

Project REEL: Refining Entertainment Education for Cancer Screening Literacy

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Entertainment Education (EE)

- An approach to population-level behavior change codified by Miguel Sabido in the 1970's
- Embeds educational messages (e.g., health messages) into soap operas and other entertaining media formats
- Prompts message reinforcement via social and parasocial channels

EE (cont.)

- Relevant to health literacy in promoting:
  - access to health information
  - the skills and motivation needed to make use of the health information
- Relevant to health disparities at levels of:
  - individual
  - information access
  - information quality

EE History



The first EE TV series was:

- broadcast in Peru in 1969
- wildly popular
- associated with increased attendance at literacy classes

Evidence from > 12 developing countries that EE is effective (Papa, et al., 2000)

Potential for EE Impact in the US

- 83% of adults watch TV dramas at least once a month; 64% are regular viewers (PN Healthstyles, 2005)
- 75% of black female regular viewers reported learning something about health from primetime TV in the last 6 months; same for daytime drama; more than whites
- About a third of regular viewers took an action based on what they heard about health on TV; Blacks and Hispanics more than whites
- 94% radio penetration among African Americans (Arbitron, September 2010)

Theoretical Basics of EE

Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986)

Relevant constructs:

- role modeling/observational learning
- positive outcome expectancies
- self-efficacy



Theoretical Basis of EE (expanded)

Relevant constructs from other theories:

- Attention
- Retention
- Narrative Transportation



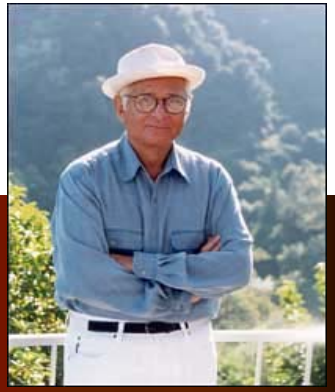
Transportation Imagery Model

- Green & Brock (2000)
- Narrative transportation engages cognitive, imagery and affective systems and is pleasurable
- Evidence from written narratives that the more transporting a story, the more health information it imparts
- Unlike engagement with and central processing of rhetorical argument (e.g., ELM), a transported audience member keeps counterarguments at arms length

