

# **Docudrama Media Effects on Viewer's Behaviors Related to Stress, Emotion, Perception, and Reality**

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# Docudrama Media Effects on Viewer's Behaviors Related to Stress, Emotion, Perception, and Reality

## Abstract

*Many television and theater-screened documentaries and docudramas share the goal of influencing viewer behavior. However, few studies have determined whether viewer behavior change actually occurs and if so, the nature of the reported changes. This study examined the effect of a docudrama, *People v. the State of Illusion*, on its viewers via a pre-post survey of participant attitudes and self-reported viewer behavior changes occurring within 10 days of the film screening. The themes in the movie related to stress, human emotions, perceptual differences, and the nature of reality. While viewing the film elicited no change in the measure of stress,  $F(1, 3) = .03, p = .856$ ; statistically significant reductions in the measures for emotion,  $F(1, 3) = 8.83, p = .004$  and perception,  $F(1, 3) = 5.45, p = .023$ ; and a statistically significant increase in the measure of reality,  $F(1, 3) = 205.25, p \sim .000$  were found. Qualitative data reinforced the findings and added an interesting and important dimension to the results. These findings substantiate previously undocumented emotional effects resulting from viewing appropriately designed docudramas.*

**Keywords:** docudrama, attitude change, behavior change, documentary, film

## Introduction

The purpose of this mixed-methods study was to determine if a full-length documentary film featuring an intermittent drama format (docudrama) changed selected work and life behaviors of its viewers. The film, *People v. the State of Illusion* (Vickers & Cervine, 2011), has been screened throughout the United States, England, Ireland, Canada, and South Africa. In addition to public showings at city movie theaters, other types of venues have included film festivals, public television (PBS) and church groups. Custom viewings have been provided for senior and mid-level employees at several public, private, and not-for-profit organizations. Additionally, the film has had extensive exposure in two US universities (masters and doctoral level courses) and several US government agencies. Viewers responses to the movie led to the primary research question for this study: What is the relationship between viewing a 90-minute docudrama and self-reported behavior changes by its viewers, specifically related to workplace and non-workplace behaviors?

Four psychologically-related themes are addressed throughout the storyline of *People v. the State of Illusion*. The themes include 1) the nature of and physiological effects of stress, 2) the process of human perception, 3) the nature and structure of reality, and 4) emotions and human physiology. Eight subject matter experts are featured throughout the movie via commentary related to the four themes of the film. The storyline centers on a male single parent who caused a fatal traffic accident with driving under the influence of alcohol. Throughout his 6-year prison sentence, he experiences a transformative shift in attitudes and behavior, eventually

emerging from prison to be reunited with his young daughter. The storyline events are matched with the themes discussed by the subject matter experts.

### **Docudramas and Behavior Change**

The American Society for Training and Development reported in 2011 that U.S. organizations spent 156.2 billion U.S. dollars on employee learning (Miller, 2012). Some training includes major media components some of this in the form of motion pictures included for instructive experiences. There is limited literature demonstrating empirical evidence of relationships between training using major films and workplace attitudes or behavior change. One of the potential reasons for the scarcity of empirical evidence on the effects of big-screen films on training program participants might be the permissions required for researchers to use a copyrighted film or parts of it for research purposes.

In this study, the authors examined the hypothesis that viewer behaviors might change after viewing *People v. the State of Illusion*. Any results of behavior change could offer insight into the effectiveness of using major films as part of instructional strategies and into how practitioners might evaluate the effectiveness of major film docudrama components in training programs. The difference between the previous direction of research and the current study is the focus on how viewing and discussing a film might affect the subsequent behaviors of its viewers in both work and life contexts.

