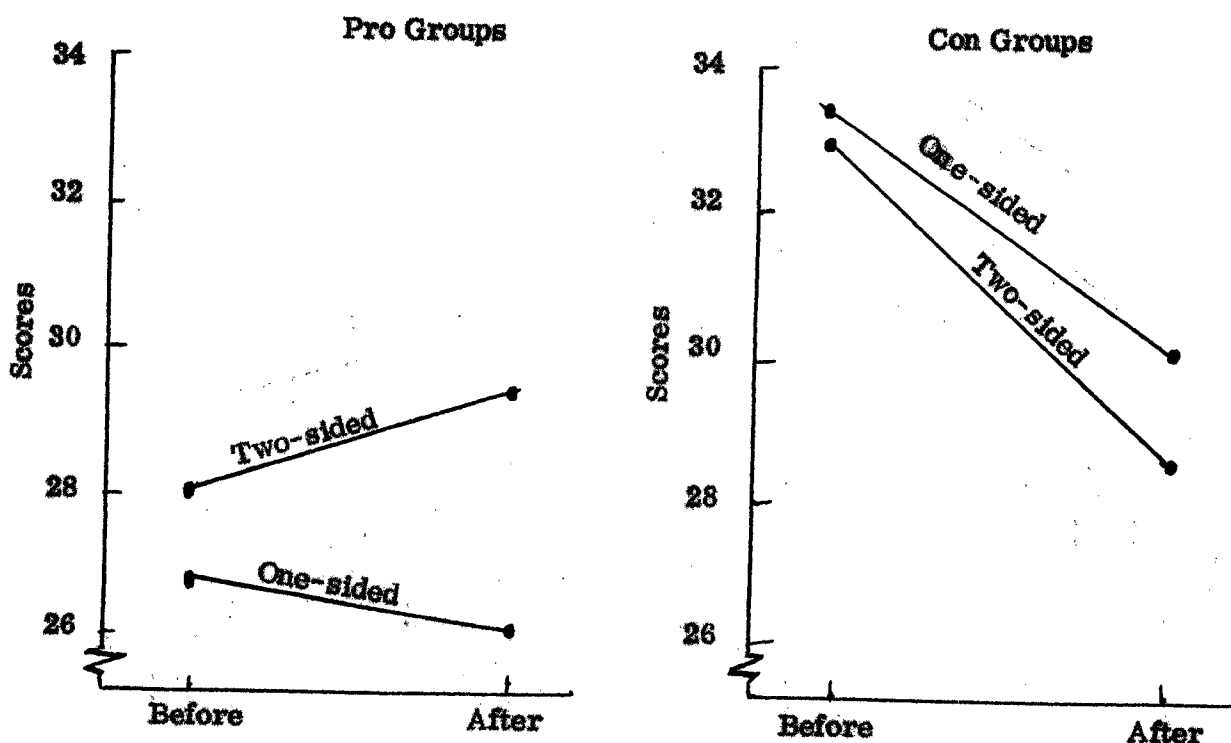


Fig. 2 Means of before and after scores for pro and con groups receiving one-sided and two-sided arguments.

A distinct difference in the behavior of the two pro groups and the two con groups can be noted. To test the significance of these differences between means, an analysis of variance was undertaken. The results of this analysis is detailed in Table 3.

The analysis of variance showed that there was no significant difference between one-sided and two-sided arguments for combined pro and con subject groups and combined before and after scores (SS_T). Pro subjects differed significantly from con subjects for combined one-sided and two-sided arguments and for combined one-sided and two-sided arguments and for combined before and after scores (SS_p). There was a significant difference between before and after scores for all subject groups regardless of initial opinion (pro or con) and structure of arguments (one-sided or two-sided) (SS_c). The differential effect of one-sided

Table 3

Analysis of Variance

SS	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
SS _{bs}	Between Subjects	2373.89	111		
SS _r	Effect of one-sided vs. two-sided arguments	15.54	1	15.54	1.28
SS _b	Overall difference between pro and con group opinions	868.22	1	868.22	70.82*
SS _{rb}	Interaction: Differential effect of arguments by initial opinion (pro and con) scores	169.75	1	169.75	13.84*
SS _{e(b)}	Error	1320.38	108	12.26	
<hr/>					
SS _{ws}	Within Subjects	1975.50	112	17.64	
SS _c	Overall effect of treatments (difference between before and after scores)	166.29	1	166.29	19.70*
SS _{rc}	Interaction: Differential effect of one-sided and two-sided arguments by treatments (before and after scores)	3.26	1	3.26	0.39
SS _{bc}	Interaction: Overall effect of treatments (difference between before and after scores) by initial opinion	281.26	1	281.26	33.32*
SS _{rbc}	Interaction: Differential effect of arguments by initial opinion by treatments	612.79	1	612.79	71.42*
SS _{e(w)}	Error	911.90	108	8.44	
<hr/>					
SS	Total	4349.39	223		
<hr/>					
* Significant at the p = .05 level					

