

Jefferson College of Population Health

# The Science of Entertainment-Education: Historical Perspectives and New Directions

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# Acknowledgements

## Mentors

- Drexel University
- American University

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- Population Media Center
- Local staff and partners

## Colleagues and Fellow Scholars

- Communication and public health researchers and practitioners around the globe



Meeting Miguel Sabido,  
pioneer of  
entertainment-education  
(April 2018)

## An Academic Definition

- **Entertainment-Education (EE):** The process of designing and implementing a media message to both entertain and educate to increase audience members' knowledge about an educational issue, create favorable attitudes, shift social norms and change overt behavior (Rogers & Singhal, 1999)



## Brief History

- Roots in oral and performing arts traditions
- 1940's: The Lawsons (Australia)
- 1950's: The Archers (United Kingdom)
- 1960's and 1970's: Sabido soap operas
- Dissemination by PCI Media Impact, Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs
- Today: a global strategy that has been implemented in countries around the world



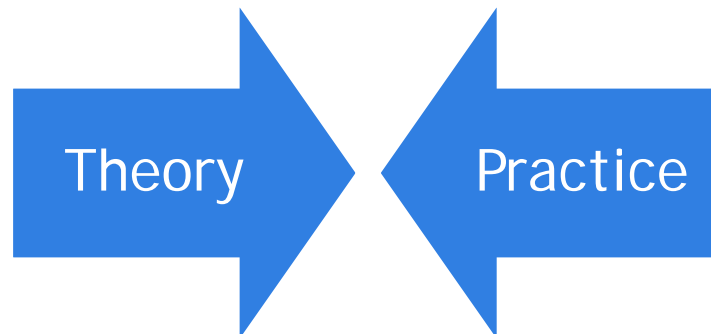
# Theory Alongside History

## What is a theory?

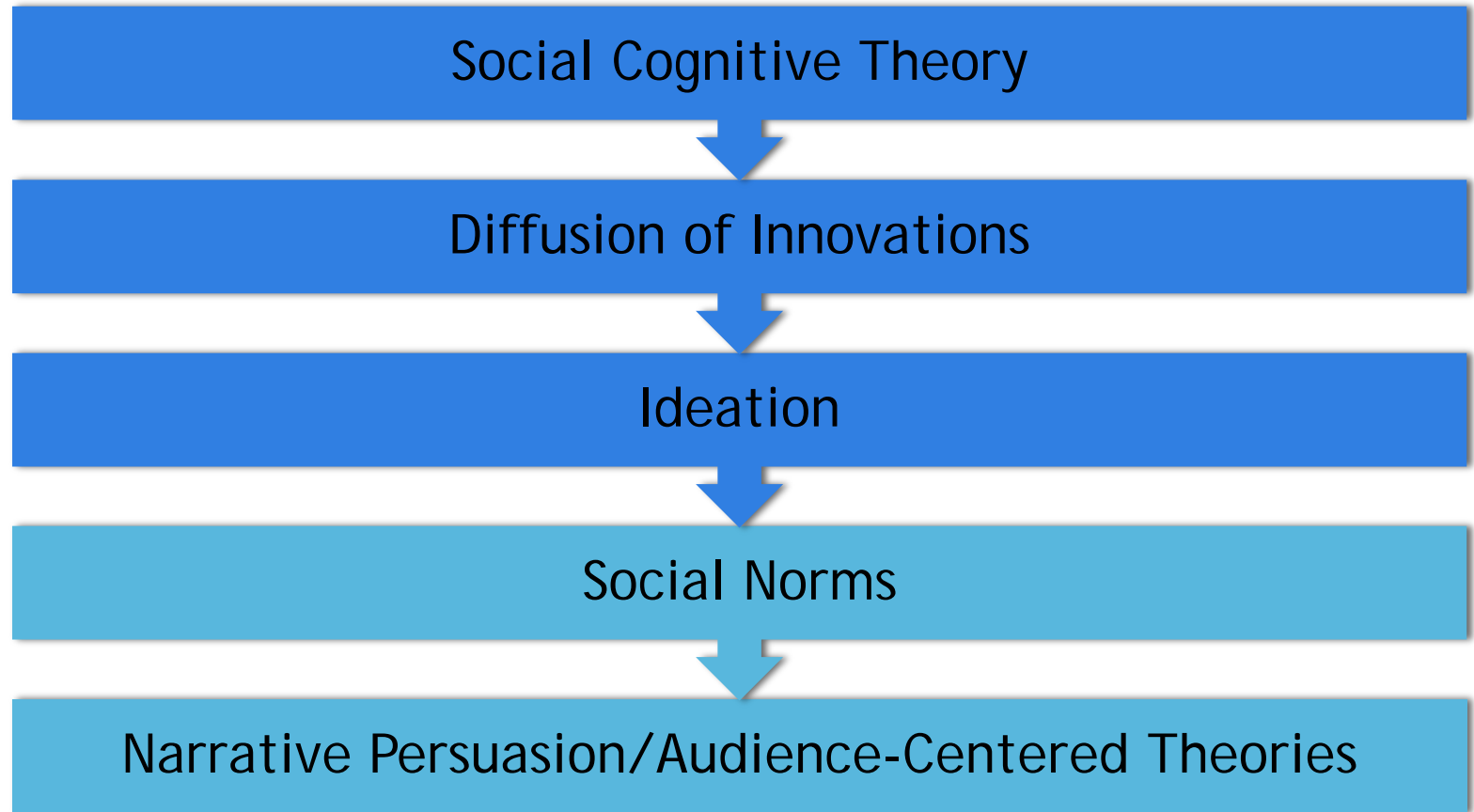
- Systematic way of understanding events, behaviors, and situations
- A model or a pathway; an “explanation”
- Set of accepted beliefs/interrelated concepts

