

Grant J. Rich
V. K. Kumar
Frank H. Farley *Editors*

Handbook of Media Psychology

The Science and The Practice

 Springer

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Grant J. Rich
Department of Psychology
Walden University
Juneau, AK, USA

V. K. Kumar
Department of Psychology
West Chester University of Pennsylvania
West Chester, PA, USA

Frank H. Farley
Department of Psychology
Temple University
Philadelphia, PA, USA

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“An invaluable source for academics interested in the psychology of media, including artificial intelligence, and for psychologists who use media in their work, including telehealth.”

–Steven Pinker, *Johnstone Professor of Psychology, Harvard University*, and the author of *How the Mind Works* and *Rationality*.

“An intriguing glimpse into the future by world class experts in the media and psychology. Will their prognostications be validated over the next decade? The foundations inherent in their forecasts are skillfully explored. Unprecedented technological advances continue to shape the future in unexpected ways, including within behavioral health care.”

–Pat DeLeon, MPH, JD, PhD, *Former President of the American Psychological Association; Distinguished Professor at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (DoD) in the School of Nursing and School of Medicine*.

“In today’s world, media (particularly social media) and technology are omnipresent and engulfing; thus, a book focusing on the psychology of media and technology is sorely needed. *The Handbook of Media Psychology and Technology: The Science and the Practice* meets that need with chapters authored by the most prominent psychologists working in this area. This volume is one that you simply must have.”

–Ronald F. Levant, EdD, MBA, ABPP, *Former President of the American Psychological Association; Professor of Psychology Emeritus, The University of Akron*.

“Outstanding contribution to Media Psychology that provides an up-to-date overview of the field. The book is edited by some of our most eminent media psychologists. This will be a standard for the field and an excellent textbook for media psychology.”

–James H. Bray, PhD, *Former President of the American Psychological Association; Fellow of the APA Society for Media Psychology and Technology; Professor, University of Texas at San Antonio*.

“This is a who’s who of legends, top scholars, and rising stars in media psychology and technology. The chapters cover both key concepts and cutting-edge topics that could be ripped from the headlines. I cannot imagine a more timely or valuable handbook!”

–James C. Kaufman, PhD, *Professor of Educational Psychology, Neag School of Education, University of Connecticut*; a founding editor of *Psychology of Popular Media Culture* (now *Psychology of Popular Media*) and *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity and the Arts*.

“An outstanding and definitive resource when we need it most! This Handbook expertly synthesizes an enormous and important scientific body of work at an extraordinarily important time when media is perhaps more influential than ever. This is essential reading for anyone who wants to understand how media and technology may be changing what it means to be human.”

–Mitch Prinstein, PhD, *John Van Seters Distinguished Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience, UNC-Chapel Hill*, author of *Popular: Finding Happiness and Success in a World That Cares Too Much About the Wrong Kinds of Relationships*.

“A must-read for those interested in the burgeoning field of Media Psychology, including what is most relevant to our digital world—ethics, social media and teen brains, apps, AI, Virtual and Augmented Reality. Written and edited by eminent experts in the field, this volume provides academics and practitioners thought-provoking information.”

–Mary K. Alvord, PhD, *Past President of the APA Society for Media Psychology and Technology* and co-author of *The Action Mindset Workbook for Teens*.

“The blessings and curses inherent in the impactful, accelerating and massively influential (overt and subliminal) realms of media and technology cannot be ignored, and had better not be!

This superb book edited by three of the greats in psychology, with contributions by authors who are legendary and outstanding luminaries along with some who are young and brilliant rising stars in the field, is vital reading for anyone who wants to learn more about media and technology, about maximizing the benefits, and preventing the potentially disastrous dangers, in this twenty-first century, and beyond.”

–Dr. Debbie Joffe Ellis, *Adjunct Professor, Columbia University Teachers College*; author; *Global Presenter on Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy*.

“In the ever-evolving field of Media Psychology, this handbook stands out as a crucial resource. Drawing on my own experience working with many of its esteemed authors, I can attest to their expertise and dedication. This book masterfully blends thorough research with practical insights, making it an essential guide for both novices and seasoned professionals. It’s more than a must-read—it’s a vital companion for anyone navigating the complexities of media’s psychological impact.”