### **Emotional Involvement with Films**

Characters in film have communicated the human experience in many contexts for more than a century (Bartsch, 2010). The film genre of documentaries, exemplified in modern times by films such as *Fahrenheit 9/11* (Moore, 2004) and *An Inconvenient Truth* (Gore, 2006), has recently begun a shift back to the documentary as educational and informative. These new media formats provide information to movie viewers and allow the viewers to interpret the information as they see fit (Gerdes, 2011). Evidence of immediate effects from watching documentaries emerged from the recent study of the effects of viewing Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11*. The study found evidence of immediate effects, such as eliciting strong emotions and cognitive changes which may influence behavior (Arendt, Marquart, & Matthes, 2013; Koopman et al., 2006). The current study addresses Till et al.'s (2011) call to extend the literature on emotional involvement and response to films.

### **Attitude and Behavioral Change**

Al Gore's documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth*, is believed to have affected the attitudes and behavior of many who viewed the film through first person effects (Lin, 2013). Lin contended the direction the film creators intended could have been a factor that influenced participants' attitudes and behaviors. Other factors that may influence a shift in attitude and behavior resulting from viewing a film include social influence and individual morality, which may affect emotional reactions (Raney, 2011; Shedlosky-Shoemaker, Costabile, DeLuca, & Arkin, 2011). The current study was a quantitative and qualitative analysis of participant engagement with the film *People v. the State of Illusion*, examining whether participant behavior changed within 5 to 7 days of viewing the film.

### **The History of the Documentary**

John Grierson coined the term documentary in 1926 (Tibbets, 2006). Documentaries offer viewers a glimpse of possibilities regarding many topics. For example, people might learn

about culture and conflict by observing the content in some documentaries. Hilderbrand (2009) suggested the conflict filmmakers introduced in a documentary could be the impetus for meaningful change. As we have suggested earlier, most films that have a purpose of influencing others on one subject or another often appear to achieve some results. In some work settings, companies have used documentaries to train managers to recognize different cultures (Early, 1987). Organizations continue to use documentaries to prepare employees for many work challenges. One example is learning about building relationships between caregivers and physicians (Rabow, Goodman, Chang, Berger, & Folkman, 2010). Warmington, Van Gorp, and Grosvenor (2011) viewed documentaries as form of argument about the historical world. Nichols (2001) proposed six modes or genres of the documentary: expository, observational, poetic, participatory, reflexive, and performative. Most documentaries offer viewers a glimpse of a topic oftentimes intended to shape a perspective on some point in time, influence behavior, or shift an attitude. However, little agreement exists among theorists on a definition of documentaries (Plantinga, 2005). In the next section we will explore the definition of one particular approach, the docudrama.

### **The Docudrama Format**

The docudrama is a genre of documentary blending some melodramatic fiction and news documentary to influence viewers' attitudes (Adams et al., 1985). The docudrama approach might apply to one or all of the modes of documentaries based on Nichols' (2001) model. Docudramas might start with a description of a problem discussing its meaning and implications. Viewers are oftentimes placed in the driver's seat as observers or participants. The content of docudramas offers a perspective and the potential for a shift in attitude as in *People v. the State of Illusion*. The movie engages and challenges viewers to consider how a shift in worldview might shift the direction of their personal and work lives.

## **Attitude-Change Oriented Media**

### **General Public**

Attitude-change oriented media is often focused on changing the attitudes and beliefs of the public (Hilderbrand, 2009). Examples include *Fahrenheit 9/11* and *An Inconvenient Truth*. In *Fahrenheit 9/11*, producer Michael Moore examined what he believed was a controversy surrounding the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 in New York, Washington DC, and Pennsylvania. Al Gore, former Vice-President of the United States, produced the film *An Inconvenient Truth* examining the effects of global warming (Koopman et al., 2006; Beattie, Sale, & Mcguire, 2011). In both films, the producers reached out to viewers attempting to shift viewer attitudes. The method in both examples was Nichols' (2001) expository mode of documentary developing an argumentative frame to connect with and influence viewers.