## Why do we use theory?

- To identify potential solutions
- To understand why people behave the way they do
- To plan, design, and evaluate EE programs



# Selected Cross-Cutting Theories Applied to EE



# The Current State of EE Practice

## Top Findings from a Literature Review of EE Practice from 2005-2016\*

Program Goal	Behavior Change (30.7%)
Program Focus	Individual-level Change (68.5%)
Geographical Location	Subnational/local-level (46.8%)
Key Topic	HIV/AIDS/STIs/sexual health (35.6%)
Channel	Television (17.8%)
Genre	Drama (28.4%)

N=126

\*Sood, S., Riley, A.H., & Alarcon, K. (2017). Entertainment-education and health and risk messaging, In R. Parrott (Ed.), Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication. Oxford University Press: New York, NY.

# The Current State of EE Evidence

## Top Findings from a Literature Review of EE Research from 2005-2016\*

Research Methods	Quantitative (61.9%) Mixed Methods (24.6%) Qualitative (13.5%)
Research Design	Post-only (40.5%) Pre and post (27.0%) Randomized controlled trial (23.0%)
Sample Size	100-249 participants (26.8%) 500 or more participants (22.0%)
Level of Reported Effectiveness	Medium/intermediate outcomes (61.1%) High/behavior + social change 18.3%) Low (20.6%)
Outcomes	Behavior (24.1%)

N=126



# The Current State of EE Evidence

## Top Findings from a Literature Review of EE Research from 2005-2016\*

Research Methods	Quantitative (41.8%) <b>Mixed Methods (24.6%)</b> Qualitative (31.5%)
Research Design	Post-only (40.5%) Pre and post (27.0%) Randomized controlled trial (23.0%)
Sample Size	100-249 participants (26.8%) 500 or more participants (22.0%)
Level of Reported Effectiveness	Medium/intermediate outcomes (61.1%) High/behavior + social change 18.3%) Low (20.6%)
Outcomes	Behavior (24.1%)
N=126	

# Participatory Methods



## Participatory Methods for Entertainment-Education

Visual Methods	Oral Methods	Written Methods	Listening Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Photography</li><li>• Video</li><li>• Drawing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stories</li><li>• Theater</li><li>• Phone calls</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Letters</li><li>• Diaries</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Listening Groups</li></ul>

Riley, A.H., Sood, S., & Robichaud, M (2017). Participatory methods for entertainment-education: Analysis of best practices. *Journal of Creative Communications*, 12(1), 62-76.

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A large blue double-headed arrow spans the width of the table, with the word "THEORY" centered inside it.

