

Positioning Entertainment-Education for Second-Order Change<sup>1</sup>

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## Positioning Entertainment-Education for Second-Order Change

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On the first day of school, a four-year old girl cried so hard that her mother had to stay with her the whole day. This situation repeated itself the next day. The mother wondered what she could do to change her daughter's behavior. In one of the many 19<sup>th</sup> century riots in Paris, a police commander was ordered to shoot at the mob to clear the public square. The commander wondered if he could convince the public to leave the square without firing a single shot. In the late 1980s, the Minister of Health in Thailand is urged to find new ways to combat the rapidly spreading HIV/AIDS. How could the lifestyles and behaviors of those at high risk for contracting the disease, as well as of the general public, be changed? On a day-to-day basis, we are faced with many situations that require the changing of people's beliefs, attitudes and/or behaviors. We are successful in some situations and fail in others. What does it take to change ourselves and/or others?

Scholars have conceptualized social change in multiple ways. Social science scholars of communication focus on persuasion, including how beliefs, attitudes, and/or behaviors in a society are created, modified, or reinforced (O'Keefe, 1990). To bring change, persuasion scholars have grappled with filling what is called the KAP gap -- that is, the gap between an individual's knowledge, attitudes, and practices (Rogers, Vaughan, Swalehe, Rao, Svenkerud, & Sood, 1999; Singhal & Rogers, 1999). Rhetoricians, on the other hand, have focused on the role of communication in promotes truth, justice, and/or other values and ideologies in a society. However, there is no research that systematically explicates the communicative processes of sustainable social change.

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The purpose of the present paper is to investigate the role of entertainment-education programs in sparking second-order changes (which involve a fundamental, transformational shift in one's values and beliefs) in social systems. Most past studies of entertainment-education programs have focused on studying first order social changes (which involve small shifts in knowledge, attitudes, and practices without any fundamental shift in one's values system). Specifically, we study the [impact engendered](#) by group listening to an entertainment-education radio soap opera, *Taru*, in certain villages of India's Bihar State. Consider the following examples from Bihar.

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Inspired by the character of Neha, who establishes a school to educate *dalit* (lower caste) children in the fictional storyline, young male and female listeners of *Taru* in Abirpur Village come together to discuss the paucity of educational opportunities for underprivileged children, and establish a school for *dalit* children by the village well. For the first time in the history of Abirpur Village, young unmarried men and women engaged in a collaborative social cause activity. Later, they jointly attended a theater workshop outside of their village, and collaboratively established a *Taru Natya* (Drama) Club in Abirpur to promote pro-social causes.

Moved by the celebration of young girl's birthday in the *Taru* storyline, a couple in Madhopur Village decided to celebrate their daughter's birthday. While a son's birthday is often a cause for celebration in rural Bihar, a daughter's birthday is rarely a joyous occasion. Sons and daughters, or boys and girls, receive differential treatment in Bihar's rural society. Relative to girls, boys receive better education, nutrition, and care; have better mobility outside of homes; and are more pampered by parents, grandparents, and community elders. The actions of this one couple in Madhopur led to a string of

birthday celebrations for girls in Madhopur, complete with balloons, music, sweets, and cakes. This practice is now prevalent in several neighboring villages of Madhopur, where group listening to *Taru* occurred.

Vandana Kumari, a 17 year-old member of Village Kamtaul's *Taru* listeners club, also regularly listened to an entertainment-education radio serial, *Taru*. During an interview, she noted: “We listen to each episode of *Taru*. We then discuss the episode’s content in our listeners' club. After listening to this radio serial, we have taken decisions to wipe out the caste discrimination in our village, teach *dalit* (lower caste) children, and to pursue higher education.”

By August 2002, within the first five months of *Taru*’s broadcasts, Vandana’s family undertook several social actions which were bold – which previously would have been unthinkable. For instance, Vandana’s father, Shailendra Singh, a rural health practitioner (RHP), goaded and supported by his family members, directly intervened to stop a child marriage in Kamtaul Village. “It was the first time in the history of our village that a child marriage was opposed,” said Singh (personal interview, September 3, 2002). Further, Vandana’s mother, Sunita Singh, once again, goaded and supported by family members, launched an adult literacy program for over 20 *dalit* (low-caste) village women. Every afternoon, she walked to the *Harijan Tola* (the neighborhood where the lower caste people lived), and taught the women alphabets, numbers, and basic health practices. “In our community, it is unthinkable for upper caste *bahus* (daughter-in-laws) [like me] to leave our homes in broad daylight and mingle with lower caste women....but it had to be done,” noted Sunita Singh (personal interview, September 3, 2002).