Producers of *An Inconvenient Truth* and *Fahrenheit 9/11* appear to have attempted to change the attitudes and beliefs of viewers by focusing on emotion and conjecture, rather than applying scientific theory (Koopman et al., 2006; Beattie et al., 2011). Emotion-linked attitude change has been shown to not last long – any measured attitude change will often be fleeting and does not create lasting change (Koopman et al., 2006; Beattie et al., 2011). *People v. the State of Illusion* differs from both *Fahrenheit 9/11* and *An Inconvenient Truth* because it was specifically created to focus on scientifically-sound methods that an individual could use to change their self-perceptions and thus create positive change within their own lives, as discussed by Gerdes

(2011).

### **Attitude Change Media Within Organizations**

Attitude-change oriented media has also been tested within corporations and organizations wishing to change employee behaviors or attitudes (Earley, 1987; Reinecke & Trepte, 2008). Attitude-change media within organizations and corporations is often designed to benefit the organization as a whole by improving employee morale or productivity (Reinecke & Trepte, 2008; Springer Pence, 2004). A well-known example of attitude-change oriented media used within an organizational context is the “Fish!” philosophy, developed by John Christensen that focused on customer service within organizations. *Fish!* was intended to boost the morale of customer service representatives, and, in turn, customers (Springer Pence, 2004).

### **Spiritually-Oriented Documentaries**

Calvert (2006) observed that spiritually-oriented documentaries often focused on individual self-improvement, but oftentimes did not include scientific materials to support the self-improvement guidelines. If scientific materials are included within spiritually-oriented documentaries, the materials need to be chosen very carefully in order to bolster the case for self-improvement via the spiritual methods and guidelines that underlie the documentary. Examples of spiritually-oriented documentaries include *The Secret* (Heriot, Byrne, Goldenfein, & McLindon, 2006) and *Fireproof* (Kendrick & Kendrick, 2008).

Many spiritually-oriented documentaries examine the ways in which conscious and unconscious thought deviates from a perceived “positive” mental and physical state, and detail the ways in which individuals can maintain a “positive” state and avoid dropping into a “negative” state of being. These documentaries are produced as a part of or lead to an integrated offering that includes a variety of printed support materials like books, study guides, devotionals, leader manuals, and for some special facilitator classes and certifications.

### **Scientifically-Oriented Documentaries**

Scientifically-oriented documentaries originated in the 1890s not long after the invention of the medium as a tool for research and medicine (Tercier, 2009). In spite of this long history, little is known about how this genre of documentaries might affect the attitudes of viewers. Southwell and Torres (2006) are credited with pioneering research into the causal mechanisms affecting viewer beliefs about the nature of science through viewing science-based media on television. Southwell and Torres’ call for further research resulted in one additional study examining how viewers might develop beliefs about science through watching science-based documentaries (Retzbach, Retzbach, Maier, Otto, and Rahnke, 2013).

*People v. the State of Illusion* and *What the Bleep Do We Know!?* are two examples of scientifically oriented documentaries. In *What the Bleep!?* film producers William Arntz and Betsy Chasse gathered scientists from several disciplines to describe how we might choose to perceive the world shaping our reality. Many of the scientists and scholars in the film based their judgments on quantum theory (Griffiths, 2013; Loewer, 1998). If people have the power to perceive one reality, then people might be able to perceive multiple realities. In *People v. the State of Illusion*, film producer Austin Vickers described how people perceive and choose reality making choices dependent on how they chose to observe the world. The film’s expert witnesses included psychologists, neuroscientists, biologists, and physicists who provide evidence suggesting the reality that we know is the reality we choose to perceive. Scientifically-oriented

documentaries might have influence on the attitudes of viewers. The current study would help to address the current gap in the literature on how such films might affect individuals working in corporate America.

## Method

### Mixed-Methods Design

Our design was a mixed-methods explanatory design with follow-up explanations. The quantitative analysis was emphasized and explanations developed from follow-up qualitative interviews and analyses.

The research design was formulated as two semi-independent experiments combined. We used qualitative methods in two places: at the beginning we used subject matter experts (SME) to create and sort items related to the subject matter of the film. These items were assembled into four thematic scales to be used to collect participant reactions. For the experimental group we followed the post test by collecting comments from the participants.