–Kristian A. Alomá, PhD, *President-Elect of the Society for Media Psychology and Technology*; *Founder and CEO at Threadline*.

“This book is destined to be the gold standard, a must have book for clinicians, researchers, educators and social policy makers who are interested in the growth and applications of media psychology in clinical practice or research, artificial intelligence and virtual reality, ethical considerations or the next chapter in the growth and development of this emerging specialty in psychology from its ‘rock stars’.”

–Alan D. Entin, PhD, ABPP, *a founding member and Past President of the APA Society for Media Psychology and Technology.*

Foreword

It is a genuine joy to write a foreword for a book that promises to be the definitive work on media psychology for many years to come. It is a particular pleasure because the editors (Grant J. Rich, Krishna Kumar, and Frank Farley) are eminent psychologists who have each served as president of the Society for Media Psychology and Technology (Division 46 of the American Psychological Association); Farley has also served as president of the Association itself. Because of their stature and reputation, these three scholars have been able to recruit many of the biggest names in media psychology to contribute to this volume.

Put simply, the list of contributors is a panoply of media psychology rock stars. Who better to write about the history of media psychology than Michael Broder, someone who was an integral player in that history? Who better to write about cancel culture than Michael's daughter, Joanne Broder, the inaugural editor of *Psychology of Popular Media*? Grant J. Rich's chapter on banned books is extremely timely, and it provides an overview of book banning that puts sad contemporary practices in a historical context. Lenore Walker, who termed, described, and popularized the concept of battered women, was persuaded to coauthor a chapter on gender and media, and her husband, David Shapiro, one of the leading figures in forensic psychology, was enticed into writing a compelling chapter addressing the ethical issues that continue to bedevil all of us working in media psychology. Skip Rizzo is arguably the world's leading authority on virtual reality as a treatment, and he contributed a timely chapter on artificial intelligence (AI), augmented reality (AR), and virtual reality (VR). One can't pick up a newspaper or watch the evening news without hearing warnings about the dangers associated with AI; Skip's chapter provides a cogent analysis of the risks involved. Craig Anderson is an expert on violence in the media, and his coauthored chapter is a masterpiece. Pam Rutledge, Susan Eddington, Bernie Luskin, Don Grant ... the list goes on and on, and each chapter author is a bona fide authority on the topic on which they are writing.

I discussed the explosive growth of interest in media psychology in an invited article I wrote some years ago for the *American Psychologist* (Wedding, 2017). This growth can also be tracked with the Ingram Viewer Tool in Google Books.

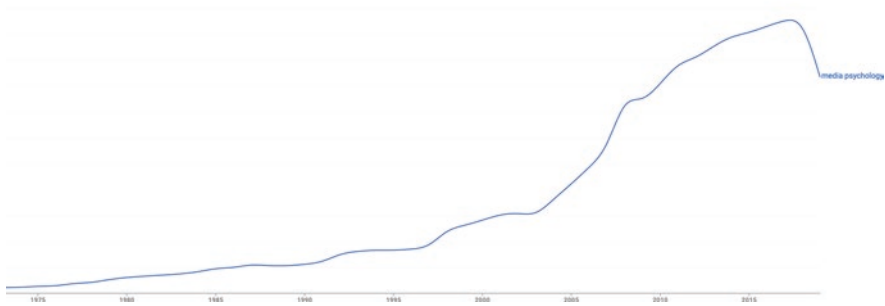


Fig. 1 Google Books Ngram citations for the phrase “media psychology,” 1975–2019

The frequency of mentions of the term “media psychology” is plotted from 1975 to 2019 (the latest year for which data are available) in Fig. 1. The data document dramatic growth through 2017 when it peaked, with some slight diminution of interest since that time.

I read most of the *Handbook of Media Psychology and Technology* on two very long flights from Dubrovnik to Portland. The book was engrossing enough that the time passed relatively quickly—at least as quickly as is possible in a coach seat on a cramped United flight—and I appreciate the opportunity. I learned a great deal from reading the book, and I suspect you will as well. Equally important, you will derive great pleasure from the experience, and it will make you a better media psychologist!

