

4-2006

## Diversity, Convergence and a Balanced Media Diet in a Digital Age [Slides]

Louisa Ha  
*Bowling Green State University, louisah@bgsu.edu*

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### Repository Citation

Ha, Louisa, "Diversity, Convergence and a Balanced Media Diet in a Digital Age [Slides]" (2006). *School of Media and Communication Faculty Publications*. 3.  
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# **Diversity, Convergence and a Balanced Media Diet in a Digital Age**

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**Louisa Ha**

**Bowling Green State University**

Presented at the Research Division,  
Broadcast Education Association Annual  
Convention, Las Vegas, Nevada,

April 27-29, 2006



# Definitions of Media Diversity

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- Quality (Einstein, 2004)
- Pluralism (FCC & Ofcom)
- Equality of access and presence (van Cuilenburg, 2000)
- Competition (Compaine & Gomery, 2000)
- Heterogeneity, variety or disparity (van Cuilenburg 2000), Moreau & Peltier, 2004)
- Equilibrium between consumer interest and media offering (Bae, 2000; Owen & Wildman, 1992)
- Innovation (Wilstrom, 2005)



# Proposed Three Levels of Media Diversity Analysis

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- Diversity funneled in 3 levels from supply, to acquisition, and consumption.
- Introduces the intermediate stage of acquisition or purchase, not just supply and viewing diversity

# Levels of Analysis in Media Diversity

## I. Media Supply (Source Diversity) Media Ownership and Workforce Diversity

### Media Organization Product Offering

- content diversity
- fictional vs. non-fictional content
- viewpoint
- program genres/formats
- target audience (demographic)
- cultures

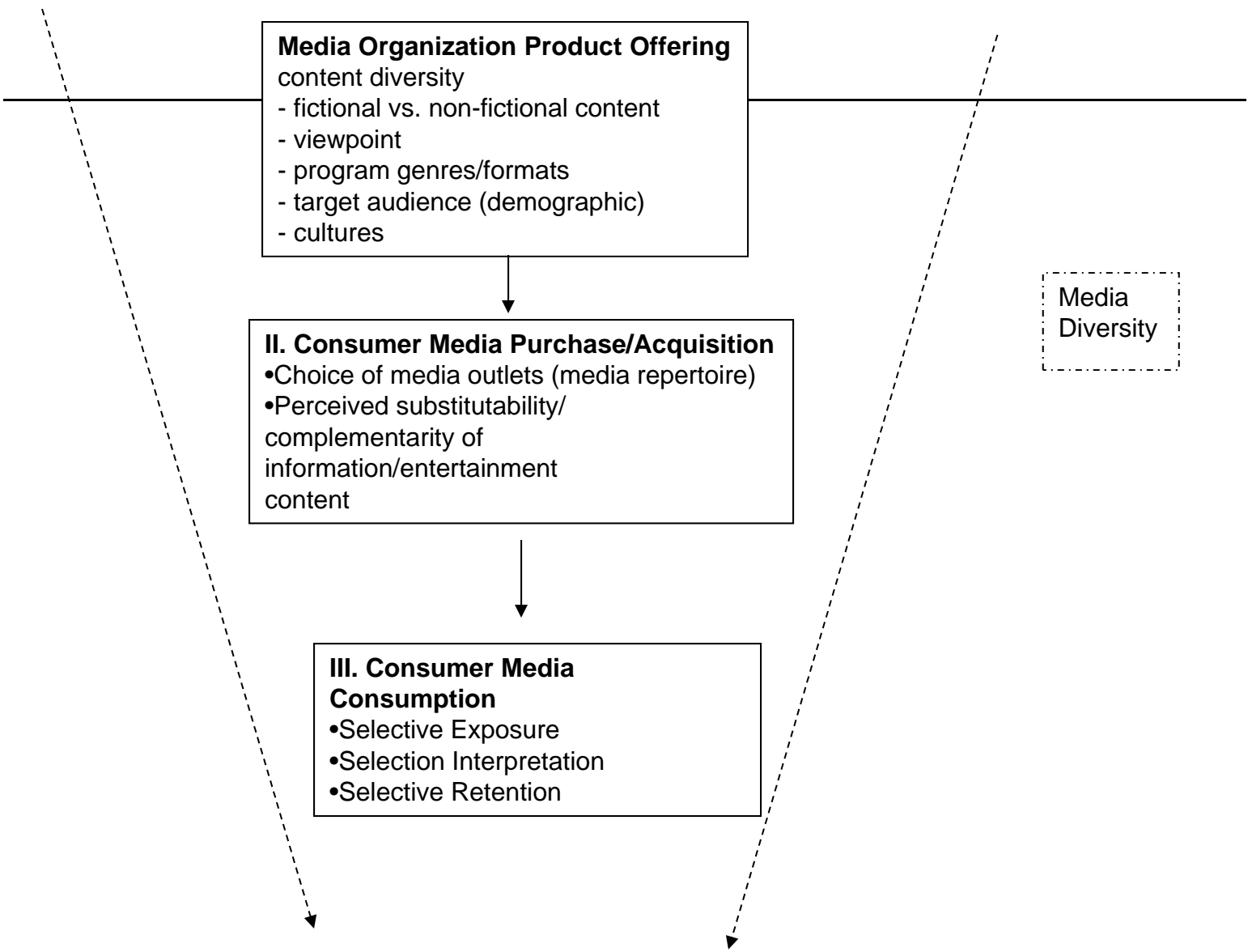
## II. Consumer Media Purchase/Acquisition

