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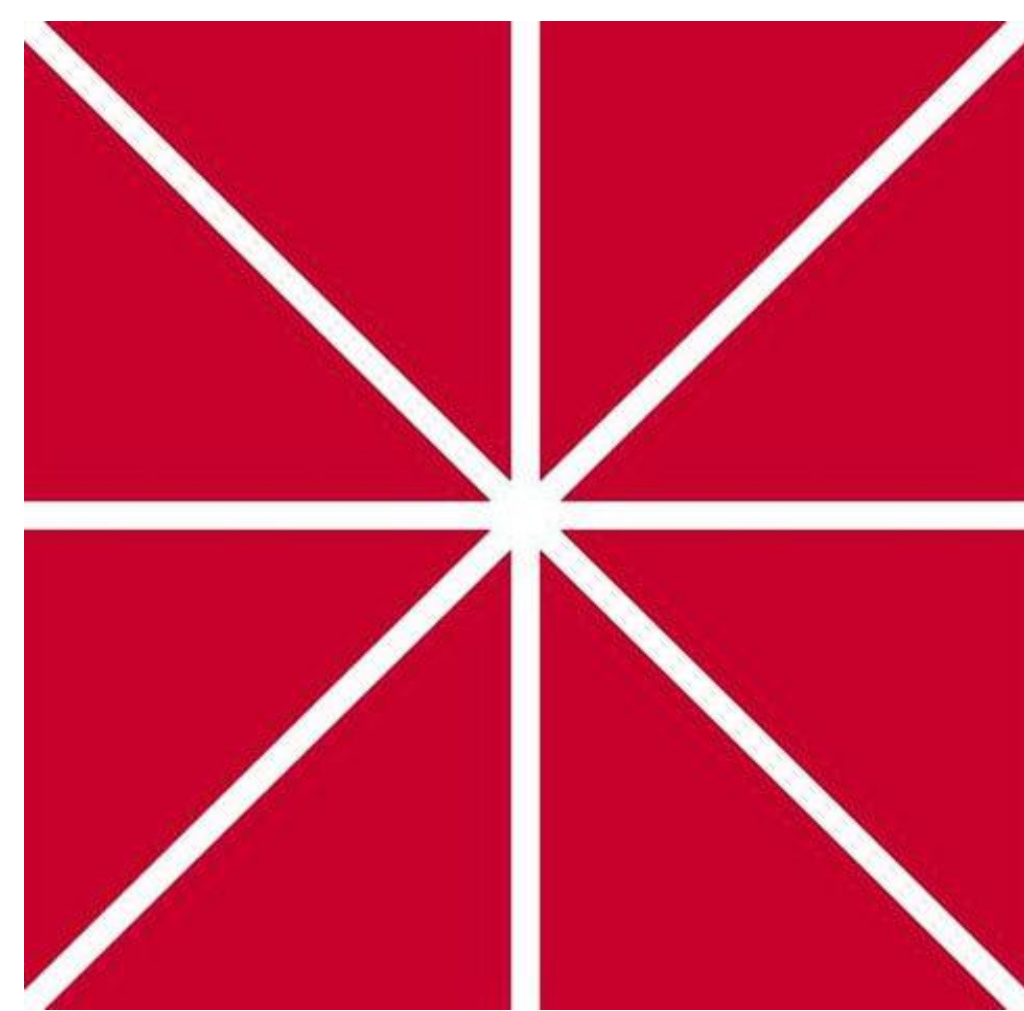
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Differences within Eudaimonic Media: Exploring how Meaningful and Inspirational Content Elicit Emotions

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Introduction

Recently, researchers theoretically discriminated eudaimonic media (Oliver et al., 2018) into inspirational and meaningful media, but empirical research on this differentiation has only started. This exploratory study attempted to differentiate the emotions elicited by meaningful or inspiring movie clips. Moreover, the study explored the role of movie endings versus trailer clips as a way to test stimulus material effectiveness for future studies.

Hypotheses

H1: a) Previously defined meaningful clips will have higher values of meaningfulness than previously defined inspiring clips; **b)** previously defined inspiring clips will have higher values of inspiration than previously defined meaningful clips.

Research suggests that trailers lack the summative meaning of a film's ending. Consequently, trailers might be more inspiring than endings and endings more meaningful.

H2: a) Ending clips will have higher meaningfulness than trailer clips; **b)** trailer clips will have higher inspiration than ending clips.

