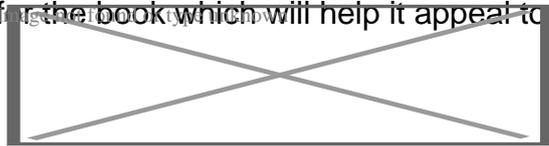

Dr. Herbert Krugman (1969): Watching television induces alpha brain waves (similar to hypnosis)

Description

- Consumer Behavior and Advertising Involvement: Selected Works of Herbert E. Krugman (Marketing and Consumer Psychology Series)

This book is an honor to the many important contributions of Herbert Krugman, past president of APA (American Psychological Association), The Division of Consumer Psychology and The Association for Public Opinions Research. This reader contains his selected works in Consumer Behavior and Advertising which combine insights from Cognitive Psychology, Social Psychology and Survey Methodology. William Wells, University of Minnesota, has provided the foreword and section overviews for the book which will help it appeal to all academics and students of consumer research.



"The fact that TV is a source not actively or critically attended to was made dramatically evident in the late 1960s by an experiment that rocked the world of political and product advertising and forever changed the ways in which the television medium would be used. The results of the experiment still reverberate through the industry long after its somewhat primitive methods have been perfected.

"In November 1969, a researcher named Herbert Krugman, who later became manager of public-opinion research at General Electric headquarters in Connecticut, decided to try to discover what goes on physiologically in the brain of a person watching TV. He elicited the co-operation of a twenty-two-year-old secretary and taped a single electrode to the back of her head. The wire from this electrode connected to a Grass Model 7 Polygraph, which in turn interfaced with a Honeywell 7600 computer and a CAT 400B computer.

"Flicking on the TV, Krugman began monitoring the brain-waves of the subject. What he found through repeated trials was that within about thirty seconds, the brain-waves switched from predominantly beta waves, indicating alert and conscious attention, to predominantly alpha waves, indicating an unfocused, receptive lack of attention: the state of aimless fantasy and daydreaming below the threshold of consciousness. When Krugman's subject turned to reading through a magazine, beta waves reappeared, indicating that conscious and alert attentiveness had replaced the daydreaming state.

"What surprised Krugman, who had set out to test some McLuhanesque hypotheses about the nature of TV-viewing, was how rapidly the alpha-state emerged. Further research revealed that the brain's left hemisphere, which processes information logically and analytically, tunes out while the person is watching TV. This tuning-out allows the right hemisphere of the brain, which processes information emotionally and noncritically, to function unimpeded. 'It appears,' wrote Krugman in a report of his findings, 'that the mode of response to television is more or less constant and very different from the response to print. That is, the basic electrical response of the brain is clearly to the medium and not to

content difference.... [Television is] a communication medium that effortlessly transmits huge quantities of information not thought about at the time of exposure.'

"Soon, dozens of agencies were engaged in their own research into the television-brain phenomenon and its implications. The findings led to a complete overhaul in the theories, techniques, and practices that had structured the advertising industry and, to an extent, the entire television industry. The key phrase in Krugman's findings was that TV transmits 'information not thought about at the time of exposure.'" [p.p. 69-70]

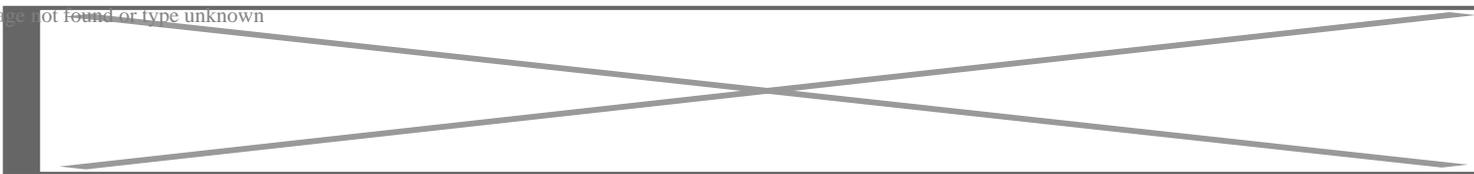
"As Herbert Krugman noted in the research that transformed the industry, we do not consciously or rationally attend to the material resonating with our unconscious depths at the time of transmission. Later, however, when we encounter a store display, or a real-life situation like one in an ad, or a name on a ballot that conjures up our television experience of the candidate, a wealth of associations is triggered. Schwartz explains: 'The function of a display in the store is to recall the consumer's experience of the product in the commercial.... You don't ask for a product: The product asks for you! That is, a person's recall of a commercial is evoked by the product itself, visible on a shelf or island display, interacting with the stored data in his brain.' Just as in Julian Jaynes's ancient cultures, where the internally heard speech of the gods was prompted by props like the corpse of a chieftain or a statue, so, too, our internalized media echoes are triggered by products, props, or situations in the environment.

"As real-life experience is increasingly replaced by the mediated 'experience' of television-viewing, it becomes easy for politicians and market-researchers of all sorts to rely on a base of mediated mass experience that can be evoked by appropriate triggers. The TV 'world' becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy: the mass mind takes shape, its participants acting according to media-derived impulses and believing them to be their own personal volition arising out of their own desires and needs. In such a situation, whoever controls the screen controls the future, the past, and the present." [p. 82, Joyce Nelson, THE PERFICT MACHINE; New Society Pub., 1992, 800-253-3605; ISBN 0-86571-235-2

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“A new device that measures changes in pupil diameter while subjects view advertisements, packages, etc., offers promise of becoming a powerful tool for studying the interest-arousing qualities of stimuli. encouraging evidence of the reliability and validity of this device has been found in a series of studies—two of which are described in this article.”

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Plain numerical DOI: 10.1086/266977

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“The pursuit of public preferences in the field of style and fashion is a fascinating sport. equally exciting can be the search for psychological principles connecting liking with novelty and familiarity. here are a report of experiments conducted to discover such principles and, appropriately, suggestions for a design for an ideal experiment. © 1960 princeton university.”

Krugman, H. E.. (1966). The Measurement of Advertising Involvement. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 30(4), 583.

Plain numerical DOI: 10.1086/267457

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"In an earlier paper in this journal, the author suggested that the processes of attitude change underlying mass communication impact are of two kinds: with low involvement to persuasive stimuli one might look for gradual shifts in perceptual structure, aided by repetition, activated by behavioral choice situations, and followed at some time by attitude change, while with high involvement one could look instead for the classic and familiar conflict of ideas at the level of conscious opinion and attitude that precedes changes in behavior. the present paper describes the development and application of a workable tool to measure this involvement, a necessary step if the study of communication impact along these lines is to proceed further. © 1966, the american association for public opinion research." Krugman, H. E.. (1983). Television program interest and commercial interruption. Journal of Advertising Research

Show/hide publication abstract

"Examines the correlation between effectiveness of an interrupting commercial and the popularity level of the subsequent television (tv) program. need to distinguish between viewer opinion and impact of commercial on viewers; analysis of type of tv shows and their impact value." Krugman, H. E.. (1965). The Impact of Television Advertising: Learning Without Involvement. Public Opinion Quarterly, 29(3), 349.

Plain numerical DOI: 10.1086/267335

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"Does television advertising produce sales by changing attitudes? not always, says herbert e. krugman in his presidential address before the american association for public opinion research on may 15, 1965. it may do so, he states, just by changing perceptions of the product in the course of merely shifting the relative salience of attitudes, especially when the purchaser is not particularly involved in the message. this arresting thesis has important implications for noncommercial as well as commercial persuasion efforts. © 1965 by princeton university press."

Category

1. General

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