Types of News Story Audiences

- General (everyone)
- Geographical (neighborhood, region)
- Cultural (ethnic, religious, lifestyle)
- Gender-Based (traditional or non-traditional roles)
- General Subject-Based (sports, A&E, outdoors)
- Specific Subject-Based (baseball, hip-hop, kayaking)
- Age-Based (generational)
- Event-Based (deep coverage of major event)
- Niche (extremely specific)

Differences Within Audiences

- **Passive vs. Active**
  - Passive – read/watch/listen – traditional news audience
  - Active – invested in content – responding energetically
- **Perceiving vs. Judging**
  - Perceiving – absorbing through senses – gut instinct – soaking it up
  - Judging – analyzing material – deciding positive or negative
- **Feeling vs. Thinking**
  - Feeling – emotions – impact on self & others – less strictly rational
  - Thinking – practical – look for evidence – more rational
- **Involved vs. Uninvolved**
  - Involved – fully attentive, following every aspect of content
  - Uninvolved – divided attention, yet still loosely following content
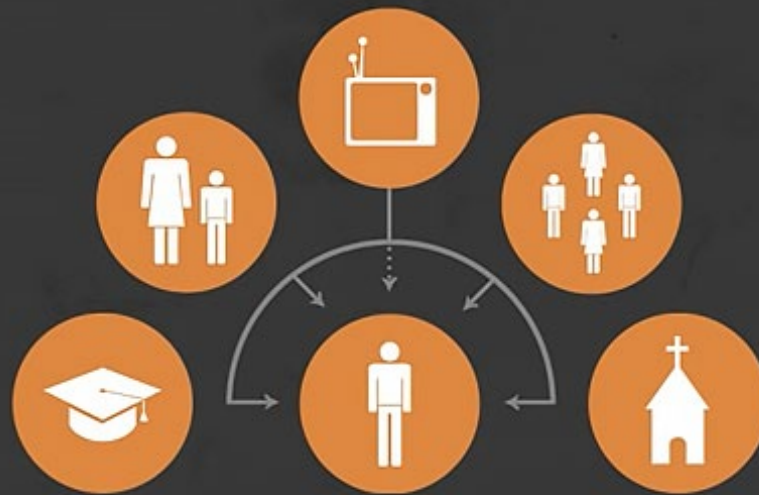
Passive Audience: Hypodermic Model

Active Audience: Reinforcement Model

Active Audience: Reinforcement Model

THE REINFORCEMENT THEORY

- ACCORDING TO JOSEPH KLAPPER, THE ONLY TIME THE MEDIA CAN INFLUENCE PEOPLE IS WHEN IT INTRODUCES A NEW IDEA OR CONCEPT.

Active Audience: Uses and Gratifications

- **Surveillance**
  - Know what's going on in the world around us
  - Need for security – the unknown can bring danger
- **Personal Identity**
  - Learn more about who we are – how we compare with others
  - Identify with people in media coverage
- **Personal Relationships**
  - See how other people live, apply to our own lives
  - Use media content as way to relate to other people we encounter
- **Diversion**
  - Relief from stresses of everyday life
  - Simple entertainment – emotional release

News Site Diversions

- **Comics**
  - Date back to illustrations in early newspapers
  - Earliest color features – driver of Sunday newspapers
  - Still hugely popular, even in digital age
- **Advice Columns**
  - Related to letters to editor – different kind of interactivity
  - Identify with strangers with similar problems and complaints
  - One of most popular elements on news sites to this day
- **Puzzles and Games**
  - Crosswords became fad in 1920s – criticized, then embraced
  - Word search, Sudoku, Wordle, other examples
  - Continue to drive traffic – NY Times purchased Wordle in 2022
- **Sports and Entertainment**
  - Each considered diversions by news publishers over the years
  - Believed to bring readers to "real" news
  - Often drive more traffic than "real" news