and two-sided arguments on the pro group is different from that on the con group (when before and after scores are averaged) (SS_{rb}). There was no significant interaction between one-sidedness and two-sidedness of arguments and treatment when averaged over pro and con scores (SS_{rc}). Irrespective of the structure of the arguments, the treatment (measured by the difference between before and after scores) had a different effect on pro and con groups (SS_{bc}). The differential effect of arguments was found to be significantly dependent in part on whether the arguments were one-sided or two-sided, and in part by initial opinion (SS_{rbc}). The high significance on the three-way interaction (SS_{rbc}) among structure of arguments, treatments (before and after scores), and initial opinion, indicates that one-sided and two-sided arguments had different effects, but not different enough to be statistically significant as a main effect. Inspection of Fig. 2 confirms this result. The high significance of those parts of the analysis of variance involving the initial opinion factor (SS_b , SS_{rb} , SS_{bc} , and SS_{rbc}) may be in part due to the fact that the scores changed in opposite directions, i. e., pro people moving to a con position would obtain a higher score, and con people moving to a pro position would score lower on the attitude scale.

These results do not confirm the hypothesis that two-sided arguments are more effective than one-sided arguments in changing the opinion of subjects initially opposed to the position taken by the communicator. This conclusion is tempered, however, by the confounding of the effect of the length of the arguments with their one-sidedness and two-sidedness. Further, the effect of both one-sided and two-sided arguments are significantly dependent on the direction of the intended change: subjects who are initially in favour of a general topic may behave quite differently than those who are initially opposed to that topic when subjected to communications

designed to change their opinions. This conclusion is tempered by the confounding of the effect of the arguments with the initial opinion of the subjects.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

The results obtained from this experiment do not support the hypothesis that two-sided arguments are more effective than one-sided arguments in changing opinions of subjects initially opposed to the position taken by the communicator. Pro subjects receiving con arguments and con subjects receiving pro arguments behaved quite differently regardless of the structure of the arguments. To explain this difference, it is necessary to consider whether the pro arguments were less persuasive than the con arguments, or whether the pro subjects have a more firmly entrenched attitude than the con subjects.

Assuming that the scale adequately discriminates between pro and con subjects (the difference between pro and con subjects was statistically significant), it is necessary to consider the arguments as a contributor to the outcome of this research. The variations subject groups under the four experimental treatments fall into two broad categories: those between one-sided and two-sided arguments, and those between pro and con arguments. By constructing the arguments in accordance with instrumental conditioning, the problem of equality between pro and con statements was reduced, but not altogether eliminated. It could be that the reinforcing statements acted differently. This is a problem for further research.

The lack of difference in effect between one-sided and two-sided arguments can be explained by closeness to the asymptote of learning of any responses connected with the movies. The confounding of length with the one-sidedness and two-sidedness of the arguments does not appear to have affected the results.

Despite the fact that two-sided arguments presented twice as many negative reinforcements of the subjects' position, no significant difference was found in learning of the new opinion presented by the communication.

If there is, on the other hand, variation in the behavior of pro and con subjects, it would appear that a favourable attitude toward the movies is more firmly entrenched than an unfavourable attitude. In terms of learning theory, the subjects favourable to movies as entertainment have received more reinforcement and have learned the favourable response pattern more thoroughly than subjects unfavourable to the movies.

There are many implications in this study for further research, the most important of which concerns the measurement of the attitude or opinion in question. More research into the scaling of statements to tap both latent and manifest attitude dimensions is required.

Intimately related to the problem of persuasion is the structure of the communication itself. The use of learning theory to describe the communication has been shown to be a valuable approach in providing a mold for structuring the argument. Moreover, the filling of that mold with appropriate discriminative and reinforcing stimuli remains for the present an art. It will become less an art as more knowledge is gained about the personality of those we are trying to persuade.

The problem of differentiating pro and con arguments, and measuring relative strength of arguments must be solved before a clear-cut distinction can be expected on questions of the effect of various orders and arrangements of the content of communications.

From a practical point of view, the most important contribution of this study is the appearance of the difference in the response of the pro and con groups. More research is needed to explain this result.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The effectiveness of one-sided and two-sided arguments in changing the opinion of the audience toward movies as entertainment was tested experimentally. Two groups of subjects favourable to the movies as entertainment and two groups unfavourable to the movies as entertainment, in groups of 4, were drawn from a psychology class at Assumption University of Windsor, and were presented with tape-recorded communications designed to change their attitudes. Although a replication, in part, of a similar study originally performed by Hovland (1949), the present study provided a particular theoretical orientation (learning theory), used more refined techniques of measurement (a Guttman type attitude scale) and a more sensitive statistical analysis (analysis of variance), than was used in Hovland's original study.