West Linn, OR, USA

Danny Wedding

Reference

Wedding, D. (2017). Public education and media relations in psychology. *American Psychologist*, 72(8), 764–777. <https://doi.org/10.1037/amp0000202>

Media Psychology and Technology: An Overview

Since the founding of the Society of Media Psychology and Technology of the American Psychological Association (APA) in the 1980s, media psychology has grown rapidly; there are now several textbooks (e.g., Ferguson, 2016; Stever et al., 2022), professional journals (e.g., *Psychology of Popular Media*, *Media Psychology*), a *Handbook of Media Psychology* (Dill, 2013), and professional meetings organized by the Society at the Annual Convention of the APA. In a similar fashion, society has been experiencing rapid changes in media and technology since the beginning of the twentieth century, with televisions, radios, calculators, pay phones, board games, and vinyl records replaced with increasingly sophisticated options, such as streaming videos and digital music, laptop computers, smartphones, social media, video games, and virtual/augmented reality. Media psychology, as a discipline, sits at the intersection of communications/media studies and psychology, two of the largest and most popular university majors, with psychology often ranked as third most popular major, and communications typically ranking in the top ten majors. Though media psychology itself is comparatively new, interest in media studies has long been a popular topic; for instance, the classic book *The Medium Is the Massage* (1967) by the father of media studies, the Canadian Marshall McLuhan, and Quentin Fiore, has sold over one million copies. Of course, media and the discipline have made revolutionary advances over the 55 years since then, and to serve students, teachers, researchers, and professionals and the hunger for scholarly work in media psychology, it is essential to have quality texts that represent the breadth and depth of this growing discipline, comprehensively cover the current scope of media psychology and technologies, and include compelling evidence of cutting-edge emerging trends.

While there are several brief media psychology textbooks aimed at introductory undergraduate-level students (e.g., Ferguson, 2016; Stever et al., 2022), and professional journals fill specialized needs for the professoriate, there is a clear need for a comprehensive, up-to-date Handbook for the discipline, given the last publication of such a Handbook (Dill, 2013) was over 10 years ago. Thus, the present volume aims to fill this gap, by providing a single comprehensive source specifically dedicated to *Media Psychology: The Science and the Practice*, with a strong

representation of the core topics in the discipline and chapters that focus on notable emerging trends in media and technology as they relate to psychology and related disciplines. Chapters are authored or coauthored by well-known psychologists from the discipline and occasionally by colleagues in related fields of inquiry. We hope this Handbook will be valuable not only to professors and students in psychology seeking a core text or supplement for psychology courses but also to professors and researchers outside the psychology discipline who seek insight into the perspective of psychologists, such as scholars and advanced students in media studies, sociology, film studies, gender studies, online education, psychiatry, social work, counseling, and behavioral medicine.

To achieve our ambitious goals the editors have assembled a stellar group of leading contributors who, taken together, have taught, counseled, consulted, and conducted research on the various topics represented in this Handbook. The book's lead editor, Dr. Grant J. Rich, has an abiding interest in media psychology and technology. He is the 2024 President of APA's Society for Media Psychology and Technology and a Fellow of the American Psychological Association and the Society for Media Psychology and Technology. He has published widely on media psychology, including on topics such as celebrity, creativity, music, cinema, and online education. Dr. Rich has an abiding interest in behavioral health technologies, including prescription digital therapeutics (PDTs) and their precursors, such as Experience Sampling Method (ESM) approaches. He has published over 110 peer-reviewed journal articles/book chapters/entries, over 100 book and film reviews/essays, and has 8 recent, and well-received, co-edited books, including *Internationalizing the Teaching of Psychology* (2017), *Teaching Psychology Around the World (Volume 5)* (2020), and *Psychosocial Experiences and Adjustment of Migrants* (2023). Dr. V. K. Kumar, one of the book's other two coeditors, is a Professor Emeritus of Psychology at the West Chester University of Pennsylvania. He is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association (APA). Dr. Kumar has published over 170 works that include empirical articles, reflective/review articles, book reviews, an edited book, reference books, editorials, and blogs and made numerous presentations at national and international conventions and conducted CE workshops. He (with a colleague and students) has been a recipient of several awards, e.g., the Best Theoretical Paper Award, Milton Erikson Award for Excellence in Scientific Writing, and the Clark Hull Award for Scientific Excellence in Writing on Experimental Hypnosis. Dr. Kumar has served as the 2014 President of the APA Society for Humanistic Psychology and the 2020 President of the APA Society for Media Psychology and Technology. He served as Editor/Coeditor of *The Amplifier Magazine* of the APA Society for Media Psychology and Technology from 2008 to 2022. The third coeditor, Dr. Frank H. Farley, a Fellow of APA, has twice served as President of APA's Society for Media Psychology and Technology, and he also has served as national President of the nearly 145,000-member American Psychological Association. Additionally, he has served as president of a large number of APA divisions including 46, 1, 3, 10, 15, 32, 48, 52, and 26, as well as President of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the International Council of Psychologists (ICP). Dr. Farley has been highly active in media psychology,