Research suggests that exciting special effects are positively correlated with light, non-serious genres; this light content could evoke positive affect that exceeds that of ending clips. Additionally, previous findings have indicated that positive emotions are strongly associated with inspiring content.

H3: a) Ending clips will have higher sadness than trailer clips; **b)** trailer clips will have higher positive affect than ending clips.

H4: a) Previously defined meaningful clips will have higher sadness than previously defined inspiring clips; **b)** Previously defined inspiring clips will have higher positive emotions than previously defined meaningful clips.

Meaningful movies can cause an individual to reflect on the fleeting nature of life at the movies' conclusion. In addition, meaningful content is associated with heightened mixed affect.

H5: Ending clips will have higher mixed affect than trailer clips.

H6: Meaningful clips will have higher mixed affect than inspiring clips.

A prior study (Raney et al., 2018) provides empirical evidence for Black participants experiencing a higher amount of self-transcendent emotions (i.e., awe, elevation, hope, admiration) in comparison to White and Latino participants, especially through video media. Research suggests that self-transcendent emotions are more strongly associated with inspiring media than meaningful media.

H7: African-American participants will experience more inspiration than White or Hispanic/Latino participants.

Methods

- Participants ($N = 109$; 82.6% female, 19.12 years, 72.5% White ethnic majority) participated in an online quasi experiment where they were randomly allocated to watch and evaluate 4 of 16 short clips (either 4 of 8 endings or 4 of 8 trailers) from popular meaningful ($n=8$) or inspirational movies ($n=8$).
- Movies were deemed meaningful or inspiring based on a prior audience survey (Janicke, Raney, Oliver, & Dale, 2016).

Inspirational Media



Inspirational Emotions:

- Inspiring
- Uplifting
- Hopeful
- Elevating

Inspiring Predicted Movies (endings or trailers):

- *The Blind Side*
- *Forrest Gump*
- *The Pursuit of Happyness*
- *Remember the Titans*



Meaningful Media



Meaningful Emotions:

- Touching
- Moving
- Emotional
- Meaningful

Meaningful Predicted Movies (endings or trailers):

- *The Help*
- *Pay It Forward*
- *Black Hawk Down*
- *Batman Returns*



Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Dependent t-test Results for Happy/Sad Emotions and Meaningful/Inspiring Clips

Emotion	Meaningful Clips		Inspiring Clips		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	M	SD	M	SD			
Positive affect	3.40	1.54	5.28	1.20	12.48	101	p<.001
Sadness	4.68	1.48	3.98	1.48	3.63	101	p<.001
Meaningfulness	6.14	0.76	5.51	1.15	5.38	101	p<.001
Inspiration	5.74	1.03	4.81	1.20	7.59	102	p<.001
Mixed affect	2.67	1.15	3.39	1.34	-5.03	101	p<.001

Results

- Previously defined meaningful content elicited more meaning than previously inspiring clips (H1A ✓), but previously defined inspiring content did not elicit more inspiring emotions than the meaningful clip (H1B ✗).
- Ending clips did not elicit higher meaningfulness than trailer clips (H2A ✗), but trailer clips ($M=5.71$) elicited more inspiration than ending clips ($M=4.77$) (H2B ✓).
- Ending clips were not perceived more sad than trailer clips (H3A ✗), but trailer clips ($M=4.99$) elicit more happiness than ending clips ($M=3.56$). (H3B ✓)
- Inspirational clips ($M=5.28$) elicited more positive emotions than meaningful clips ($M=3.40$) (H4A ✓), and meaningful clips ($M=4.68$) elicited more sadness than inspirational clips ($M=3.98$) (H4B ✓).
- Mixed affect scored higher for trailer clips ($M=3.40$) than inspiring clips ($M=3.40$). (H5 ✓)
- Meaningful clips did not elicit more mixed affect than inspiring clips (H6 ✗)
- African American participants seemed to experience more inspiration ($M=5.69$) compared to White ($M=5.30$) or Hispanic/Latino ($M=5.31$) participants. (H7 ✓)

Discussion

The findings are significant because they suggest that different types of emotional responses in eudaimonic media exist: meaningful emotions may be a response to both inspirational and meaningful media content, and inspiring content may be described as more positive than meaningful content (Rieger & Klimmt, 2018; Clayton et al., 2018).

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