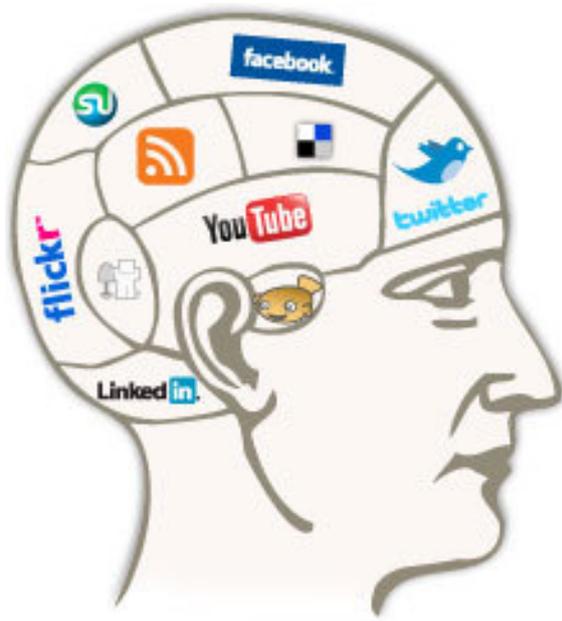


Media psychology



Media psychology is the branch of psychology that focuses on the interaction of **human behavior** and **media** and technology. Media psychology is not restricted to mass media or media content; it includes all forms of mediated communication and media technology-related behaviors, such as the use, design, impact and sharing behaviors. This branch is a relatively new field of study because of advancement in **technology**. It uses various methods of critical analysis and investigation to develop a working model of a user's perception on media experience. These methods are used for society as a whole and on an individual basis. Media psychologists are able to perform activities that include consulting, design, and production in various media like television, video games, films, and news broadcasting. It is important to understand that media psychologists are not considered to be those who are featured in media (such as counselors-psychotherapists, clinicians etc.) rather than those who research, work or contribute to the field.

1 History

There are overlaps with numerous fields, such as media studies, communication science, anthropology, education, and sociology, not to mention those within the discipline of psychology itself. Much of the research that would be considered as 'media psychology' has come

from other fields, both academic and applied. In the 1920s, marketing, advertising and public relations professionals began conducting research on consumer behavior and motivation for commercial applications ^[1]. The use of mass media during World War II, created a surge of academic interest in mass media messaging and resulted in the creation of a new field, communication science (Lazarsfeld & Merton, 2000). The field of media psychology gained prominence in the 1950s when television was becoming popular in American households. Psychologists responded to widespread social concerns about the children and their television viewing. For example, researchers began to study the impact of television viewing on children's reading skills. Later, they began to study the impact of violent television viewing on children's behavior, for example, if they were likely to exhibit anti-social behavior or to copy the violent behaviors that they were seeing. These events led up to the creation of a new division of the **American Psychological Association** in 1987. Division 46, the **Media Psychology Division** (now the **APA Society for Media Psychology and Technology**), is one of the fastest growing in the American Psychological Association. Today's media psychologists study both legacy and new media forms that have risen in recent years such as **cellular phone technology**, the **internet**, and new genres of **television**. Media psychologists are also involved in how people are impacted and can benefit from the design of technologies such as augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) and mobile technologies, such as using VR to help trauma victims ^[2].

2 Theories

Media psychology's theories include the user's **perception**, **cognition**, and **humanistic components** in regards to their **experience** to their surroundings. Media psychologists also draw upon developmental and narrative psychologies and emerging findings from neuroscience. The theories and research in psychology are used as the backbone of media psychology and guide the discipline itself. Theories in psychology applied to media include multiple dimensions, i.e., text, pictures, symbols, video and sound. Sensory Psychology, semiotics and semantics for visual and language communication, social cognition and neuroscience are among the areas addressed in the study of this area of media psychology. A few of the theories employed in media psychology include:

2.1 Affective disposition theory (ADT)

Main article: *Affective disposition theory*

The concept of *affective disposition theory* is used to differentiate users' perspectives on different forms of media content and the differences within attentional focus.^[3] The theory consists of four components that revolve around emotion: (1) media is based on an individual's emotions and opinions towards characters, (2) media content is driven from enjoyment and appreciation from individuals, (3) individuals form feelings about characters that are either positive or negative and (4) media relies on conflicts between characters and how individuals react to the conflict.^[4]