### Materials – Pre and Post Test

We needed to develop measures appropriate to *People v. the State of Illusion*. For the quantitative instrument, four psychologists were recruited as SMEs in attitude measurement and change. The SMEs were given a list of possible items generated by the authors to reflect content identified as attitudinally relevant from the film. The SMEs sorted the items into attitude-related categories based on perceived similarity. The individual items were combined into four scales consisting of five items each. These categories were then thematically named Stress, Emotion, Perception, and Reality. A final review and SME evaluations of the items relative to the four scales confirmed the composition of the scales. The four scales were conceptualized as Likert scales summing the five responses to the component Likert-type items. The items were prepared as an online instrument that could be easily administered before and after any showing of the movie. A participant assigned scores on the five items making up the four Likert scales by using five-point Likert-type items (1= Strongly Agree, 2=Agree, 3=Undecided, 4=Disagree, 5=Strongly Disagree). Since the four scales each contained five items, the individual ratings were simply added together to obtain the four Likert scale attitude measure scores for each participant and collected before and after viewing the movie. The mixed-design MANOVA was used to analyze the dependent variable measures.

Participant discussion of the film was the focus of our experiment. The post-viewing instrument contained the same 20 items as the pre-viewing survey with five additional questions allowing participants to disclose via type-written narrative replies: 1) whether they had changed any workplace behaviors as a result of viewing the movie - defined as: *How you think or act on the job?*, 2) whether they had changed any personal behaviors as a result of viewing the movie - defined as; *How you think or act away from the job?*, 3) the specific movie themes that led to reported changes in behavior, either on or off the job, 4) whether or not the participant would authorize the movie to be shown in their workplace if given the authority to do so, and 5) how the participant would rate being involved in the study itself (unsatisfactory – fair – good – excellent – no reply).

The repeated measures approach was used for both online and live presentations of the film to assess attitude changes resulting from watching the film. The survey was taken

immediately before viewing the movie and again 7-10 days after viewing the movie. For the experimental group, we added an immediate face-to-face post-viewing intervention of a one-hour discussion session facilitated by a SME reinforcing major points from the movie; no post-viewing discussion occurred with the online control group. We wanted to discover whether a post-viewing, SME-facilitated discussion led to statistically significant differences on the quantitative measures and or noticeable differences in self-reported qualitative data.

**Participants**

Two purposive convenience samples were selected. Online participants from a master’s level class in organizational behavior were assigned to the online control group (N = 36). Members of the high-technology firm were assigned the live experimental group (N =22).

The study included 58 participants. The ages of the participants ranged from 20 to over 50 years; the majority of participants were between 26 and 40 years of age (See Table 1). Educational backgrounds of the participants varied from bachelor’s to master’s degrees. Participants held a variety of positions within organizations and the US military. Some of the military participants were commissioned officers, others non-commissioned officers. Non-military participants included members of high-technology teams, managers, or administrators. Online participants (control group) were enrolled in a master’s level course in organizational behavior. Live participants (experimental group) worked in a variety of positions – from individual contributor to executive – for a high technology sales and marketing firm.

Table 1

*Participant Demographics*

Age	Online Control Participants		Live Experimental Participants	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Under 20	0	0	0	0
20-25	3	1	3	3
26-30	1	1	1	7
31-35	1	5	1	2
36-40	7	7	0	0
41-45	4	2	2	2
46-50	1	1	0	0
50+	0	2	1	0

**Quantitative Phase**

In our study we wanted to determine if there were differences between the two independent groups of participants as well as from a post viewing presentation and discussion. We were also interested in comparing attitude changes for the two groups on four measures administered prior to watching the movie and repeated after watching and discussing the movie

(experimental group) or only watching the movie (control group). The appropriate design for this was a mixed-design multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) with one between-subjects independent variable (the samples: student, corporate), one within-subjects independent variable (time of assessment: pre-movie, post-movie), and four dependent (response) variables (stress, emotion, perception, and reality).