Opinion was defined as a verbal response which may be covertly expressed in inner speech or overtly expressed by the subject when a suitable discriminative stimulus is presented. Following the principles of operant conditioning, these responses were negatively reinforced, either explicitly in the case of two-sided arguments, or by implication in the case of one-sided arguments. (In one-sided arguments, no mention was made of the subject's original opinion.) Accordingly, four arguments were used, a con one-sided argument was presented to one pro group, a con two-sided argument as presented to the other pro group,

a pro one-sided argument was presented to one con group and a pro two-sided argument was presented to the other con group.

The results showed that 1) only three of the four communications was successful in changing attitudes toward the movies; 2) two-sided presentations were not more effective than one-sided arguments in changing opinion of subjects initially opposed to the position taken by the communicator (length and one-sidedness and two-sidedness of the arguments were confounded); 3) there was a significant difference in behavior between subjects who were initially favourable to the movies as entertainment and those who were initially unfavourable toward the movies, indicating that either the pro position was more firmly entrenched than the con position, or that the con arguments were weaker than pro arguments.

Attitude Scales

CONFIDENTIAL

THIS IS A PSYCHOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF ATTITUDES

IT IS YOUR OWN PERSONAL ATTITUDE we want you to express in this questionnaire. Answer it as personally and directly as possible. FOLLOW YOUR FIRST IMPULSE to answer and CHECK QUICKLY the most appropriate alternative. ALL QUESTIONS SHOULD BE ANSWERED. If you find it difficult at any point to choose between given alternatives, choose the one most similar to YOUR attitude. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

PART A. 1 Name _____ 2. Group 1 2 3 4

PART B.

1. I am tired of the movies, I have seen too many poor ones.

Highly agree	Agree	Doubtful	Disagree	Absolutely disagree
1	2	3	4	5
2. Movies are all right, but a few of them give the rest a bad name.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---
3. Movies are just a harmless pastime.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---
4. The movies are good clean entertainment.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---
5. I'd never miss the movies if we didn't have them.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---
6. Sometimes I feel that the movies are desirable and sometimes I doubt it.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---
7. A movie is the best entertainment that can be obtained cheaply.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---
8. A movie once in a while is a good thing for everybody.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---
9. I like the movies as they are because I go to be entertained, not educated.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---
10. I like to see other people enjoy movies whether I enjoy them or not.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

SCORE B

SCORE D

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ATTITUDE TOWARD MOVIES

This is a study of attitudes toward the movies. On the following pages you will find a number of statements expressing different attitudes toward the movies.

✓ Put a check mark if you agree with the statement.

× Put a cross if you disagree with the statement.

If you simply cannot decide about a statement you may mark it with a question mark.

This is not an examination. There are no right or wrong answers to these statements. This is simply a study of people's attitudes toward the movies. Please indicate your own attitude by a check mark when you agree and by a cross when you disagree.

LIST OF OPINIONS IN THE SCALE

1. (1.5) The movies occupy time that should be spent in more wholesome recreation.
2. (1.3) I am tired of the movies; I have seen too many poor ones.
3. (4.5) The movies are the best civilizing device ever developed.
4. (0.2) Movies are the most important cause of crime.
5. (2.7) Movies are all right but a few of them give the rest a bad name.
6. (2.6) I like to see movies once in a while but they do disappoint you sometimes.
7. (2.9) I think the movies are fairly interesting.
8. (2.7) Movies are just a harmless pastime.
9. (1.7) The movies to me are just a way to kill time.
10. (4.0) The influence of the movies is decidedly for good.
11. (3.9) The movies are good, clean entertainment.
12. (3.9) Movies increase one's appreciation of beauty.
13. (1.7) I'd never miss the movies if we didn't have them.
14. (2.4) Sometimes I feel that the movies are desirable and sometimes I doubt it.
15. (0.0) It is a sin to go to the movies.
16. (4.3) There would be very little progress without the movies.
17. (4.3) The movies are the most vital form of art today.
18. (3.6) A movie is the best entertainment that can be obtained cheaply.
19. (3.4) A movie once in a while is a good thing for everybody.
20. (3.4) The movies are one of the few things I can enjoy by myself.
21. (1.3) Going to the movies is a foolish way to spend your money.
22. (1.1) Moving pictures bore me.
23. (0.6) As they now exist movies are wholly bad for children.
24. (0.6) Such a pernicious influence as the movies is bound to weaken the moral fiber of those who attend.
25. (0.3) As a protest against movies we should pledge ourselves never to attend them.
26. (0.1) The movies are the most important single influence for evil.
27. (4.7) The movies are the most powerful influence for good in American life.
28. (2.3) I would go to the movies more often if I were sure of finding something good.
29. (4.1) If I had my choice of anything I wanted to do, I would go to the movies.
30. (2.2) The pleasure people get from the movies just about balances the harm they do.
31. (2.0) I don't find much that is educational in the current films.
32. (1.9) The information that you obtain from the movies is of little value.
33. (1.0) Movies are a bad habit.
34. (3.3) I like the movies as they are because I go to be entertained, not educated.
35. (3.1) On the whole the movies are pretty decent.
36. (0.8) The movies are undermining respect for authority.
37. (2.7) I like to see other people enjoy the movies whether I enjoy them myself or not.
38. (0.3) The movies are to blame for the prevalence of sex offenses.
39. (4.4) The movie is one of the great educational institutions for common people.
40. (0.8) Young people are learning to smoke, drink, and get from the movies.

