# Hedonism as a motive for mood management?
## A Reflection of Zillmann´s Mood-Management Theory

Werner Wirth & Holger Schramm

Although Zillmann's mood management theory (Zillmann, 1988a, 1988b) has acquired a prominent place in entertainment research, it does not give a satisfactory explanation for various phenomena of media usage, e.g. the reception of sad movies. A central assumption of MMT is the hedonism hypothesis, i.e., human beings are hedonistic by nature and will therefore minimize or avoid unpleasant stimulations and moods and maximize or perpetuate pleasant stimulations and moods. Many other authors and researchers argue explicitly against the hedonism hypothesis as a primary and only motor for mood regulation processes. Parrott (1993), for example, lists twelve motives why individuals maintain their bad mood and another twelve motives why they could not maintain their good mood. Additionally, mood improvement may be welcome from a hedonistic point of view, but it may often be functionally suboptimal (Erber, Wegner, & Therriault, 1996; Knobloch, 2003; O'Neal & Taylor, 1989). The presentation will reflect mood management theory on the background of contemporary theories of mood (regulation) and emotion (regulation) to supplement the hedonism motive with other non-hedonistic motives of affect regulation.

# Extraversion and Entertainment: An Experimental Study on the Influence of Personality on Information Processing and Entertainment

Kathleen Arendt

Beyond explaining differences in media preferences, information processing, and media effects by socio-demographic variables, personality psychology provides for finding explanations by incorporating so-called psychographic variables. One prominent way of describing differences in personality is by measuring a person's personality type. Extraversion, as one personality type, distinguishes between individuals more or less in need of external stimulation. According to Eysenck, this difference is biologically based and influences behavior. Media offers are an easily accessible way of meeting this need for external stimulation. The study examines differences in information processing of television offers due to a person's personality type being extravert or introvert. A more or less optimal media offer should result in a satisfaction of the need for external stimulation, and thus in a better entertainment experience. Entertainment is described according to the triadic-dynamic entertainment theory as a positive emotion on a macro-level evolving when a recipient experiences a feeling of control during the reception process.

## Persuasive influence of narrative entertainment

Helena Bilandzic & Susanne Kinnebrock

Entertainment programs on television most often assume the form of a narrative, e.g., films, or series. Stories are generally considered to exert a strong influence on their audience; however, the mechanisms of narrative impact are not easily established and have only recently become the focus of research on persuasion (Green & Brock, 2002; Green et al., 2004; Slater & Rouner, 2002). The aim of this paper is to elaborate the theoretical foundations of narrations and their impact, examining its usefulness for media effects research. To achieve this, we will (1) clarify the term „narrative", (2) elaborate on the role of narratives in experiencing media content, and (3) provide an integrative overview on the conditions for narrative persuasion .

## "Felt Entertainment"
## The Circumplex-Model of Affect, and Media Entertainment

Andreas Fahr

The Circumplex Model of Affect {Russel & Carroll 1999} describes basic emotions or feelings as a function of arousal und pleasantness. In the present study arousal was measured through electrodermal activity, pleasantness through a continious response measure (CRM) unit. The combination of both sets of process data can indicate "felt entertainment". The advantage of this measurement is the possibility to collect data while people are watching entertainment programs and without interviewing them (e.g. via think aloud techniques or questionnaires). The findings will be discussed against the background of validity.

## Gender specifics in perception of fictional entertainment genres

Volker Gehrau

The paper focuses on gender differences in media use and reception. Men prefer action and violence while women prefer narration and tragic. One reason for this might be found in the meta experience of mood (Mayer / Gaschke 1988, Oliver 1993). Negative emotions like fear or sadness might be accompanied by positive meta emotions. The situation of media use provides this phenomenon and different gender socialization might have provided men to enjoy media violence and women to enjoy media tragic. This idea corresponds to the basic genres proposed by Gehrau (2001): comedy, tragedy, and suspense. Comedy is regarded as non specific family program whereas the other are regarded as gender specific dramas: tragedy for women and thriller for men. On this basis a reception analysis is presented for a comedy, a thriller, and a tragedy. The characterization if the stimuli is seen as dramatic, funny or suspenseful does not differ by gender. But the enjoyment and the feeling of being entertained differs between men and women and interacts with the stimulus. Women enjoy the tragedy more then men and men enjoy the thriller more than women. One reason for the

different transformation of negative emotions like fear or sadness in enjoyment might be found in different attitude towards the persons and characters in the stimulus, as an explorative analysis of the same data indicates.

## Parasocial Relationships with Drivers Affect Suspense in Racing Sport Spectators

Tilo Hartmann & Gregor Daschmann

The present study examines determinants of the suspenseful nature of viewing sports on television. An integrated model is supposed that links the concept of (positive and negative) Parasocial Relationships (PSR) to the concept of affective dispositions as used in the Affective Disposition Theory of Sportsfanship (ADT). Five hypotheses on the formation of suspense while viewing sports contests on television are derived and tested in an empirical study in the context of the popular sport "Formula 1". Results show a significant influence of both positive and negative forms of PSR on the viewers' hoping and, in turn, on the felt level of suspense.