CDC, NCI and other agencies fund EE outreach to Hollywood

USC ANNENBERG

The Norman Lear CENTERTAINMENT



Hollywood, Health & Society



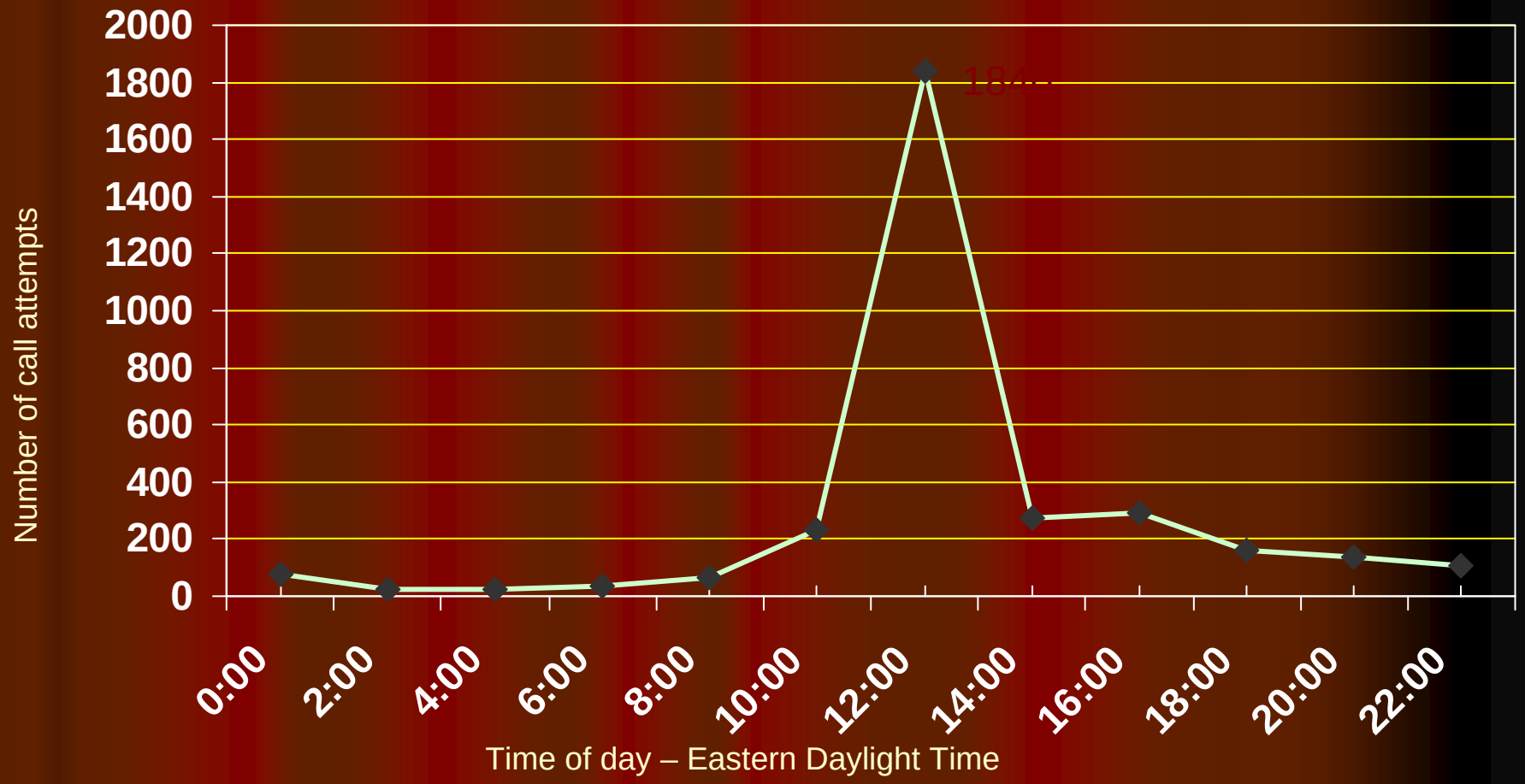
- Sentinel for Health Awards
- Tip sheets, scientific consultation

