Advertisements that emphasized self-reliance, improvement, and competition (“You, only better”) were more common in America than in Korea, whereas advertisements that emphasized family harmony and social acceptance (e.g., “The dream of prosperity for all of us”) were more common in Korea than in America (see also Aaker, Benet-Martínez, & Garolera, 2001).

Han and Shavitt (1994) conducted a second study to see whether these differences affect the persuasiveness of various messages. During the first part of the experiment, American and Korean college students read advertisements for various products. Some of these advertisements emphasized individualistic themes, and some emphasized collectivistic themes. Students then indicated how desirable they found the products. The data displayed in Figure 7.4 show that message content and culture interacted to affect persuasion. Among American college students, advertisements that focused on individualistic themes were more persuasive than were ads that focused on collectivistic themes. The opposite was true for Korean college students. These findings provide further evidence that messages are rarely universally effective. What works for some people doesn’t work for others, and what’s effective in some cultures is ineffective in other cultures (see also Aaker & Schmitt, 2001; Evans & Petty, 2003).

C. The Legacy of the Yale Communication and Attitude Program

Having reviewed a good deal of research inspired by the Yale Communication and Attitude Program, it is appropriate to step back and evaluate this research effort. First, Hovland’s group paved the way for almost all subsequent work on persuasion. In this sense, the research had very high heuristic value. The theoretical yield was not as