## Watching "Leo Kress": Parasocial interactions and exposure to media entertainment

Tilo Hartmann & Christoph Klimmt:

Based on the Two-level model of Parasocial Interactions (Hartmann, Schramm und Klimmt, 2004a, b) hypotheses about both the formation / determinants of parasocial interactions (PSI) as well as the link between PSI and phenomena of entertainment exposure are examined. In close accordance to the model, the study shows that the a) more onlookers found the persona to be attractive (physical/social/task), and b) the more strongly the viewers felt adressed by the persona, the stronger the PSI. In turn, more intense PSI lead to c) a heightened experience of nonmediation and d) a more positive overall appraisal of the watched show.
Keywords: parasocial interactions, entertainment, persona

## Reality-TV, Action-Adventure or Crime Drama?
## Viewerbased Classifications of Crime-Laden Entertainment Fare

Jella Hoffmann

The way viewers classify media content influences both the choice between television programmes and the process of comprehension, interpretation as well as evaluation – and thus the effect – of any media content. In communication research classifications are e.g.used as answer categories in survey questions. But for studies focussing on aspects of media use and preference it seems to be a prerequisite for valid results to classify media content as users would. For example, previous studies indicate that especially in the field of TV entertainment viewer categories are different from expert categories and far more differentiated.

This study shows that television viewers indeed use differentiated categories – at least for crime-laden entertainment fare – and that considerable interpersonal agreement exists. In addition, the criteria users thought relevant for classification were analyzed. The found categories were named by means of viewer terms and can now be used as a basis for further research.


## Mystery Appeal
## Effects of Uncertainty and Resolution on the Enjoyment of Mystery

Silvia Knobloch & Caterina Keplinger

To investigate determinants of mystery enjoyment, a short story was manipulated to produce different levels of uncertainty regarding two suspects' criminal involvement (low vs. high uncertainty) and to create different resolutions (denouement, confirmation, and surprise). Participants' (n = 84) reactions and enjoyment were ascertained via questionnaires after reading the mystery development and after the mystery resolution. Moreover, personality assessments were administered. Results show that enjoyment of the mystery story was greater when participants were highly uncertain regarding the culprit. As hypothesized, resolution enjoyment depended on type of resolution and self-esteem. A resolution that confirmed respondents' suspicion was disliked by persons with high self-esteem, whereas respondents with low self-esteem disliked a surprising resolution.

## The experience of entertainment in virtual environments
## The role of media and user variables within the experience of Spatial Presence

Ursina Mögerle & Saskia Böcking

The subjective experience of Spatial Presence (SP) in a virtual environment has been defined as an experience of entertainment. However, the interactions between media and user factors regarding this experience has not yet been investigated. Therefore, the aim of the present study is to analyse the importance of media and user variables for the experience of SP in virtual environments. In an experiment, a 2x2 factorial design was employed and two media factors FoV (61° vs. 20°) and presentation modus (3D vs. 2D) were manipulated. Results show that user factors influence the experience of SP, as it turned out that two of the considered user variables (cognitive involvement and Visual Spatial Imagery) show significant effects on SP. Concerning the media factors, none of the variables influences SP significantly. These findings suggest that also in virtual environments primarily user factors play a significant role for the experience of SP – and consequently for the experience of entertainment – whereas media factors seem to be of secondary importance.

# Is social comparison an audience motive? Relating the usage of entertainment media to the theory of social comparison processes

Christian Schemer

Several studies have demonstrated that the social comparison with media actors is an important aspect for audiences of entertainment media. E.g. talk shows, soaps or reality TV offer a variety of possible comparison targets. However, communication researchers have paid comparatively little attention to the meaning of social comparison as a process. In this article, it is argued that social comparison is an important factor explaining the use of entertainment media. But, instead of conceiving social comparison as a mere audience motive, it is hypothesized that other motives promote social comparisons with media actors. Both research in communication science and social psychology indicate that comparison motives can at least be grouped into four classes: accurate self-evaluation (seeking information about one's actual status by comparing against similar others), self-improvement (identification with and wishful-thinking about better-offs), self-enhancement (satisfaction about the misfortune of others), and self-verification (seeking confirmatory information). Each comparison motive predisposes individuals to pay attention to corresponding comparison targets (better-offs, worse-offs or similar) in entertainment media.

# Emergency Room Revisited: The Stereotypical World of the Heavy Viewer?

Yvonne Thies and Margrit Schreier, International University Bremen

In our contribution we will present the results of a study on the relationship between the viewing of medical TV series, the reality perception of such series, and sexist stereotypes on the one hand and the agreement with sexist clichés about nurses on the other hand (N = 137). The hypothesis that those who frequently watch hospital series are more likely to agree with the sexist clichés cannot be confirmed. Instead, those viewers are most likely to accept the clichés who watch with moderate frequency and who at the same consider the series to provide a fairly realistic view of hospital life. There is also an interaction effect between perceived reality of the soaps and sexism as well as gender: men and persons high in sexism are especially likely to accept the clichés if they at the same time perceive the soaps to be moderately realistic.

