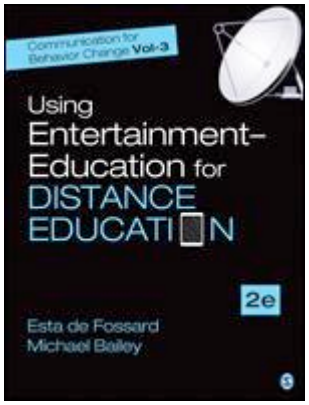

Using Entertainment–Education for Distance Education, 2nd Edition (Communication for Behavior Change Volume lll)

de Fossard, Esta; and Bailey, Michael
Sage Publications, 2016

Book Review

Tags: distance education | edutainment | online education

Reviewed by: Carolyn Helsel, *Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary*
Date Reviewed: January 25, 2018

As a professor who teaches in an online education program, I picked up this book with interest for how it might inform my pedagogy. The content of the book, while relevant to my context of theological education, addresses more specifically the needs of organizations working for behavioral change in developing countries, particularly regarding available health interventions such as disease testing and immunizations. The authors address the mediums of radio, television, and internet, and how managers of these educational programs can best utilize different types of information sources.

Early on, the authors distinguish between "Edu-tainment" and "Entertainment-Education." Edu-tainment is a focus on education that employs insights from entertainment to keep learners engaged in the educational process and content. Entertainment-Education relies more heavily on the entertainment side in order to teach a certain topic or attitude, helping participants to empathize with characters in order to consider adopting behaviors similar to the characters. Entertainment-Education might look like a fable told to convey a moral – the story of the fable is interesting in itself, while the moral being taught is present but not foregrounded. With Edu-tainment, the same moral or lesson is present as in the fable, but the lesson or intended learning outcome is more directly named.

While the title of the book contains "Entertainment-Education," "Edu-tainment" is the main focus of the authors. Both approaches appeal to the "E Structure," which is "Engagement of the audience, through Emotional involvement, which inspires Empathy for certain characters, who then provide Examples that demonstrate to the audience how they can accomplish the desired behavior, and also provide a sense of Efficacy for audience members, who make the

desired changes or acquire that desired knowledge and gain a degree of Ego-enhancement (personal growth)" (8).

Excellence in Edu-tainment requires a great deal of management and collaboration. The authors describe the various formats for Edu-tainment such as video or radio, and how the eventual product should be constructed with a team of writers, producers, and actors, with how lessons should be piloted with control groups to judge their effectiveness. Persons reading this for the sake of improving their online education pedagogy will feel overwhelmed by the expectations here, but learning about the possibilities for dramatic renderings of lessons with scripted dialogue can provide new ways to think about teaching for those interested in deepening their skills. While this book may not be directly helpful to theological educators because of its emphasis on behavioral modification in developing countries, it does provide some helpful tips.

https://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/resources/book_reviews/communication-for-behavior-change-volume-lll-using-entertainment-education-for-distance-education-2nd-edition/