## Results

### Quantitative Results

We checked the assumptions for MANOVA. Box's test for the equality of covariance matrices strongly passed,  $p = .514$ . With only two levels of repeated measure, sphericity was not an issue. The multivariate test results showed no significant difference between the student and corporate samples,  $p = .244$ , i.e., the members of the two sample groups showed no difference in the joint distribution of stress, emotion, perception, and reality.

The within-subjects results showed no significant difference between the pre-movie and post-movie measures for stress,  $F(1, 3) = .03$ ,  $p = .856$  and significant differences between the pre-movie and post-movie measures for emotion,  $F(1, 3) = 8.83$ ,  $p = .004$  (See Figure 1); Perception,  $F(1, 3) = 5.45$ ,  $p = .023$  (See Figure 2); and Reality,  $F(1, 3) = 205.25$ ,  $p \sim .000$  (See Figure 3).

Figure 1. Plot of Pre-Post Mean Differences for Emotion

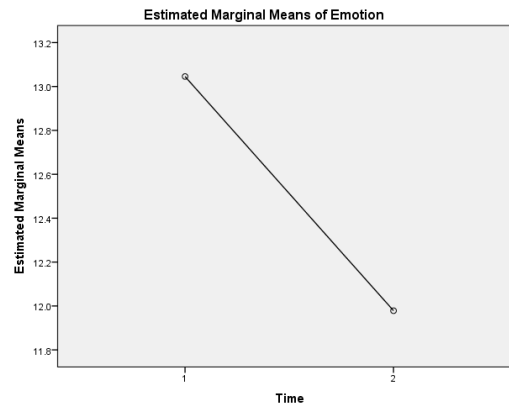




Figure 2. Plot of Pre-Post Mean Differences for Perception

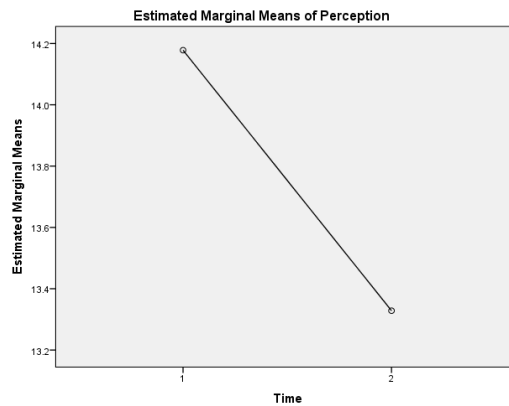
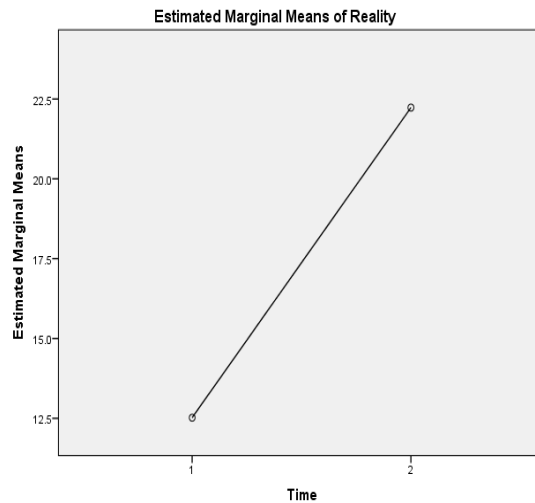
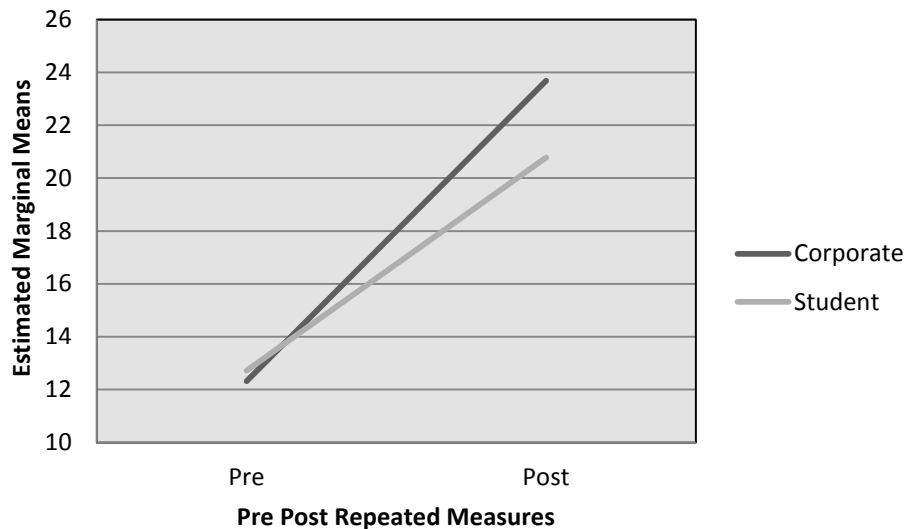