APPENDIX B

PERSUASIVE ARGUMENTS

Con: Two-sided Argument

Of all of the forms of mass entertainment, movies have been the subject of the most extravagant claims. Many of these claims result from a lack of true appreciation of the place of movies in our society. Let us examine some of these claims and try to see how many of them are really appropriate.

One claim made by the movie makers themselves is that no finer entertainment is available. They cannot make movies too intellectual or too profound or this entertainment function of movies would vanish. People go to the movies only to be entertained, not educated. This claim is wholly invalid. The American film makers have taken an instrument as sensitive, as delicately balanced, as capable of indescribable beauty as the finest Steinway piano; they have set themselves in front of the largest audience in the history of the world -- and proceeded to play over and over again the same tune, chopsticks. Movies today are tasteless and unimaginative, presenting for the most part a superficial picture of reality to their audience. Another claim made by the movie makers is that they present life largely as the members of the audience wish to see it presented. If the real problems of real people were presented on the screen, movies would lose their entertainment value. This assertion is another example of the fallacious reasoning used by those who see themselves as protectors of an over-restricted art. Movies are for the most part, shallow, false and clichécluttered; inspired

by the same idiot muse that enables countless TV viewers to submit uncomplainingly to the brain-crushing banalities of the soap opera and the routine terror of the "adult" western. Sex, not as defined by Hemingway, but as dished up by Kathleen Winsor. Crime, not as penetrated by Dostoevski, but as batted out by Erle Stanley Gardner. Love, not as dignified by Tolstoy, but as standardized, streamlined and sweetened to taste (everybody's) in our TV dramas, love magazines and movies.

In the same vein, many claim that the plots and characters of movies are quite all right, and are forced to communicate only terms of stereotypes because the film is mass entertainment, and must reach a common denominator. Hollywood has shown itself to be incapable of lifting itself above the lowest common denominator of public taste. We are forced to accept the grooved and shel-lacked into standard brand star and the cycle. We have been treated to western outlaw cycles, rural romance cycles, ancient spectacle cycles, Civil War cycles, gangster cycles, and most recently, psychiatric cycles through which amnesia spreads like the common cold.

More and more Hollywood technique is being lavished on less and less content until today, the average Hollywood film comes off the assembly line like a well-made can: canned love, canned adventure, canned psychiatry, canned history, canned spiritual values, hermetically sealed, untouched by human heart or even human hand.

Another extreme campaign being waged by the blind supporters of movies is that they are basically just a harmless pastime for the moviegoer. The effect on people's minds of the continuing parade of gruesome behavior that

constitutes the general state of movies today, can never be assessed. This claim goes further, stating that the presentation of whatever immorality is present in the film is fully justified as an artistic expression of the moral climate of our time. The producer of an immoral film does not, however, have any influence over the interpretation and impact of the film once it leaves his studio. He states that this is justifiable because the movies are mass entertainment. Why should society tolerate the perversion of one person's valid moral idea by such a film? For the most part the producer says this is not his responsibility but that of society. In many films this type of behavior is presented purely as a box office attraction. Called sensationalism, this activity in addition to arousing non-discriminating minds, tends to pervert the film as an art form. Research has shown that a particularly powerful presentation can do much to undermine the teaching of parents and other responsible agents in society. Maintaining social order in a democracy is a difficult enough problem as it is, without having it complicated by sensationalistic and money-hungry movie executives. Testimony in support of this statement can be found in the large number of movie actors and actresses returning to the legitimate stage.

