

## Re: Preaching To The Converted

**Source:** <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.logic/2004-10/1131.html>

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**From:** Immortalist (*Reanimater\_2000\_at\_yahoo.com*)

**Date:** 10/25/04

Date: Mon, 25 Oct 2004 12:20:14 -0700

"Bunx" <bifjoy@ntlworld.com> wrote in message  
news:4fcfd.188\$4k7.50@newsfe1-gui.ntli.net...

- > *What the fuck is a one sided argument supposed to be*
- >
- > *The phrase is a contradiction.*
- >

It is not an argument that brings out the important opposing arguments and then proceeds to refute them but an argument that presents one side that is assumed to be favorable to the audience, hence preaching to the already converted.

(B) Prior Experience of the Audience.

Another audience-related factor of considerable importance is the frame of mind the audience is in just prior to the communication. An audience can be made receptive to a communication if it has been well fed and is relaxed and happy. Indeed, as Irving Janis and his associates have discovered, people who have been allowed to eat desirable food while reading a persuasive communication are more influenced by what they read than are people in a control (noneating) group. Similarly, research by Richard Petty and his colleagues suggests that being in a good mood can make people more vulnerable to persuasion.

Conversely, there are ways in which members of an audience can be made less receptive and less persuadable. As I noted, people predict they will be able to resist persuasive communications such as television commercials. Accordingly, one way of decreasing their persuasibility is by forewarning them that an attempt is going to be made to persuade them. This is especially true if the content of the message differs from their own beliefs. I would argue that the phrase "And now, a message from our sponsor" renders that message less persuasive than it would have been if the communicator had simply glided into it without prologue. The forewarning seems to say, "Watch out, I'm going to try to persuade you," and people tend to respond by marshaling defenses against the message. This phenomenon was demonstrated in an experiment by Jonathan Freedman and David Sears. Teenagers were told they would be hearing a talk entitled "Why Teenagers

Should Not Be Allowed to Drive." Ten minutes later, the speaker presented them with a prepared communication. In a control condition, the same talk was given without the 10-minute forewarning. The subjects in the control condition were more thoroughly convinced by the communication than were those who had been forewarned.

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The Nature of the Communication

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- (1) Logical vs Emotional Appeals
- (2) Statistical Evidence vs 1 Personal Example
- (3) One-Sided vs Two-Sided Arguments
- (4) The Order of Presentation
- (5) The Size of the Discrepancy Between Views

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(6) Characteristics of the Audience

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- (A) – Self-Esteem
- (B) – Prior Experience of the Audience
- (C) – People tend to protect their sense of freedom
- (D) – Reactance operates in number of interesting ways
- (E) – How Well Do the Principles Work?

<http://groups.google.com/groups?selm=vt49og3usfsbda%40corp.supernews.com>

The Social Animal – Elliot Aronson – 8th Edition 1999

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0716733129/>

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