Figure 3. Plot of Pre-Post Mean Differences for Reality



The results indicated one significant interaction (for Reality scores) between the time of the assessment and the sample groups. This interaction can be seen in Figure 4. The corporate pre-movie mean score is plotted with the black line; it is less than the student pre-movie mean score, but this reverses for the post-movie scores, i.e., corporate post-movie mean score is greater than the student post-movie mean score. The student pre-post movie mean scores are plotted with the grey line; their pre-movie mean score is higher than the corporate mean score, but this reverses for the post-movie scores.

Figure 4. Plot of Interaction between Student and Corporate Samples on Reality Pre and Post Measurements



Pairwise comparisons revealed significant differences between the pre-movie and post-movie measures for three of the measures; Emotion,  $p = .004$ ; Perception,  $p = .023$ ; and Reality,  $p \sim .000$ . Therefore, we conclude that viewing the film *People vs The State of Illusion* elicited no change in the measure of stress, but statistically significant reductions in the measures for emotion and reality, and a statistically significant increase in the measure of Reality. These findings substantiate previously undocumented emotional effects resulting from viewing appropriately designed docudramas like *People vs The State of Illusion*. The significant interaction shows that the change in mean pretest to posttest scores for the two samples was different for the student and the corporate samples. While both increased, the corporate sample increased more dramatically than did the student sample indicating a stronger effect on the corporate sample.

### Qualitative Follow-Up

Manual inspection and review of all written comments from the experimental group of corporate participants assessed the reported impact of viewing and discussing the film. Among the corporate employees a shift in rating from disagree to agree was reported by 86% of the participants. This compared to a similar but smaller shift, 70%, in the control group of students. These shifts are illustrated by the following quotes from participants:

**Item 36:** *Since viewing the movie, have you made any **changes in your work life** (i.e., how you think or act on the job) related to having viewed the movie? Please elaborate*

**Students - 69% positive comments, such as:**

I feel that I now have a better understanding of my perceptions and the effects that they not only have on me, but also those around me. In addition, our attitudes are

based on choices that we make in our environments as they pertain to perceptions. I have made a more cognizant effort to seek out the positive and while negative people and circumstances will be a part of everyday life, I have made choices to remain positive and nonjudgmental as well as to continue to gain a better understanding of my perceptions and how to change them.

**Students - 31% negative comments, such as:**

I haven't really changed much as I view the world through my eyes (my perception) that equates to my reality.

**Corporate - 66% positive statements, such as:**

Since viewing the movie, I understand the neurological reasons for my negative emotions. While I was working on being more positive before viewing the movie for my emotional health, I now am more confident in my ability to do so since I now understand that I have an addiction to being negative and need to treat my "recovery" as such.

**Corporate - 34% negative comments, such as:**

I have not made any changes in my work life. I feel like there is too much to get done in my role and it will not get done if I change the way I do things.