However, perhaps the boldest action that the Singh family took during the summer of 2002, was to involve the *dalits* (lower caste people) in the wedding celebrations of Vandana's elder sister. The *dalits* (also referred to as *achuts* or untouchables) constitute the lowest rung in India's caste system. Working mainly as scavengers, toilet-cleaners, or garbage-handlers, or engaged in menial occupations as farm laborers or cobblers, the *dalits* are socially ostracized from the mainstream community and live in *Harijan Tolas*, such as the one in Kamtaul Village. Through certain creative, strategic, and new critical actions, the Singh family helped integrate *dalits* more fully in the social matrix of Kamtaul village. The Singh family's actions sparked systemic social changes for *dalits* which decades of emancipatory governmental programs of affirmative action had previously failed to achieve.

The actions undertaken by the Singh family, sparked by listening to an entertainment-education soap opera, *Taru*, hold important lessons for social change practitioners. We begin our paper by enunciating the key difference between first and second order social changes, and propose a framework for understanding how entertainment-education programs can spark second order social changes (like the ones initiated by the Singh family) through a process of modeling, interpersonal dialogue, reframing of existing social realities, and enactment of a new critical action. We propose that once a new critical action is legitimized, then other social actions can follow which amplify the previous ones, reshaping old social norms. We then discuss our various data-collection methods, including a description of how the storyline of *Taru* modeled second-order changes. We then systematically analyze the second order social change processes sparked in Kamtaul Village by focusing on certain critical actions of the Singh family

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(mentioned previously), distilling key insights for social change scholars and practitioners.

### First versus Second Order Change

In their landmark book, *Change: Principles of Problem Formation and Problem Resolution*, Watzlawick, Weakland, and Fisch (1974), offered a useful approach to understanding social change. They argued that the way social change agents define the problem determines the nature of the proposed solutions. In most cases, the social change problem is poorly defined, be it at the individual, group, or societal level.

Embracing a systems perspective, Watzlawick et al. (1974) argue that change can either be classified as "first-order change", or as "second -order change" (p.10). First-order change "occurs within the given system which itself remains unchanged". In second-order change, the system itself changes. In other words, "second-order change is change of change" (p.11).

The concepts of first and second-order change have been explicated by scholars in several fields. In intercultural communication, Bennett (1993) argued that when people adapt to new cultures, two types of modification occur -- behavioral modification and value modification. When a sojourner learns to bow appropriately in front of a Japanese business colleague, behavior modification occurs. However, after years of living in Japan, if one's fundamental values about the importance of showing respect have changed when one bows, value modification has occurred. Behavior modification (without value modification) represents first-order change; value modification, which is more fundamental and transformational, represents second-order change.

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Along similar lines, Maier (1987) argues that when water becomes warmer or colder, first-order change occurs. However, when water turns into ice or steam, second-order change has occurred. First-order change is incremental, involving a linear progression to do more or less, better, faster, or with greater accuracy. Second-order change, on the other hand, involves a nonlinear progression, a transformation from one state to another (Maier, 1987). Second-order change requires greater creativity and prolonged investment of time and contact by a change agent.

Moursund (2002) also distinguishes between first and second-order change. He argues that most new inventions tend to “amplify” what already exists, that is, engender first-order changes. For example, an electric typewriter is replaced with a word processor with a memory. With new diets and exercise regiments, athletes are able to run faster and jump higher. Second-order change occurs, however, when there is a fundamental shift in the way a technology is used. For example, the invention of the steam engine fundamentally changed the way mechanical power was harnessed, bringing far-reaching social changes in terms of both societal production and consumption.

The key propositions of first and second-order change are contrasted in Table 1. As noted previously, first-order change involves a response to problems in which one tries more or less of the same idea. For example, to stop smoking, people are persuaded to try the latest nicotine patch in the market. However, this behavioral shift, even if it occurs, does not adequately address the underlying causes of smoking. Thus such behavioral changes are often short-lived. The story of quitting smoking a million times is told over and over again. Second-order change, on the other hand, represents a more fundamental, transformational, and irreversible shift in a social system.