Even after criticism such as this, those who see the movies as the greatest social institution for entertainment in our time cite the superficiality of the movies as evidence for the lack of effect that they have on general morality. This is a remarkably weak claim. There is no justification for presenting superficial movies. They then claim that the evil is only in the minds of those who criticize it. If this is true, some of the most educated and socially responsible people in the twentieth century are not discerning enough to recognize violence and murder

and illegitimate sex as potentially dangerous if exploited for secondary ends. Movies are definitely regarded by these people as contributing to the general moral decline in modern society. There are cases on record to show that children and adults have committed antisocial acts after seeing a movie in which these were carefully outlined. The effect on children of the type of sensationalistic material we have been discussing is immeasurable. It is certain that a great deal of the brutality presented to them is outside their normal experience, and vivid presentations must have some effect. The fact that all ends well is cited as a defence for including this material. In many cases, however, the end is not fully appreciated because of what has gone before. To assert that movies are good, clean entertainment is too ridiculous for words.

Another claim advanced by some moviemakers is that it would be impossible to make movies educational. They claim that, in a pluralistic society there is so much disagreement over the nature of truth that it would be naive to think that movies could be made educational. Here is another illustration of the derogation of responsibility to society that so clearly marks mass media in contemporary society. To assert that truth is so varied that its communication is impossible in movies is to display an extreme lack of comprehension of the nature of truth. If this claim was true, science would be impossible, as would most other activities requiring the cooperation of people working together. It shows the implicit weakness in contemporary film art, its inability to rise above petty provincialism and popular stereotypes to portray human life in all its dimensions, without resorting to the perverted. The claimants then further state that this end is possible only in totalitarian society where ideas can be controlled.

The most potent control of ideas is to deny them. These people are committing the sin of omission in failing to recognize the dimensions of art that can truly be educational. A pluralistic democracy derives its dynamism from the friction of ideas, not the stagnation of them in oversimplified old wives' tales.

Another claim made for the movies is that they would be missed if we did not have them. Here again, they fail to recognize the pathetic lack of quality in most films. They claim that the universality of the movies extends their impact to everyone whether he attends them or not. But this universality is made possible by sacrificing substance. The sacrifice of substance leads to mediocrity. It is highly unlikely that the slums would be missed. In many ways the movies are in the same condition. The crowning claim of this particular argument is found in their justification of mediocrity. This justification seeks to locate mediocrity in the technical limitations of the medium. They say all art is likewise limited by the techniques possible in the medium. It is unbelievable that Tarzan and Michaelangelo, or Elvis Presley and Beethoven could be viewed as being limited in their creative achievements by the medium. Even within the film world itself, many great films have been produced which would seem to indicate that the medium is not as much of a limitation as these critics would have us believe.

As entertainment, the great majority of films are falling so short of a desirable end in communication that the box office receipts are falling once more. They blame it on Television. The true blame lies within their own house. Even to go to the movies once in a while is a great risk, despite claims to the contrary. One assumes the great risk of throwing money away on such utter

shallowness, that no true entertainment results. It would be better to stay home with a good book.

Con: Single-sided Argument

Of all of the forms of mass entertainment, movies have been the subject of most controversy. Much of this controversy arises in consideration of the role of movies in modern society. Since the turn of the century, when the first movies were made available to the public, the boundaries of this more cowardly than brave new world have been thoroughly mapped. But even after fifty years, this great new continent of the arts has remained as unexplored as central Greenland. Movies in the United States were the gutter children growing up without guidance or traditions in an atmosphere of opportunistic commercialization of the cheap thrill. Since then the American movie-makers have been committing sins of tastelessness, unimaginativeness and artistic amorality. These offenders have taken an instrument as sensitive, as delicately balanced, and as capable of indescribable beauty and subtle emotion as the finest Steinway; they have set themselves in front of the keyboard before the largest audience in the history of the world and proceeded to play chopsticks. Hollywood has shown itself to be incapable of lifting itself above the lowest common denominator of public taste. The movies today are false, shallow, and cliché-cluttered, and inspired by the same idiot muse that enables countless persons to submit uncomplainingly to the brain-crushing banalities of the disc-jockeys and the routine terrors of the TV western. Sex, not as defined by Hemingway but as dished up by Kathleen Winsor. Crime, not as penetrated by Dostoevski, but as batted out