**Item 37:** *Thinking back from the time you viewed the movie until now, have you made any changes in your personal, non-work life (i.e., how you think or act away from the job) related to having viewed the movie? Please elaborate.*

**Students - 78% positive comments, such as:**

The film definitely enhanced my self-awareness, which has allowed me to notice much sooner either at work or in my personal life when I am stressed or anxious. I also feel more empowered to escape from my feelings of stress and anxiety, and thus have made behavioral changes in both work and my personal life to modulate my negative emotions.

**Students - 22% negative comments, such as:**

When I look at my personal life I really can't say that I have changed much. I have created a very happy and safe home for my daughter and I and I continue to see the many blessings I have. The movie did help me to see how fortunate I am to have such a wonderful child and I hugged her extra tight when we went to bed that night. I could never imagine how a simple mistake would ever take her away from me for months.

**Corporate - 83% positive statements, such as:**

Yes, I have recently started a diet, with more of a healthy lifestyle approach. After watching the movie I have taken on a new approach where I control the way I feel about food and my emotions that usually cause me to over indulge.

**Corporate - 17% negative comments, such as:**

I don't believe that I have acted any differently since the movie. I do carry the same outlook as mentioned earlier about focusing on the positives.

**Item 38:** *The movie focused on five major themes. 1) the impact of stress in our lives, 2) the role of emotions as they relate to human physiology, 3) how we perceive the world around us, 4) the nature of reality and how we form our own, and 5) the importance of the human imagination. Thinking back over the past two weeks, which - if any - of the*

themes above have made a difference in your view of your life in general?

**Students - 94% positive comments, such as:**

I believe that the first three themes have made the most impact on my life. I have a better understanding of how stress can impact our way of thinking and emotions, but that it's important to change the reactions to those triggers. I now strive to perceive the world in a more positive light and distance myself from those that evoke negativity.

**Students - 6% negative comments, such as:**

I do not think any of the above mentioned themes has made a recent change or difference in my views.

**Corporate – 100% positive statements, such as:**

I think all of these themes have made an impact in my life, particularly 4 – the nature of reality and how we form our own, and 5 – the importance of the human imagination. These have affected my way of perceiving life in general by blocking out negative emotions and replacing them with positive ones.

**Corporate - 0% negative comments.**

**Item 39.1** *This is a two-part question. 39.1) As a student of organizational behavior, and as a member of the workforce (military or non-military), what is your view of the usefulness of the movie in the workplace? That is, if you were asked to decide whether to authorize the movie to be shown where you work, would you do so? Why or why not?*

**Students - 92% positive comments, such as:**

Given that work is a major source of individual stress and negative emotions for many people, I certainly feel the themes of stress management, physiological responses to emotions, and individual reality perception are relevant to the workplace, and thus I would definitely authorize the movie to be shown at my organization.

**Students - 8% negative comments, such as:**

I don't think that the vast majority of younger Soldiers would grasp the concepts in the movie and find it boring. This is most likely because they are not enlightened (having attained sufficient knowledge) yet in their young lives. A lot of young Soldiers feel that the world controls them and that they do not control their own glide-path through life.

**Item 39.2** *What themes from the movie translate well - or not - to the workplace?*

**Students - 53% positive comments, such as:**

I believe all of the themes translate well to the workplace; especially the impact of stress in our lives and the nature of reality and how we form our own.

**Students - 47% No Reply**

**Item 39.1:** *As a student of organizational behavior, and as a member of the workforce (military or non-military), what is your view of the usefulness of the movie in the workplace? That is, if you were asked to decide whether to authorize the movie to be shown where you work, would you do so? Why or why not?*

**Corporate - 71% positive statements, such as:**

I think the movie was very useful for the workplace. Mainly because people go to work every day and a lot of time do the same thing every day. It becomes very mundane and people can start to think negatively because of that. The video reveals that no matter your circumstance you still have control over seeing the positive in any circumstance and also having a positive outcome no matter what. So, yes, I would authorize the movie to be shown at my work.