Riley, A.H., Sood, S., & Robichaud, M (2017). Participatory methods for entertainment-education: Analysis of best practices. *Journal of Creative Communications*, 12(1), 62-76.

# Recent Theorizing Part 1: Social Norms

## Social Norms

- Definition: “a pattern of collective behavior that is reinforced, propagated, and sustained by unwritten social rules” (WHO, 2010)
- Behaviors are influenced by norms, which often occur without conscious thought (e.g., queuing into the back of a line) but also sometimes part of conscious behavior choices
- The literature is dense (descriptive norms, injunctive norms, reference groups, outcome expectations)

## Social Norms and EE

- EE programs often seek to change or shift norms by creating demand through narratives and characters (e.g., norms around uptake of modern contraception, ideal family size, etc.)
- EE and social norms have been studied for some time
- Little consensus on how exactly how norms should be measured

## Example from India



- “Kyunki...Jeena Issi Ka Naam Hai”  
(Because... That’s What Life Is)
- Flagship program of UNICEF India
- Television drama, 501 episodes, began in 2008
- Maternal and child health topics
- Large quantitative evaluation - 27,000 survey respondents (women, husbands, and mothers-in-law) over three time periods in 6 states
- Multivariate analysis to explore direct relationship between exposure and descriptive norms
- Higher level of exposure > positive and significant change in social norms
- EE “super users”

Riley, A.H., Sood, S., Mazumdar, P.D., Choudary, N., Malhotra, A., & Sahba, N. (2017). Encoded exposure and social norms in entertainment-education. *Journal of Health Communication*, 22(1), 66-74.

# Recent Theorizing Part 2: Narrative Persuasion

## Narrative Persuasion

- Considers the uniquely persuasive role of storytelling
- Being engaged in a story reduces counterarguing (or resistance)
- Narrative persuasion constructs include: identification with characters, narrative transportation, and narrative engagement

## Narrative Persuasion and EE

- The hypothesis that EE is effective because audiences are swept into stories has been tested for some time
- Scales are not typically tested outside of the Global North
- How narrative persuasion works to change or shift social norms as a result of EE is unknown

# Example from Mozambique



- “Ouro Negro” (Black Gold)
- UNICEF Mozambique, WFP, UNFPA, Ministry of Education, PCI Media Impact
- Radio drama, began in 2015
- Topics: Maternal and child health; HIV/AIDS; child protection; WASH
- Mixed methods pre/post evaluation - surveys + focus groups in 5 provinces
  - Participatory methods
- Two research questions
  - Relationship between exposure and narrative persuasion
  - Relationship between exposure and social norms
- Exposure > predicted narrative persuasion in multivariate analysis
- Exposure did not predict social norms

Riley, A.H., Sood, S., & Sani, M. (2019). Narrative persuasion and social norms in entertainment-education: Results from a radio drama in Mozambique. *Health Communication*.

# Concluding Thoughts on EE Science

- There is a rich body of literature demonstrating EE “works”
- EE scholars continue to unwrap exactly how the strategy engenders individual and social change
  - What is the role of social norms in the theoretical pathway of EE?
  - Not everything is influenced by social norms
  - Is narrative persuasion the “secret ingredient” to EE?
- Theory and practice should co-exist within communities
- EE must be part of a suite of delivery and supply approaches to most effectively impact topics across the global development agenda



# Selected Publications

## Journal Articles

- Riley, A.H., Sood, S., & Sani, M. (2019). Narrative persuasion and social norms in entertainment-education: Results from a radio drama in Mozambique. *Health Communication*.
- Riley, A.H., Sood, S., & Robichaud, M (2017). Participatory methods for entertainment-education: Analysis of best practices. *Journal of Creative Communications*, 12(1), 62-76.
- Riley, A.H., Sood, S., Mazumdar, P.D., Choudary, N., Malhotra, A., & Sahba, N. (2017). Encoded exposure and social norms in entertainment-education. *Journal of Health Communication*, 22(1), 66-74.

## Book Chapter

- Sood, S., Riley, A.H., & Alarcon, K. (2017). Entertainment-education and health and risk messaging, In R. Parrott (Ed.), *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*. Oxford University Press: New York, NY.

# Questions?



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