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Watzlawick et al. (1974) argue that there is a critical need for change agents to understand what level of social change is needed. When first-order change is required and a second-order strategy is used, there is bound to be a “revolution.” In contrast, if there is a need to change the fundamental values of a system, and a first-order change is promoted, only cosmetic social changes are achieved. The first-order change strategy of “more of the same” can actually makes the problem worse. For instance, regulating the consumption of alcohol in a society is necessary, but when restrictions do not work, a natural tendency is to add more punitive restrictions. Legislation may increase the age to get a driver’s license, reduce the levels of blood alcohol content to be cited for drinking and driving, or even revoke one’s driver’s license after a first offence. Or, as an extreme first order change strategy, one could implement total prohibition. However, in every country where prohibition has been tried, a new set of problems have emerged, including bootlegging, crime, and corruption. Watzlawick et al. (1974) argue that the solution (prohibition) can become the bigger problem.

So, in order to bring about transformational social changes, where both behavioral and value modification are desired, change agents need to understand the processes through which second order changes occur. For instance, how does a society fundamentally change its values about egalitarianism to place an equal value on the well-being of girl child as much as a boy child, or of a lower caste *dalit* as much as a higher

caste priest? And, what role can entertainment-education discourses play in sparking second order social change processes?

*E-E Initiated Second Order Change Processes*

For second order change to occur, new stories that resonate with the existing realities of audience members need to be told (see Table 1; Burke, 1950). New solutions to old problems need to be shown. These solutions have to be of the here and now variety; i.e. things that can be done here and now to effect a change (Watzlawick et al., 1974). E-E programs can model new social realities (Singhal, Cody, Rogers, & Sabido, 2004). Existing patterns of social behavior can be questioned and new ways of dealing with them can be modeled. For instance, in the 1999 *Soul City* entertainment-education television series in South Africa, a new collective behavior was modeled to portray how neighbors might intervene in a spousal abuse situation (Singhal & Rogers, 2003). The prevailing cultural norm in South Africa was for neighbors, even if they wished to help a victim, not to intervene in a spousal abuse situation. Wife (or partner) abuse is seen as a private matter, carried out in a private space, with curtains drawn and behind closed doors. In the *Soul City* series, neighbors collectively decide to break the ongoing cycle of spousal abuse. When the next wife-beating episode occurred, they gathered around the abuser's residence and collectively banged pots and pans, censuring the abuser's actions (Soul City, 2000; Usdin, Singhal, Shongwe, Goldstein, & Shabalala, 2004). After this episode was broadcast, pot banging to stop partner abuse was reported in several locations in South Africa (Singhal & Rogers, 2002). By watching the neighbors collectively act against an abuser, viewers learned new ways to break the cycle of spousal abuse.

However, for second order change to occur, just learning new behaviors through media models is not enough (Bandura, 1977; 1997). Acquiring (or learning) a new behavior is only the first step. Audience members have various doubts, inhibitions, and fears about performing the newly-learned behavior. These doubts need to be clarified, and fears overcome, before they can think of performing them in their own social context (Freire, 1970). Discussions, dialogue, and conversations among audience members regarding the content of a media program can clarify doubts, overcome inhibitions, and provide a sense of collective efficacy to act (Papa, Singhal, Sood, Law, Pant, Rogers, and Shefner-Rogers, 2000; Svenkerud, Rao, & Rogers, 1999). Collective efficacy is the degree to which individuals in a system believe that they can organize and execute courses of action required to achieve collective goals (Bandura, 1997). Collective efficacy helps to promote meaningful social change because such change is embedded within a network of social influences. Collective efficacy is concerned with people's confidence in their joint capabilities to accomplish set goals, and to withstand opposition and setbacks (Bandura, 1995, p. 33). For this process to begin, people need to believe that they can solve their mutually-experienced problems through unified effort (Papa et al., 2000). Members of a family or a neighborhood can collectively feel efficacious to solve a social problem that could not be dealt with on an individual basis (as demonstrated previously in the *Soul City* pot-banging episode).

Once audience members feel empowered to act, they often discuss and mentally rehearse how the actions could be actually implemented and tailored to their specific local cultural context. For second order change to occur, audience members have to think about acting in the “here” and “now”, go outside “the box,” and provide a new definition

to an old circumstance (as the neighbors did by intervening in the *Soul City* pot-banging episode). In essence, the existing problem is reframed so that it does not carry the implication of unchangeability (Watzlawick et al, 1974). For example, Mahatma Gandhi in 1918 arbitrated a wage dispute between textile mill owners in Ahmedabad and factory workers who were locked in a stalemate. The factory workers wanted a 35 percent increase in salary; the mill owners' best offer was 20 percent. The stalemate continued for several months; both parties were hurting and no viable solution seemed to be in sight. Gandhi stepped in with a culturally-acceptable solution that reframed the existing problem and saved face for both parties. The factory workers received their desired 35 percent increase the first day (hence satisfying their demand), 20 percent the next day (mollifying the factory owners), and then a perpetual 27.5 percent increase, the arithmetic compromise (Gardner, 1997).