by Erle Stanley Gardner. Love, not as dignified by Tolstoi, but as standardized, streamlined, and sweetened to taste (everybody's) in our TV dramas, love magazines and movies. From the nickelodian days of fifty years ago, American films seemed to have suffered a surfeit of public approval. The motive was profit; the emphasis in the formative years was speed in production and quick turnover. Since the American people apparently possessed a bottomless and indiscriminate capacity for pie-in-the-face comedies, action pictures, naive pornography and melodrama, these are what they got, and incidentally are still getting. Men and women of true artistic ability, when they take to the screen as actors and actresses, have had to freeze or suspend their gifts in order to fit in to the fixed roles they are playing in the minds, hearts or emotionally immature libidos of the movie-fans (short for fanatics). Any individuality that they once possessed has been grooved and shellacked into standard brands. The cycle is another example of such banality. We have been treated to western outlaw cycles, rural romance cycles, femme fatale cycles, Civil War cycles, flapper cycles, gangster cycles, wicked heroine cycles, and most recently, psychiatric cycles through which amnesia has spread like a common cold. It is not improbable that some knowledge of mental illness would help writers and directors in motivating and adding new facets to their characters and plots. But, like a Midas wand which turns everything it touches into a single consistency, Hollywood points its golden finger at psychiatry and lo, the psychiatrist becomes a beautiful damsel who falls in love at first sight with her tall handsome patient whose one convenient dream she spells out like a Freudian crossword puzzle. Bombarded by such a barrage of psychopathology plots, the public might be expected to at least have acquired a more enlightened

attitude toward this vital branch of medicine. But, about all moviegolers have learned from the current cycle is that the murderer will most likely turn out to be the head psychiatrist.

Since the surface writing, the direction, the photography, the editing, the visual tricks and all of the other phases of this complex art have been steadily improving, while content has lagged, it seems more and more technique is being lavished on less and less, until today the average Hollywood film comes off the assembly line like a well-made can: canned love, canned adventure, canned psychiatry, canned history, canned spiritual values, hermetically sealed, untouched by human hand or human heart.

One of the more serious criticisms that can be launched against the movies is the almost schizophrenic fantasy indulged in by most of the members of the audience. People going to the movies are beginning to have more and more, and longer and longer reveries, and retreating via the movies from every difficult situation into a prettier world of celluloid fantasy, and so heading on the road toward schizoid personality where fantasy can no longer be distinguished from real existence. No other medium has this power to lift people completely out of themselves into a billowy world of romance. Movies are being used as a cone of ether to wipe out our consciousness and drug us into stupid oblivion. None of them really stimulate us into new vitality, broaden our knowledge or deepen our understanding. One noted critic has stated that the so-called original stories are fed into studio thrashing machines, and come out polished from worn-out types in worn-out situations to a bright deceptive shine like old shoes in the accepted

trickery of all second-class merchants. As entertainment, they stand in gross degradation of their function. They do not educate within the context of their ability to do so, they undermine what social values are left in the murky depths of nuclear civilization and even as entertainment they fall far short of that which they are capable of, and that which a member of modern society is entitled to.

Pro: Two-sided Argument

Of all of the forms of mass entertainment, movies have been the subject of the most analysis and criticism. Too often, much of this criticism results from a lack of true appreciation of the place of movie entertainment in our society. Let us examine some of these criticisms and attempt to see how many of them are really appropriate.

One of the most frequent criticisms of the movies is that they are tasteless and unimaginative, presenting for the most part a superficial picture of reality to their audience. The critics who assert this, elaborate by stating that the American film makers have taken an instrument as sensitive, as delicately balanced, as capable of indescribable beauty and subtle emotion as the finest Steinway piano; they have set themselves in front of the largest audience in the history of the world -- and have proceeded to play chopsticks. This criticism is not valid. People go to the movies to be entertained. If movies were made too intellectual or too profound, they would lose their value as entertainment. For mass entertainment for a very large audience, too much depth would be undesirable.

The critics further state that movies do not accurately portray life. They say that movies are false, shallow and cliché-cluttered and are inspired by

the same idiot muse that enables countless TV viewers to submit uncomplainingly to the brain-crushing banalities of the soap operas and the routine terrors. Sex, not as defined by Hemingway but as dished up by Kathleen Winsor; crime, not as penetrated by Dostoevski, but as batted out by Earle Stanley Gardner. Love, not as dignified by Tolstoy, but as standardized, streamlined, and sweetened to taste (everybody's) in our TV dramas, love magazines and movies. Now this type of criticism is far beyond the bounds of logicity. But, first, let us assume that it is true. Any student of the mass arts in contemporary society would draw a distinction between what is generally referred to as popular culture and high culture. Popular culture is defined as being manufactured for mass consumption by technicians, is not an expression of the individual artist nor of the common people, and takes its roots in the older folk culture of our society. The function of the folk culture and its contemporary associate, popular culture, has always been entertainment. The protectors of high culture, typically represented by the subscribers to and protectors of fine art, have always found the level of popular taste lacking in depth according to their standards. The critics who state that movies are lacking in depth are judging them by a standard which, in essence, is not applicable to them. The developed taste of popular culture mirrored in the movies is not that of a Tolstoy or a Hemingway, and it seems positively absurd to assert that this is even desirable. To apply the refined standard of judgment required by the fine arts to the movies and the other popular arts is impossible in society as it now stands. It hardly seems possible that people could be entertained by seeing their own problems presented on the screen.