**Corporate - 29% negative comments**

I feel this is more of a movie to watch as a personal choice. Our group is definitely not the average workplace, so it was appropriate, but I feel this is something more for personal improvement.

**Item 39.2** *What themes from the movie translate well - or not - to the workplace?*

**Corporate - 71% positive comments, such as:**

I think the impact of stress in our lives, and the importance of imagination themes both translate well to the workplace. They are relevant because if you have stress at work you will not perform well and not succeed at your job. If you use imagination and create a positive experience, that will translate into your work and help you succeed.

**Corporate - 29% negative comments (not addressing question)**

His perspective that changed from the first time he went to prison and met the guard and janitor, to by the time he was released was a big difference in the way he seen things.

**Qualitative Content Analysis Summary**

Positive effects both for simply viewing the movie and for viewing and discussing the movie were clearly identifiable in the narrative responses provided by both groups of participants. The stronger impact on the experimental group of watching the movie and discussing it was also clearly evident. The percentages of positive and negative comments are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2

*Percentage Changes in Post-Movie Attitude Comments*

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Positive Replies</b>	<b>Negative Replies</b>
Control Group - Students No Intervention	36	69%	31%
	37	78%	22%
	38	94%	6%
	39.1	92%	8%
	39.2	53%	47% No Reply
Experimental Group – Corporate Group Follow-up Intervention	36	66%	34%
	37	83%	17%
	38	100%	0%
	39.1	71%	29%
	39.2	71%	29%

### **Limitations**

Two of the limitations of the current study were that the samples were convenience samples and all participants were volunteers. In spite of these limitations, the data in the study offers quantitative and qualitative evidence of results revealing changes in viewers' attitudes after watching the *People v. the State of Illusion*.

### **Discussion and Recommendations**

Our results demonstrating the behavioral influences of watching the docudrama *People v. the State of Illusion* on viewers add substance to the general impression by many trainers that including films in training can lead to meaningful change. Although *People v. the State of Illusion* challenges viewers to think differently about some significant opinions, it does not do so in an argumentative way creating the conflict related changes suggested by Hilderbrand (2009). We found *People v. the State of Illusion* had an impact similar to those reported by Rabow, Goodman, Chang, Berger, and Folkman (2010), Springer Pence (2004), and Reinecke and Trepte (2008) by contributing to a relationship building viewpoint and indirectly influencing attitude and behavior changes in viewers.

We feel the application of docudrama films in education has considerably more potential than has been capitalized on by most current users. Of particular value could be the systematic definition and research exploration of the six different modes of documentary films as categorized by Nicols (2001). Specifically exploring the structure and impact of expository, observational, poetic, participatory, reflexive, and performative documentary films could open new avenues of production and impact for film makers.

### **Summary**

Our study was prompted by the extensive use of *People v. the State of Illusion* by one of our team members (Vandermark) in training and speaking sessions in corporate, government, and educational settings. Audience responses to the film eventually led to the development of the research question: What is the relationship between viewing a 90-minute docudrama and self-reported behavior changes by its viewers, specifically related to workplace and non-workplace behaviors? We wanted to discover, for instance, if exposure to a docudrama could shift the behaviors of beginning doctoral students, or perhaps managers' behavior with the employees they supervise. Could a film lead to important self-reported changes in one's personal life, perhaps to the point of positively affecting marital and familial relationships? And if so, what would be the nature of the changes experienced?

Given the results of our study, we believe appropriately chosen docudramas stand an excellent chance of leading to a significant shift in the self-reported behavior changes of its viewers, contingent of course on the film's content. Adding post-viewing discussion is recommended, as is consideration of the development of follow-on materials to be used in workshops or seminars. We also recognize the need for further study related to the use of the docudrama as a behavior change stimulus, especially across different audience types in settings we did not examine. We are optimistic however, that this study will lead to continued advances in the field of media psychology and to newer approaches to educational technology, especially in the disciplines of corporate training and higher education.

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