For second order change to occur, a new critical action is introduced which reframes an existing reality (as illustrated above by the Gandhi's arithmetic compromise). Some residents of Thembisa Township in South Africa, where domestic abuse was widespread, were inspired by the *Soul City* pot banging episode (discussed above) to intervene in a local domestic abuse situation. This critical collective action, previously unknown, helped reframe the role of neighbors in addressing spousal abuse (Singhal & Rogers, 2003). Previously neighbors served as silent colluders, helplessly watching an ongoing cycle of domestic abuse in their neighborhood. However, through the critical action of banging pots and pans outside the abuser's home, Thembisa residents reframed the perceptually "private" nature of spousal abuse into an act of "public" censure. A few months later, patrons of a local pub in Thembisa Township exhibited a variation of this

practice: They collectively banged bottles when a man physically abused his girlfriend in a bar (Usdin et al., 2004). When such collective interventions in spousal abuse situations occurred with some frequency in Thembisa Township, they gained in legitimacy. Within the next year, such neighborly interventions in spousal abuse situations spread to other Townships in South Africa (Usdin et al., 2004).

When second order change gains legitimacy, it is common for a process of amplification to occur. Amplification involves the spread of a second order change from one context to another with the necessary modifications to fit the new context. So, when community members go from banging pots and pans outside a domestic abuser's home, to banging bottles inside a bar, they engage in amplification. Amplification of second order changes over a period of time leads to a routinization of the "new" values, norms, and actions in a society.

In summary, when audience members attend to entertainment-education, they can learn new ways of dealing with existing problems. When they talk about these new possibilities with other listeners or family members, they clarify in their minds how these new ways relate to their local circumstance. These discussions create a climate of social support and collective efficacy for audience members to consider taking a certain critical action. The performance of the critical action is preceded by mental rehearsal as audience members reframe existing realities into culturally-acceptable interventions. When such interventions gain social acceptance, they find legitimacy, and are routinized through a process of amplification.

### Methodology and Data-Collection

Our research on how the *Taru* project's various interventional activities sparked second-order changes in certain villages of Bihar is guided by methodological triangulation, the use of multiple research methods (both quantitative and qualitative) to measure the same phenomenon. The present paper draws mostly on various types of qualitative data collected over a period of 18 months from four villages in India's Bihar State: Village Abirpur in Vaishali District and villages Kamtaul, Madhopur, and Chandrahatti in Muzaffarpur District.

In each of these four villages, *Taru* was publicized by the local rural health practitioners, including Shailendra Singh of Kamtaul Village (whose bold social actions are discussed at the beginning of this paper). Through the support of rural health practitioners in these four villages, folk performances dramatizing the *Taru* storyline were carried out a week prior to the radio serial's broadcasts (in February 2002) to prime the message reception environment, encouraging audience members to tune-in (Singhal, Sharma, Papa, & Witte, 2004). Some 800 to 1,000 people attended these folk performances in each village, including mother-in-laws and daughter-in-laws, high-caste *brahmins* and low-caste *dalits*, grandparents and grandchildren, and men and women, both married and unmarried. Colorful posters, stickers, and flyers bearing the *Taru* logo, and listing the day and times of the *Taru* broadcasts were distributed to audiences. About half-a-dozen colorful wall paintings (20 feet by 10 feet) promoting *Taru*'s broadcasts were placed at major intersections and public places around these four villages (one of them was in Kamtaul's High School, which is located on the main state highway).. Transistors (with a sticker of *Taru*'s logo) were awarded to groups who correctly

answered questions based on the folk performance. These groups were then formalized as *Taru* radio listening clubs. Each group received an attractive notebook (with a *Taru* logo), and were encouraged to discuss the social themes addressed in *Taru*, relate them to their personal circumstances, and record any decisions, or actions, they took as a result of being exposed to *Taru*.

Our data-sources from these four villages included (1) some 45 transcripts of in-depth and focus group interviews with listeners of *Taru*, conducted at two points in time – September 2002 (six months after *Taru*'s broadcasts) and March 2003 (after *Taru* had finished its broadcasts); (2) transcripts of 18 *Taru* listeners' club diaries (each with weekly entries); (3) 22 transcripts of audio-taped listeners' club discussions in village Abirpur post-listening to *Taru*, (4) some 14 hours of video testimony provided by listeners of *Taru* and their community members, and (5) extensive field notes of the author Singhal (who made four visits to these villages during the 18 months of interventional activities), and another half-a-dozen field researchers involved in collecting data.