We have seen, by assuming that the statement that movies are lacking

in depth is true, that the criticism based on such a point results from a wrong standard of judgment being applied. But the "lacking in depth" criticism can be shown not to be universally true in itself. The film-makers in both Europe and American have been making pictures of true "high culture" standards. War and Peace, written by Tolstoy, has been made into a movie. For Whom the Bell Tolls, by Hemingway, has been made into a movie. Many of the great works of recent years, such as the plays of Tennessee Williams have been made into movies. If this does not represent high culture, albeit in a popular form, it could turn out that high culture and its standards are basically indefinable themselves.

The plots and characters of movies are also attacked and are represented according to the critics in terms of the cycle. We have had western outlaw cycles, rural romance cycles, femme fatale cycles, ancient spectacle cycles, Civil War cycles, gangster cycles, wicked heroine cycles and psychiatric stories through which amnesia has spread like the common cold. The movies, according to these critics, communicate only in terms of stereotypes, the so-called standard character, the product rolling off the Hollywood assembly line like a well made can: canned love, canned adventure, canned psychiatry, canned history, canned spiritual values, hermetically sealed, untouched by human hand or human heart. This criticism can be refuted on the grounds that entertainment depends on its ability to communicate, and if that communication is to a mass audience, communication in terms of stereotypes is absolutely essential. It is highly unlikely that anyone in the audience of a movie, including the greatest detractors of movies, would find the presentation of personalities with all of the complexities and kaleidoscopic motivation of real life, or plots that recreated human life in its infinity of

dimensions, particularly entertaining. Stereotyping and formula plots are the only road to mass entertainment. To deny them is to deny the foundation of movie entertainment.

Other critics of the movies decry their content as contributing to a significant number of the ills of modern society. Everything from juvenile delinquency to marital strife is supposed to be so common, that the movies are harming society. That the movies do present social problems on the screen is undeniable, but to assert that such presentation encourages the occurrence and spread of such problems is sheer absurdity. The critics also state that audiences are subjected to a continuing parade of immorality and violence. Scantily dressed females, bedroom scenes, brutal beatings and murder are looked upon as contributing to the general decline of morality in our time. To attribute such power to even the more potent forms of mass media such as radio and television is naive. The general consensus of opinion among researchers in the area of mass communication effects is that, rather than accomplishing significant changes in our outlook, either for good or bad, mass media, movies included, tend to preserve the status quo. While this might indicate that the morality of our times is in a sorry state, it is absurd to look on movies as a significant contributor to it. Movies may reflect our society, but their effect is negligible. In comparison to what is available from other sources, movies on the whole are good clean entertainment.

Movie producers have also been criticized because their films are not educational. As an example, the psychiatric cycle stands as the most recent movie deficiency. The critics state that it is not improbable that some knowledge

of mental illness, its complex causes and various therapies, would be of assistance to writers and directors in motivating and adding new facets to their characters and plots. But, like a Midas wand which turns everything it touches into a single consistency, Hollywood points its golden finger at psychiatry and lo, the psychiatrist becomes a beautiful young damsel who falls in love at first sight with her tall, handsome patient whose one convenient dream she spells out like a Freudian crossword puzzle. Bombarded by a barrage of psychopathology plots, the public might be expected, at least to have acquired an enlightened attitude to this vital branch of medicine. But about all moviegoers have learned so far is that the murderer will most likely turn out to be the head psychiatrist. Just how movies as entertainment could be expected to provide such an attitude of enlightenment is not described. To educate, it is necessary to change, replacing accepted facts with new insights. If in the moral question, the movies tend to maintain the status quo, then the same must be true for the movies as instruments of education. The other aspect of this criticism hinges around the definition of the function of movies. We have seen that society has defined this function as being one of entertainment, not of education. Once again the standards of high culture are misapplied to popular culture leading to a false conclusion. If the social definition of movies is wrong, it is necessary to change society, not the movies.

Another aspect of the problem of education is found in the problem of what should be regarded as educational. It would seem that the area which the critics regard as the most relevant for the movies is the area of social attitudes. It seems, however, that the differences in belief and practice in society would preclude any such use of the movies.