Sample Evaluation Study: HIV on *B&B*

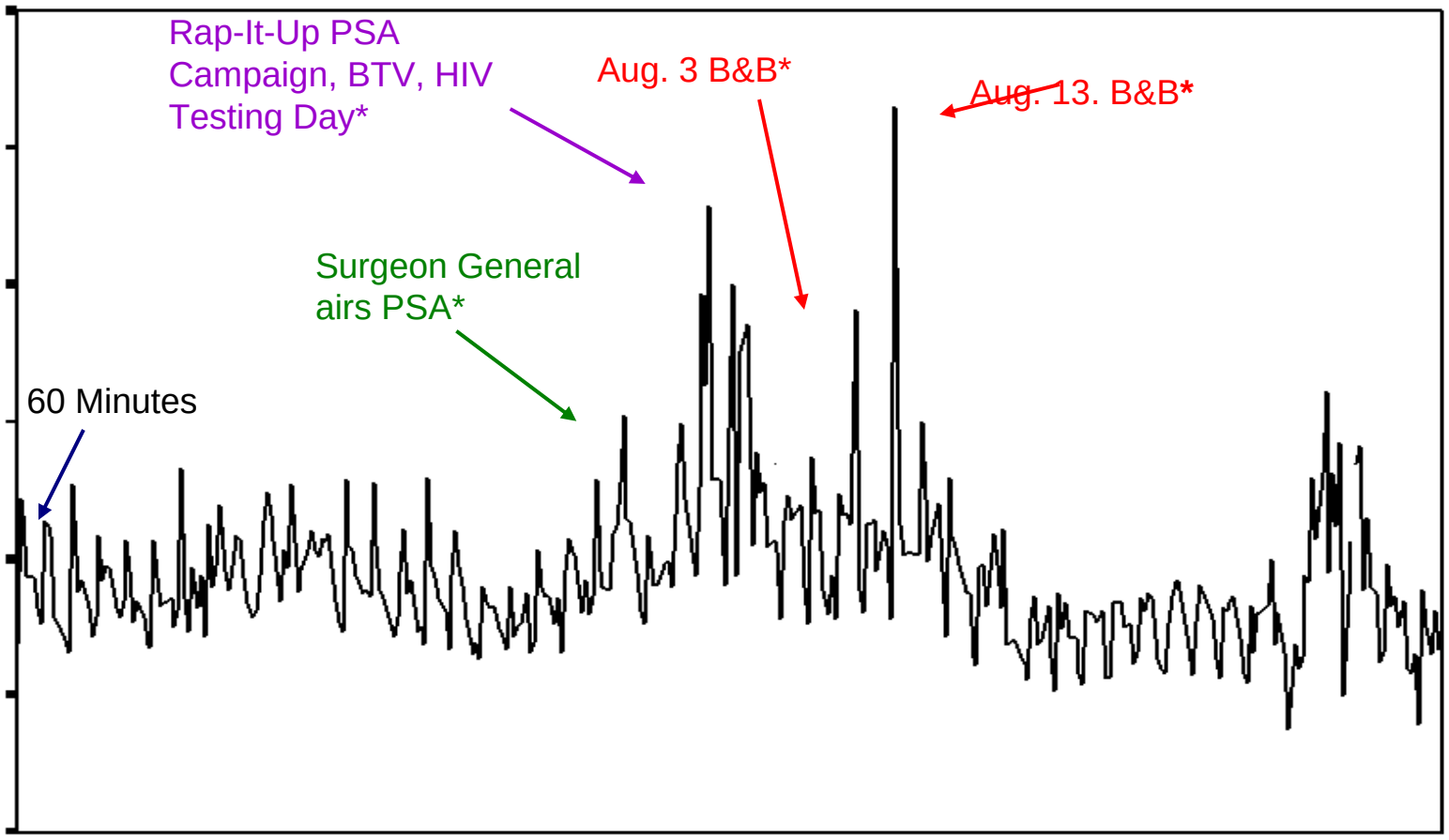




Originating call attempts to the CDC National STD & AIDS Hotlines (800-342-2437) by time of day, August 13, 2001