2.2 Simulation theory (ST)

Simulation theory^[5] argues that mental simulations do not fully exclude the external information that surrounds the user. Rather than the mediated stimuli are reshaped into imagery and memories of the user in order to run the simulation. It explains why the user is able to form these experiences without the use of technology, because it points to the relevance of construction and internal processing.^[5]

2.3 Psychological theory of play

The psychological theory of play applies a more general framework to the concept of media *entertainment*. This idea potentially offers a more conceptual connection that points to presence. The activity of playing exhibits consistent results to the use of entertainment objects. This theory states that play is a type of action that is characterized by three major aspects:^[6]

1. It is intrinsically motivated and highly attractive.
2. It implies a change in perceived reality, as players construct an additional reality while they are playing.
3. It is frequently repeated.

The psychological theory of play is based upon the explanations given by eminent people such as Stephenson, Freud, Piaget, and Vygotsky. The theory is based on how an individual uses media for their satisfaction and how media changes within a person's life according to its contents. Play is used for pleasure and is self-contained. People are influenced by media both negatively and positively because we are able to relate to what we see within the environment. Through looking more in depth at the different forms of playing; it becomes apparent that the early versions of make believe play demonstrate the child's need for control and the desire to influence their current environment.

3 Major contributors

Major contributors to media psychology include Marshall McLuhan, Dolf Zillmann, Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch, Bernard Luskin and David Giles. Marshall McLuhan is a Canadian communication philosopher who was active from the 1930s to the 1970s in the realm of Media Analysis and Technology. He was appointed by the President of the University of Toronto in 1963 to create a new Centre for Culture and Technology to study the psychological and social consequences of technologies and media. McLuhan's famous statement pertaining to media psychology was, "The medium is the message".^[7] McLuhan's famous statement was suggestive towards the notion that media is inherently dangerous.^[7] McLuhan's theory on media called "technological determinism" would pave the way for other people to study media.^[7]

Dolf Zillmann advanced the two-factor model of emotion. The two-factor of emotion proposed that emotion involves both psychological and cognitive components.^[7] Zillmann advanced the theory of "Excitation transfer" by establishing the explanation for the effects of violent media.^[7] Zillmann's theory proposed the notion that viewer's are physiologically aroused when they watch aggressive scenes.^[7] After watching an aggressive scene, an individual will become aggressive due to the arousal from the scene.

In 1974 Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch used the *uses and gratifications theory* to explain media psychology. Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch discovered five components of the theory; (1) the media competes with sources of satisfaction, (2) goals of mass media can be discovered through data and research, (3) media lies within the audience, (4) an audience is conceived as active, and (5) judgment of mass media should not be expressed until the audience has time to process the media and its content on their own.^[8]

David Giles^[9] has been publishing in the area of media psychology since 2000. He wrote the first book about media psychology in 2003. His book *Media Psychology* gives an overview of media psychology as a field, its subcategories, theories, and developmental issues within media psychology.

Bernard Luskin launched the first MA PhD program and EdD program in Media Psychology in any university at Fielding Graduate University in 2002. Writing extensively and producing media, he also launched the MA program in Media Psychology and Social Change with UCLA Extension and the MA program in Media and Communications Psychology at Touro University Worldwide. Luskin is a pioneer in media literature, program development and he conducted the APA Task Force Study that redefined Media Psychology in 1998. He is past Chair of the Society for Media Psychology and Technology.

Pamela Rutledge^[10] is the Director of the **Media Psychology Research Center** in Newport Beach, California, and a faculty member in the Media Psychology Program at **Fielding Graduate University**. She is well known for the application of media psychology as to marketing and brand strategy, transmedia storytelling and audience engagement. According to Rutledge, while there is no specific consensus or career path for media psychology, there are many opportunities^[11]. Rutledge argues that media psychology will be increasingly important because of the ubiquity of technology and the rapid adoption, particularly by the young. This, combined with the global political and economic impact of mobile technologies, suggest that technology will continue to disrupt systems and has the potential to generate solutions to problems and challenge our imagination. Rutledge believes that media psychologists are uniquely positioned to examine the questions that arise, establish best practices and standards for positive and ethical media and technology use, and inform the development of media and technology that can benefit individuals and society. Emerging areas include media literacy, digital citizenship, transmedia storytelling, and the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and making sense out of the vast quantities of data analysis increasingly available through the emerging field of data science and data visualization.