- Choice of media outlets (media repertoire)
- Perceived substitutability/  
complementarity of  
information/entertainment  
content

## III. Consumer Media Consumption

- Selective Exposure
- Selection Interpretation
- Selective Retention

Media  
Diversity





# Media Abundance

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- Substitutability and complementarity of media use
- Media repertoire of consumers

Typical user: 15 media types daily  
and 58% of time involves in media  
consumption

Co-use of media: Internet, print and  
television in major news events



# Media Abundance

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- Different media offer different attributes to consumers
- Audience duplication: co-use and multiple media consumption
- Lack of cross media analysis in diversity research
  - audiences are at the mercy of one medium



# Media Abundance

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- Easy access to the Internet: media access is not a problem, but whether there is enough audience for the Web page is the key to diversity
- Too many choices bewilder consumers. They need help and guidance from portal sites (e.g., Yahoo) and relevance ranking provided by search engines
- Search business is highly concentrated (Google 46%, Yahoo 24%)





# Media Abundance

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- Audience diversity at the consumption level-
- More choices, reinforce the same taste and interest or increase exposure to diverse content?
- Many are not aware of the alternative media products and not willing to break the media habit



# How diversity can be achieved

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- Make consumers dissatisfied with the status quo (current media offering)
- Seek out alternatives and see benefits of having alternatives
- The price factor and accessibility factor most often source of dissatisfaction, not content
- New media alternative must address to accessibility and price dissatisfaction, not content dissatisfaction
- Success is hinged upon media marketing techniques and business models chosen



# Media Convergence

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- Difficulty in defining the media sector with TV, Radio, Print Converged on the Internet and the Telephone
- Consumption of identical media content in different media platforms
- Competition between online presence of traditional media and native Internet Media brands (e.g., StupidVideos.com, Digital FM)
- Downloading and file-sharing (unclear media identities of burnt CD and i-pod)



# Proposed Research Agenda

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- New Media Diversity  
Metaphor: **The Balanced Media Diet**
  - Keep up with the current health trends
  - More practical to use and easier to measure diversity than other metaphors



# Balanced Media Diet

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- Implies consumption
- Part of a person's daily life
- Involves choice and decision-making  
- consequences to the well-being of consumers
- Media content is food for thought
- Participation of the various levels of the media consumption process from supply to acquisition, consumption to evaluation



# Balanced Media Diet

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- Media diet affects the knowledge base and mental health of the consumers
- Opinion bias and cultural bias will be minimized with a balanced diet by exposure to different view points, different country of origins, different sources of information, different composition of ethnic groups.



# Two proposed streams of diversity research

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Based on the primary function and expectation of the media content

- Fictional content diversity: entertainment.
- Non-fictional content diversity: informativeness, credibility



# Assessing nutritional value of media content

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- Research should compare mental well-being of consumers with a balanced media diet versus those with a skewed media diets.
- Possible indicators:
  1. inclusiveness or tolerance of other cultures and races
  2. Openness to new ideas





## **Developing Media Complementarity and Co-Use Index**

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- Comprehensive national media surveys by government agencies to assess degree of duplicated media use and media preference for a particular topic
- Topic areas with low number of media choices and low content diversity are warning signs for intervention<sup>7</sup>