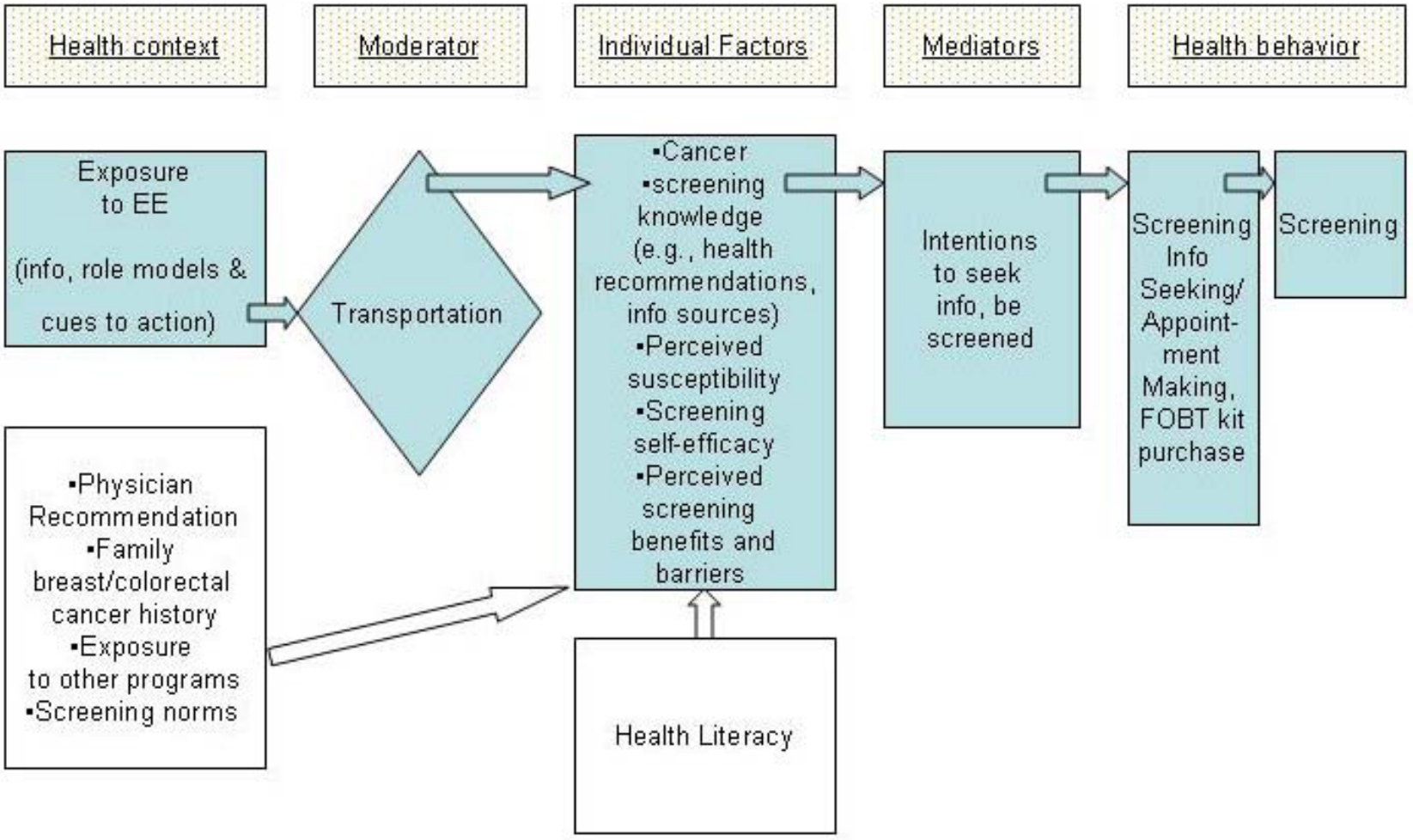
Daily originating call attempts to CDC National STD and AIDS Hotline (800-342-2437), January – December, 2001



NIH R01 Grant

- Promotion of breast and colorectal cancer screening among AA women > 50, TIM frame
- Formative research, audio soap opera creation, & an experimental study of versions that vary by:
  - Message sent by main or subsidiary character
  - Presence or absence of humor
  - (with an expert interview control condition)
- 2-minute episodes designed to be culturally acceptable to the audience and low cost to produce & broadcast

Figure 2. Conceptual model of screening



Why African American Women?

- African Americans have lower levels of health literacy, which is associated with limited understanding and use of preventive care, and poorer access to care
- African Americans are screened for breast and colon cancer at lower rates than whites and diagnosed at later, non-localized disease stages
- The soap opera audience is disproportionately African American

New Millennium Studios

- Local, culturally competent
- Seasoned entertainment professionals

Studio: TV deal a pat on the back for Reid

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It appears life definitely has given him something worth rubbing in the faces of his greatest critics, but the always well-dressed and debonair Reid takes it in stride.

"I wouldn't say we are victorious yet," Reid said. "If this was basketball we would be celebrating the fact that we made it to the playoffs and looking ahead to what we hope is victory in the finals."