## Experiencing entertainment while watching tabloid TV-stories – a study of the emotional processing

Dagmar Unz, Birgit Michel, Frank Schwab & Peter Winterhoff-Spurk

Constructing entertainment as an emotional mechanism (Schwab, 2003), we ask how tabloid TV-stories are emotionally processed and what emotional effects occur. The study of emotional processes involves "the need to (a) study ongoing processes over time, (b) study multiple systems and their interaction (cognition, physiology, expression) ..." (Scherer, 2000, p. 95). As facial expressions are naturally accompanying an emotional process, they are observable indicators of unobservable emotional processes. Using THEME, a new methodological approach aimed to identifying hidden patterns in the structure of behavioural event data (Magnusson, 2000), we analyzed facial expressions of viewers of tabloid TV-stories. Our results show a high number of nonrandom temporal patterns in the event time series of facial expressions. A remarkably high proportion of these patterns can be interpreted referring to cognitive appraisal-processes (Kaiser & Wehrle, 2001), thus indicating a sequence of cognitive emotional processing (particularly concerning the appraisal of novelty, intrinsic pleasantness, goal conduciveness, fairness). By this means, the analysis of facial expressions can contribute to the study of emotional processes while using media.

## Violent Video Games and Aggression. A Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging Study.

René Weber, Ute Ritterfeld & Klaus Mathiak

Recent studies as well as meta-analyses demonstrate that exposure to violent video games is significantly linked to increases in aggressive behavior, aggressive cognition, and aggressive affect (Anderson & Bushman, 2004). However, validity and reliability of common research designs, possible cognitive mechanisms, and, above all, causality remains heavily debated. By using fMRI (14 subjects; males, age 18-26; 3 Tesla, multi-echo EPI) to investigate the neural correlates of virtual violence in a state-of-the-art video game (ego-shooter "Tactical Ops") we demonstrate that functional neuroimaging may provide deeper and more reliable insights in effects of playing video games.

## Suspense and the experience of spatial presence when reading fictional, narrative texts

Werner Wirth, Saskia Böcking & Natascha In-Albon

Different considerations suggest that when reading fictional texts the narrative structure is decisive not only for generating suspense but also for generating the feeling of presence. Affective Disposition Theory regards empathy towards a protagonist and the probability of a negative outcome for this protagonist to be decisive for activating feelings of suspense and therewith the feeling of being present. To test these assumptions a 2x2-field-experiment with 81 participants was conducted. Results show that in the context of reading fictional narrative

texts suspense enhances the feeling of being present. However, for this kind of text, central assumptions of Affective Disposition Theory could not be confirmed. Results are discussed regarding their impact for the feeling of being present in less immersive media environments as well as with their implications for Affective Disposition Theory.

## Entertainment as performance

Carsten Wünsch

According to Früh's entertainment theory (2002) entertainment can be described as an affective experience (macroemotion). This experience represents a dynamic variable in the process of reception and most important it is described by a positive valence. In order to measure this construct a continuous response measurement together with a retrospective questionnaire was developed. This presentation reports experiences in the use of this measuring instrument and findings of various validity tests. Based on these findings it discusses whether such an expensive measuring method is suitable.

## Does Entertainment entertain? Towards a precise and subtle view of the reception of TV entertainment programmes

Lothar Mikos

The paper describes entertainment as a programme category and questions the term in regard to reception modalities. It argues that the category entertaining is useless to deal with the complex activities of audiences in the reception process. Instead it would be useful to differentiate viewing motives for the reception not only of entertainment programmes and specific TV formats, modalities of reception, cognitive and emotional responses and activities of the viewers. Reporting results of several audience studies will illustrate the arguments.

## An attempt to categorize entertainment from the point of view of the spectator: Factors and types of experience that govern the way television is experienced by the viewer

Ursula Dehm & Dieter Storll

What factors determine the way in which television programmes are selected and received by the viewing audience? The answer to this question is of fundamental importance when it comes to planning and designing programmes. Viewers' expectations are determined by 5 core factors: emotionality, orientation, relaxation, amusement and social experience. These five factors are valid for all television content, whether informational or entertaining. They also apply for all segments of the public.

By taking these five factors that govern the way TV is received it was possible to identify seven different types of TV viewer: involved enthusiasts, emotional hedonists, indulgent knowledge seekers, habitual participants, habitual orientation seekers, undemanding stress managers and distanced sceptics.

Taking as an example a range of TV programmes from different genres (based on the above core factors) the specific quality of experience that these broadcasts provide for the different types of viewer is illustrated.