In addition, in summer 2003, a participatory theater workshop and folk theater performances were conducted with 45 *Taru* listening club members hailing from these four villages. One of the present authors (Pant) along with other members of the *Taru* Project team at Ohio University, co-led this theater workshop. The week long workshop was designed to empower *Taru* listening club members to develop participatory theatrical performances to capture: (1) their personal and group listening experiences in relation to *Taru*, and (2) their concomitant attempts to secure political and social reform in their respective villages (Harter, Sharma, Pant, & Singhal, 2004). These folk performances

were then staged for village members in an attempt to bring the personal narratives of the participants into the realm of public discourse. This summer workshop yielded scripts, video footage of performances, and transcripts of three-dozen interviews conducted in these four villages with viewers of performances, workshop participants, and community members. In addition, author Pant spent a total of two weeks living in Village Abirpur (a week before and a week after the workshop), conducting in-depth and focus group interviews, collecting data through the technique of participatory photography, and keeping an extensive field journal of her ethnographic observations. The results from these [different](#) sets of data were distilled to analyze the *Taru*-sparked second-order change processes in Bihar, India.

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### *Taru's Story: Modeling Second Order Changes*

*Taru* was a 52-episode entertainment-education radio soap opera, broadcast in India from February, 2002 to February, 2003. Its purpose was to promote gender equality, small family size, reproductive health, caste and communal harmony, and community development. *Taru* began broadcasting in Bihar State on February 22, 2002. One episode was broadcast each week on Friday at 8:00 p.m., with a repeat broadcast each Sunday at 3:40 p.m. Each episode of *Taru* began with a theme song, and a brief summary of the previous episode. Each episode ended with an epilogue that posed a reflective question to the listeners, inviting them to write-in their responses to AIR.

The story of the *Taru* radio serial revolved around Taru, a young, educated woman who works in Suhagpur village's Sheetal Center, an organization that provides reproductive health care services, carries out village self-help activities, and fights social injustices by mobilizing community action. Taru is idealistic, intelligent, and polite, and

works with a network of friends and supporters to empower rural women. Taru is a close friend of Shashikant, who like Taru, is educated, intelligent, and involved in social work at the Sheetal Center. However, he belongs to a lower caste, and is subject to discrimination by the high caste people in the village. While several caste-conscious community members in Suhagpur deride Taru's friendship with a lower caste man, Taru likes Shashikant for his sincerity, and he, in turn, is supportive of Taru's socially ameliorative efforts. While there is an undercurrent of romance between the two, they have not yet explicitly expressed it, given that Shashikant is mindful of his lower caste status (Taru belongs to an upper caste family). Their relationship, including its romantic interludes, represents a call to caste and communal harmony.

Taru's mother, Yashoda, is highly supportive of her daughter, whom she sees as an embodiment of her own unaccomplished dreams. On the other hand, Mangla, Taru's rogue brother, derides Taru's social work, and ridicules her friendship with the lower-caste Shashikant. With the help of Aloni Baba (a village saint) and Guruji (a teacher), Taru and Shashikant join hands to fight multiple social evils in a series of intersecting storylines, including preventing a child marriage, stopping the killing of a new-born girl child, encouraging girls to be treated on par with boys and *dalits* on par with high-caste *brahmins*, and fostering compassion for those afflicted with AIDS.

A subplot involves Naresh, his wife Nirmala, his sister Ranjana, his mother Ramdulari, and his four daughters. Ramdulari insists on a fifth child, arguing for the importance of having a grandson. Nirmala uses contraception to avoid an unwanted pregnancy, and as the story evolves, Ramdulari undergoes a change of heart and starts valuing her granddaughters. Taru and Shashikant work with this family to celebrate the

birthday of one of the granddaughters. It was the first time that the village came together to symbolically rejoice the presence of a girl child.

Another subplot involves Neha, a close friend of Taru, who is newly married to Kapileshwar, the son of the local zamindar (landlord). Kapileshwar starts out as a controlling husband and influenced by his parent's dogma about daughter-in-laws only staying indoors, restricts Neha's mobility outside of the home. But Neha wants to lead a meaningful life and with encouragement and support from Taru and Shashikant begins a school for dalit (low-caste) children. As the story evolves, Kapileshwar undergoes a change of heart, and becomes highly supportive of Neha's activities, despite criticism from his parents.