The TV One deal is, for all intents and purposes, a triumphant pat on the back for Reid. Backed by ComCast Corp. and Radio One, the television station is scheduled to launch next January. The programming will be geared toward African American viewers that fall in the 18- to 49-year-old range, with a special push toward women. Reid's role will be to serve as an advisor for programming and production for the station's president and CEO Johnathan Rodgers, as well as to supervise post-production for many of the station's offerings.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Tim and Daphne Reid have weathered the storm for six years at New Millennium Studios and said that they see survival as success.

New Millennium will also play an integral role in launching TV One by offering the network a first look at all of its original content targeting African American adults. The studios will provide three made-for-TV movies, three entertainment series and three non-fiction series including a public affairs program and, yes, a reality show that Reid said will likely focus on the life of eight students at a historically black college. (Anyone thinking Virginia State University, which is not so far from the studios? Or perhaps Norfolk State University where Reid is a huge alumni? Reid isn't giving up any details.)

"For the most part any programming geared toward African Americans has been the hip-hop culture and there are successful African Americans in this country that want to see their stories told as well," Reid said. "That hasn't been done yet and there is an entire segment of the country that I have long felt should have their stories told. That's been my vision and the goal I have based my work on."

He hopes the deal with TV One will do just that and, in the process, inch the doors of the film industry a little bit wider in central Virginia.

His biggest supporters have faith that it will.

"I think more than anything it goes to show what someone with vision can accomplish regardless of what anyone else has to say about what is and isn't possible," said Rita McClenney of the Virginia Film Office. "Tim had a vision and he's worked hard to make it a reality and I think this is proof that his vision was on target."

For Reid and those busy at work on the grounds of New Millennium, that vision has been to provide quality content that tells the stories of African Americans on a tight, and at times, uncomfortably small budget.

The TV One deal couldn't have come at a better time, Reid said, especially for a studio like New Millennium.

Though the Petersburg-based movie company has had a hand in some major productions including Reid's own "Asunder," "For Real," and the critically acclaimed "Link's Place," movie and television deals haven't exactly been thrown at New Millennium in overwhelming numbers.

Reid has had to find new and creative ways of making things happen, like adding his own music label and video distribution company. Today, New Millennium is perhaps one of only a handful of wholly owned African-American, independent film companies that does everything from pre-production, including financing, to post production, such as adding in the music and distributing the videos to major stores like Blockbuster and Hollywood Video.

"He saw something missing in the film and television industries that he knew could and should be provided, and that is what we are doing," said Martin Jones, general manager of New Millennium Studios. "We don't have a crystal ball that will tell us if everything is going to work out the way we hope, but right now the future is looking bright."

For Jones, that is enough to make the past six years worth any criticism he and others at New Millennium may have had to endure.

"Every year we get stronger and prove more people wrong," Jones said. "We are doing what we set out to do and that is the best way to prove to everyone that New Millennium is a perfect fit and the right idea."

• *Jennifer Francis may be reached at 732-3456, ext. 255.*

Progress to Date

- Ran 7 focus groups of “doers” & “non-doers”
- Developed and taped the narrative (*Mama on Board*) in 4 versions, & an expert interview with the same actors and # of mentions of screening
- Have run 6 listening groups (23 doers/82 non)

Why EE for Disparity Reduction?

- The relatively long format narrative allows *showing* as well as *telling;* this is user-friendly and "sticky" message transmission
- Targeted channels with broad audience reach are already available and funded
- Potential artistic collaborators are motivated to help their communities

More Research Needed

- There is a long list of narrative elements to test experimentally
- Generalizability to other low literacy populations should be established
- Testing external validity with elective audience exposure requires field trials

Recruitment Note

- Mainly through churches, mainly Baptist
- Literature suggests proactive (e.g., work through churches) and reactive (e.g., run ads) strategies, but gives little specific guidance
- Nuances such as the distinction between independent and affiliated churches appear to be completely absent

Infrastructure Issue

How can we bring more researchers together with writers, producers, and members of the affected target audiences in a fruitiful, on-going, multi-directional, agenda-setting dialogue?

Thank you, and stay tuned!