Other critics have stated that the cost of movies is too high in comparison with other forms of entertainment. It may appear, however, that there are other forms of entertainment which fit this category. Television is cheaper, say the critics. This is not so: compare the cost of television with the cost of movie entertainment. At one dollar per show, one could go to the movies twice a week for a year for the initial cost of a TV set. If maintenance costs are figured in, this period could be lengthened. Further, more choice is available to the moviegoer than to the TV viewer or radio listener. For a great many people, an evening out is more satisfying than home entertainment. If, then, you are to go out, movies still stand as the cheapest form of entertainment, when compared with sporting events, night clubs, stage plays, Broadway musicals, symphony concerts and operas. None can compare with the movies when cost is considered. Movies give the best entertainment value.

Some people have stated that they would not miss the movies if we did not have them. They fail to realize the contribution of film art to modern society. The very universality of movies has an impact on every individual, whether he attends them or not. They feel that unless they attend them, movies have relatively little effect on their lives. It is quite obvious that every individual is a member of society. Because of this membership, every important feature of that society has some effect on the individual member whether he realizes it or not. Movies, and indeed all art forms, have an impact on every individual and would be missed if they were not available.

As entertainment, a movie once in a while is a good thing for everyone. However, this statement has also been attacked, in much the same vein as some of

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the critics cited previously in our discussion. No one would deny that a periodic visit to an art gallery, symphony concert, stage play or ballet is a good thing. In so far as movies are art, attendance at them will be a satisfying experience.

Pro: One-sided Argument

Movies as entertainment are the subject today of a great deal of controversy. Most of this controversy arises from a lack of adequate study of the role of this art form in modern society. For North Americans, movies have proven to be the most favoured of all of the mass entertainment media. For most of society, from the lowest to the highest social classes, the movies are wonderfully real and exhilarating. Movies have developed as an art form with a highly developed, spectacular technique, as sensitive, as delicately balanced and as capable of indescribable beauty and subtle emotion as the finest Steinway. The motion picture is the most compelling and the most satisfying of all of the art forms, synthesizing as it does, composition, pantomime, spoken drama, photography, rhythmic motion, and music. In the past few years, the movies have been gradually recovering the ground initially lost to television. The power of film entertainment is driven home even more strongly when it is recognized that television program schedules would have been noticeably empty without movies. Recently, Hollywood and the film makers of Europe have been producing many films which present genuinely dramatic problems of our critical and momentous times.

The movies are perhaps the best relaxation from a busy world that can be obtained at a reasonable cost. No other medium has the power to lift

people completely out of themselves and show things completely as they are -- to look into your home or into the home of your neighbour or some distant community you would never have the chance to see. Only the motion picture camera can look so closely into the face of a man that it can record the unsaid things that come into his eyes -- then swing away over the buildings, over the city, to place him in long-shot perspective as one of the city's millions. Movies can be used as adrenalin to stimulate us to new vitality, broaden our knowledge, deepen our understanding. There is no other medium which can encompass sheer variety in plots and characters quite like the movies. From western outlaws through rural romance, from the Civil War in the United States to the siege of Carthage by the Romans, from the gangster-ridden era of the thirties in Chicago to the intrigues and evils of an early mental hospital, all of these are available to the makers of the movies and have, indeed, thrilled millions across the world.

The movies do not, however, simply because they are defined by society as entertaining in purpose, attempt to educate or to make demands that are too intellectual or too profound. As a contributing agent to contemporary society, the movies stand unsurpassed, for studies have shown that their impact extends to almost everyone in society, whether they attend them or not. Just by virtue of one's membership in society, everything in that society tends to affect one. Movies would definitely be missed if there were none for our entertainment and enjoyment.

Another factor contributing to the success of movies as entertainment is the fact that their very universality makes them one of the most harmless of human pastimes. It is highly unlikely that one would end up as an immoral being

simply because of a vicarious and nebulous experience in a movie theatre. The same is true of the supposed effect on young minds. Because the movies are basically fantasy, much like children's fairy tales, it is certain that no harmful effect on personality will result from seeing a movie.

There can be no doubt that a movie is worthwhile for everyone from time to time. Even if one does not enjoy the movie himself, the enjoyment that accrues to him from seeing his friends enjoy it is a worthwhile experience.

Perhaps the most singular and possibly the greatest contribution of the movies is their ability to portray in our complex and high-speed civilization the folk culture of modern times. The movies have the ability to give form and meaning to many lives which might otherwise seem shapeless and without sense, giving a deeper understanding of our own lives and the lives of others. The movies can express better and to more people the spirit of an age, creating a certain unity of feeling. The movies provide diversion from the cares of the day and satisfy desires unfulfilled in our common life. The movies have reached a maturity which enables all of us to be not merely the most entertained people of all time, but the most capable of developing empathy, that ability to experience someone else's emotions which is the basis of civilized behavior and the ultimate power of the motion picture.

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