Importantly, an examination of the overall storyline of *Taru* shows clearly that this is a program that models second-order changes, introducing decisively different codes of social behavior, which radically challenge existing norms and practices: For example, a friendship between a high caste girl and a *dalit* social worker despite opposition from family and community members; the stopping of a child marriage; the stepping out of a high-caste *bahu* (daughter-in-law) outside of her in-laws home to start a school for *dalit* children; the celebration of a girl's birthday for the first time in a village, and others. As the storyline evolved over 52 episodes and over a one-year long period, these modeled messages were reinforced repeatedly.

#### An Analysis of *Taru*-Sparked Second Order Change Processes in Kamtaul Village

In this section, we analyze how the Singh family in Kamtaul Village of India's Bihar State engendered a process of second order changes when they were inspired by *Taru*'s egalitarian messages to wipe out caste discrimination in their village. The Singh

family told us that in *Taru's* storyline, Shashikant, a member of the lower-caste, is ill-treated in the opening episode in Neha's marriage ceremony. Several guests question his presence, taunting and humiliating him. Taru is disturbed by the guest's parochial caste behaviors, and apologizes to Shashikant. She argues that the caste system belonged to a bygone era, and *dalits* should participate equally in weddings and all other social rituals. So, Vandana, the daughter of Shailendra and Sunita Singh, noted in her *Taru* listening diary that a new credo for treating lower caste people was modeled on *Taru*. The *Taru* [employment](#) presented a new solution to an existing problem.

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Numerous discussions, over several months, occurred in the Singh household about untouchability and ill-treatment of *dalits*. The family discussed several possibilities of what they could do here and now to combat untouchability in Kamtaul Village. But how could they challenge a social practice that was nurtured by tradition and so firmly ingrained in Kamtaul's social ethos? Some ideas began to surface through discussion and dialogue. Sunita Singh decided to open a school for dalit women in the Harijan Tola. Her daughters and husband supported her, even though firmly believed that a *bahu* (daughter-in-law) should not step outside one's home. In essence, the family context provided efficacy for Sunita to act. Empowered by this action, the Singh family began to think of other ways to make a more public statement about untouchability. They played out various scenarios, mentally rehearsing and refining them. Their biggest worry and challenge was how to reframe the issue of untouchability in a way that it would be culturally acceptable. The wedding celebrations of Vandana's elder sister provided an opportunity to enact their new ideas.

*Dalits* are involved in almost all wedding celebrations; however, their roles are limited to cleaning toilets, collecting and disposing garbage, and doing other menial jobs. So, rarely do *dalits* come in contact with guests (in fact, their shadow is considered as inauspicious), and they do not have anything to do with preparing or serving food and/or drinks (for that would represent “contamination”). The Singh family decided to break tradition by introducing a new critical action with new rules. There was considerable resistance from Shailendra’s mother, who dissuaded her son, noting: “Why do you want to get into this mess”...

A few days, before the marriage, when guests began to arrive at the Singh household (for pre-marriage rituals and ceremonies), several *dalits* were asked to help out. During the evening, while several guests were sitting, Shailendra Singh asked one of the *dalits*, whom he had asked previously to dress in clean clothes and be properly groomed, to serve him a glass of water. In front of others, he emptied the glass, and then asked the *dalit* to also serve water to other guests. Some relatives followed Singh’s lead, even if somewhat reluctantly, by accepting the glass of water and then drinking it. Some relatives said they were not thirsty. Some others, “who were offended but felt that they couldn’t say anything, got up from their chairs, gave some banal reason, and left the scene” (personal interview, September 3, 2002).

Once tradition was broken and a new social precedent was legitimized, for the next three days, six or seven *dalits* were actively engaged by the Singh family to serve food and drinks to the invited guests. “We gradually increased their involvement....*Dalits* went from serving water, to serving drinks, to serving both food and drinks....They went first from serving family members, to serving close relatives, to serving outside guests”

(personal interview, September 3, 2002). On the wedding day, some 30 *dalits* participated in the celebrations and half of them served food and drinks to the 600 guests, of which two-thirds comprised the local population of Kamtaul. In essence, the new [codes of social behavior about the participation of \*dalits\* were](#) further legitimized through amplification.