4 See also

- Cyberpsychology

5 References

- [1] Rutledge, P. B. (2013). Arguing for Media Psychology as a Distinct Field. In K. Dill (Ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Media Psychology* (pp. 43-58). New York: Oxford University Press.
- [2] Rizzo, A., John, B., Newman, B., Williams, J., Hartholt, A., Lethin, C., et al. (2013). Virtual Reality as a Tool for Delivering PTSD Exposure Therapy and Stress Resilience Training. *Military Behavioral Health*, 1(1), 52-58.
- [3] Arthur, Raney (2011). "The Role of Morality in Emotional Reactions to and Enjoyment of Media Entertainment". *Journal of Media Psychology: Theories, Methods, and Applications*. Hogrefe Publishing (1). doi:10.1027/1864-1105/a000027.
- [4] "Affective Disposition Theories | Media Psychology Review". *mprcenter.org*. Retrieved 2015-12-09.
- [5] Shanton, Karen; Goldman, Alvin (2010). "Simulation theory" (PDF). *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Cognitive Science*. **1** (4): 527–538. PMID 26271500. doi:10.1002/wcs.33. Retrieved 2015-12-08.
- [6] "PLAY THEORY". *Communication Theory*. Retrieved 2015-12-09.

- [7] Giles, David (2003). *Media Psychology*. Mahwah, N.J.: Routledge.
- [8] Katz, Elihu; Blumer, Jay; Gurevitch, Michael (1973). *Uses and Gratifications Research*. **37** (4th ed.). Public Opinion.
- [9] "David Giles Website".
- [10] "Pamela Rutledge Website". Retrieved 2015-12-08.
- [11] Rutledge, P. (2016). Media Psychologists. In R. J. Sternberg (Ed.), *Career Paths in Psychology: Where Your Degree Can Take You* (pp. 291-308). Washington D.C.: American Psychological Assn.

6 External links

- **Media Psychology Research Center**
- **Media Psychology: Division 46 of the American Psychological Association**

7 Text and image sources, contributors, and licenses

7.1 Text

- **Media psychology** *Source:* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Media_psychology?oldid=783515932 *Contributors:* Mrwojo, Markhurd, Auric, Piotrus, Klemen Kocjancic, Mindmatrix, Toussaint, Nihiltres, Wavelength, Kkmurray, SmackBot, Zhargonol, Chris the speller, Bluebot, Clicketyclack, Dicklyon, SandyGeorgia, Doczilla, MikeWazowski, Iridescent, CmdrObot, Iss246, Matisse, InNotOf395, RobotG, Goldenrowley, TWells, Magioladitis, Student7, C.m.jones, Mike V, Funandtrvl, Pamelarutledge, Natg 19, SieBot, Wfondren, Toddst1, DoronAssayas, Tenmick, Addbot, MrOllie, Kopeeditur, Luckas-bot, Yobot, Citation bot, LilHelpa, Matttoothman, Howsa12, Atlantia, Catcher09, EmausBot, John of Reading, Nick Moyes, Speed0423, Bamyers99, BiffyMaroon, FeatherPluma, Justlettersandnumbers, JordoCo, BG19bot, Golfer787, Frze, Joost26, Acadēmica Orientalis, Jamela Peterson, Me, Myself, and I are Here, P. Alison Brown, Mrm7171, Fixture, NoemieDV, Monkbob, Veryproicelandic, Cmjohnson5 and Anonymous: 41

7.2 Images

- **File:Social-media-phrenology.jpg** *Source:* <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f7/Social-media-phrenology.jpg> *License:* CC BY-SA 4.0 *Contributors:* Own work *Original artist:* Kjyrstenolson

7.3 Content license

- Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0