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Shailendra and Sunita Singh jointly summarized for one of the present authors how *Taru* helped spark social change processes in Kamtaul (personal interview, September 3, 2002): “Previously, it was just a thought. As a family, we were always good to *dalits*, but still the *samajik deewar* [social wall] existed. But after listening to *Taru* and discussing this issue on a daily basis, the thought began to take on a concrete shape. We always used to talk about the beautiful *dosti* [friendship] relationship between *Taru*, the high caste girl, and Shashikant, the low caste but highly accomplished man.” We were also inspired by the character of Neha, who despite her in-laws opposition, decides to open a school for low caste children. So we said, we also need to do something. But it was important that we did it in a way that it would send a message. And then we said, it is *our* daughter’s marriage; so we can use that event.

After their daughter’s marriage was over, the Singh’s noted that many villagers came to them and said that “they did not do the right thing, and they should have kept the *dalits* separate.” Many told them that “they felt bad that tradition was subverted, but they had no choice but to witness silently as it was, after all, a wedding celebration, a joyous occasion” (personal interview, September 3, 2002). How did the Singh’s respond to the resistance and the support? Shailendra said: “I told them I am a health practitioner. Everyone falls sick. I can’t discriminate between saving a *brahmin* (high caste) or a *dalit*

child.” Further, he told them: “Times are changing. We should change with the times.”

The Singhs also noted that their actions were applauded by many in Kamtaul: “People came and said that never before was such a step taken in Kamtaul. This has happened for the first time. Many said that now this can happen again. In fact, now it will happen in larger numbers” (personal interview, September 3, 2002).

Our preceding analysis suggests that *Taru* modeled new realities for a more egalitarian integration of *dalits* in society, created a space for discussion and dialogue about this issue among listener club members, helped the Singh family to clarify how existing realities could be reshaped and reframed, and gave them courage to implement these new possibilities by introducing a critical new action. Once the action was legitimized in a small way, then other actions followed which amplified the effects of previous ones, helping, in part, to fundamentally reshape old norms and values. .

#### Conclusions

*“We must become the change we want to see.” - Mohandas K. Gandhi*

From the beginning of civilization, humanity has been on a quest to discover the most effective ways to change others. Marketers, politicians, and public health officials expend considerable energy to get others to make fundamental shifts in their values and behaviors (second-order change). However, they usually meet with limited success. Watzlawick et al. (1974) argue that the way we define “problems” shape our solutions. If we assume that the problem is outside of us, all our interventions begin there. Mohandas K. Gandhi, who led India to freedom against British colonial rule, believed that, as opposing to trying to change others, each of us need to change and embody the nature of

change we wish to see. So, Gandhi worked on himself, not others. By changing himself, he changed others.

In this paper, we explored and analyzed how *Taru*, an entertainment-education radio soap opera, motivated individuals and communities in India's Bihar State to create their own processes of second-order change. Our data suggest that *Taru* impacted certain individuals (for instance, the Singh family in Kamtaul Village) to make strategic behavioral changes in their life, with the overall purpose of personal, family, and community betterment. This process of change has several key components. Specifically, members of the Singh family modeled the choices made by *Taru* and other characters in the soap opera. This was done after the Singh family members discussed and debated how the actions of the *Taru's* characters held relevance for their life. With Shailendra Singh being the only rural health practitioner in the village in which both upper and lower caste people lived, the issue of treating the *dalits* (untouchables) in a more egalitarian manner became particularly salient for the Singh family. While the rest of the family supported the idea of treating *dalits* with as much respect as the upper castes, Shailendra's mother thought it was wrong to do so. The collective efficacy of the family, however, prevailed and the family discussed how they could enact their decision to treat *dalits* fairly, albeit in a manner that was culturally acceptable. A critical action was performed when Shailendra Singh invited a few *dalit* members to help with his daughter's wedding and asked one of them to serve water to the guests. Over a few days, even though there was some resistance, the *dalit* members' assistance in the wedding became routinized, gained legitimacy, and was amplified with the *dalits* helping in multiple ways. The journey of second-order change had begun.

Even though this is an exploratory analysis of the role of E-E in initiating second-order change, this paper makes important theoretical and practical contributions to understanding change processes. Research on the impact of E-E programs have traditionally only looked at knowledge-attitude-practice (KAP) as the outcome variables (Rogers et al.1999; Singhal & Rogers, 1999). More recently, scholars have started to analyze the processes of social change created by E-E interventions (Singhal et al, 2004; Usdin et al., 2004). For example, scholars have argued that for E-E programs to be effective, the audience members need to be involved with the soap opera, have parasocial relationships with key characters, and engage in conversations and dialogue about social issues with other community members (Papa et al., 2000; Sood, 2002). We believe that this analysis on how E- E programs can initiate a process of second-order change, a goal in many interventions today, is perhaps the first step to further study in this area.

In this paper, we offer a set of seven factors and processes that can initiate second-order change.

First of all, the purpose of an E-E program is not to change others. It is to offer a “new” story and a set of “new” ideas for the audience members to explore and consider. *Taru* focused on promoting gender equality, small family size, reproductive health, caste and communal harmony, and community development. Our data suggests that audience members from our four community case study villages identified with *Taru* and other key actors in the soap opera. For example, audience members in the Abirpur village started a school based on what Neha did in the soap opera.

Second, the audience members talked, discussed and debated about a variety of ideas and chose to act on some of the issues (untouchability, creating a school for

children, etc.). Several scholars (Freire 1970; Papa et al, 2000) have shown that dialogue is a critical pre-requisite for social change to occur.

Third, having the support of family members and other community members is a critical part of embarking on second-order change. Shailendra Singh and his family would not have considered inviting the *dalits* to help in the wedding if they had not felt collectively efficacious in handling the anticipated resistance.

Fourth, once the Singh family felt empowered to change, they had to reframe the existing issue of untouchability to community members in a culturally-appropriate manner. The process of reframing, and in many cases, going outside the box, is a key ingredient for the creating second-order solutions to existing social problems (Watzlawick et al, 1974).

Fifth, this reframing has to be translated into a critical action that was culturally compatible with the intended audience (Watzlawick et al., 1974). In this case, the Singh family chose to act in small doses, having the *dalits* serve water and after a few days, have them serve a meal.

Sixth, since it is natural for the audience members to resist second-order changes (that is, when *dalits* serve water to high caste members), continually addressing the resistance from community members is essential. The Singh family answered the opposition and resistance with respect and dignity, and over a few days this legitimized the new ritual of *dalits* serving water. It does help, however, that Shailendra Singh is seen as the “doctor” in the village and is highly respected by community members. This credibility influenced enough people in the village to support Shailendra’s choice to treat *dalits* fairly, thus helping to routinize the action.

Finally, when an individual or a member of a community begins to adapt or reinvent a second-order change behavior to a specific context, amplification begins to occur (Watzlawick et al, 1974). Amplification is a critical and necessary ingredient to sustain second-order change. Amplification allows for an issue to stay on the agenda and for a critical action to trigger multiple other actions. For example, the Singh family's choice to treat *dalits* fairly prompted Singh's daughter, Vandana, to urge her friends to do the same. In addition, *Taru* played a key role in empowering Vandana and her friends to make tough choices with courage and conviction (see Singhal et al, 2004).

Our analysis holds several practical lessons for those who wish to spark E-E initiated second order change processes.

1. How one defines a problem impacts the choice of solutions.
2. The purpose of an E-E program should be to tell a story that creates possibilities for new solutions to be considered. It is not to offer prescriptive ways to change.
3. It is important to create a space where discussion, debate and dialogue can occur about the nature of change one wants to see. Often such can happen in listeners' groups formed to collectively consume an E-E program.
4. Gathering support from family and community members is essential before embarking on a critical action.
5. Reframing and the accompanying critical action must be culturally appropriate for the intended audience.
6. One cannot resist all the social resistance. However, resisting in a respectful and dignified manner can win many allies.
7. Allow time for the behavior to be routinized and legitimized in the community.

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8. If these processes listed above occur, community members will, on their own, amplify the new ideas to suit their own needs.
9. Be the change you want to see!

This paper has its limitations. We only looked at one case in one village, albeit in an in-depth manner, to explore the role of E-E initiated second order change. We are presently engaged in studying the impact of *Taru* in several different villages and contexts, and will include that in our future research. We did not specifically address the ethical issues surrounding E-E initiated change. For example, what if the Singh family was ostracized because of their choices? We are planning to work on a paper focusing specifically on the ethical issues of our *Taru* project. This paper is a *post facto* analysis of the spontaneous effects of *Taru* in India's Bihar State. In the future, we plan to apply the principles offered here to see the efficacy of E-E initiated second-order change.

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Table 1: Key differences between first and second-order change.

FIRST-ORDER CHANGE	SECOND-ORDER CHANGE
Adjustments within the existing system	Change of the existing system
Doing more or less of the same thing	Trying things “outside the box”
Generally reversible	Generally irreversible
Non-transformational	Transformational
Not much new learning	Requires new learning
No fundamental shift in values or behaviors	Fundamental shift in values or behaviors
Old story can still be told	New story is told

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