engaging in over 1,000 media interviews and contributions, such as TV (e.g., CNN, NBC, Fox), newspapers (*USA Today/New York Times/Wall Street Journal*), and magazines (e.g., *Time, Psychology Today, Outside, Men's Health, O, The Oprah Magazine*). He has published 7 books and over 250 scholarly work articles that include empirical research-based articles, opinion pieces, film, and book reviews.

This Handbook aims to serve as a scholarly text and resource book for students, researchers, and instructors in a variety of disciplines that specialize in media as a discipline for research or teaching and/or use public media to disseminate their scholarly work. We hope that college and university professors will consider the Handbook as a main course text or for supplementary reading on special topics. Additionally, we expect psychology practitioners with professional interests or needs in understanding media psychology and technology will find the Handbook invaluable for their practices and settings (e.g., clinical/school/educational psychologists). Furthermore, scholars from related mental health disciplines (e.g., counseling, psychiatry, social work, and medicine) will likely find the material of interest in working with clients or communities impacted by media and technology. The book is aimed at advanced undergraduates and above. Courses it could be utilized for include media psychology; psychology of media and technology; psychology of aggression; social psychology topic courses in persuasion, violence, propaganda, sexuality, or race/class/gender; educational psychology topic courses on online education, media and technology, and education, media, and academic performance; and so on. This Handbook may also be relevant for courses in communication studies and other social science disciplines, such as sociology, film/television studies, and gender studies.

While our book is, we believe, unique in its depth and breadth specifically focusing on media psychology and technology for science and practice, there are other books that have related content. To provide context for the present volume, a survey of the landscape of related products includes books such as several text-style books focused on some aspects of media psychology. In the first category, one finds texts such as Christopher Ferguson's previously mentioned *Media Psychology 101* (2016), which is aimed at beginning undergraduates. Also previously noted, and somewhat similar, is *Understanding Media Psychology* by Stever et al. (2022), which also appears to aim to serve a beginning undergraduate audience. In contrast to these two textbooks is Dill's *Oxford Handbook of Media Psychology* (2013), which provides impressive in-depth coverage, but is now almost 10 years old, a problematic challenge, in that Media Psychology and Technology is a rapidly changing and growing discipline. This present volume, *Handbook of Media Psychology: The Science and the Practice*, is thus uniquely positioned in breadth and depth to cover the latest critical disciplinary developments as well as emerging media and technology, such as social media, MOOCs/online educational technologies, PDTs (prescription digital therapeutics), and virtual and augmented reality.

As part of a further survey of the terrain of media psychology, in addition to the above-mentioned books, one could note more narrowly focused books that cover single aspects or subdisciplines within Media Psychology. For instance, there are several books devoted to psychology and film, such as Sayyed Mohsen Fatemi's

Film Therapy (2021), Katherine Marshall Woods' *Best Psychology in Film* (2019), and Danny Wedding and Ryan Niemiec's books *Movies and Mental Illness* (2014) and *Positive Psychology at the Movies* (2014). While these specialty subtopic books are valuable, the present Handbook aims for greater breadth than the aforementioned special topics books, though indeed it does include some coverage of film and other subtopics in chapter-length treatments. Finally, we can mention examples of books and texts that originate from disciplines other than psychology, such as film and media studies (e.g., Dixon & Foster's *A Short History of Film*, 2018), English (e.g., Lewis' *American Film: A History*, 2019), gender studies (e.g., Yousman, Yousman, Dines, & Humez's *Gender, Race, and Class in Media*, 2020), or sociology (e.g., Lindner & Barnard's *All Media Are Social*, 2020). However, given our core audience is advanced students, researchers, professors, and professionals of psychology and related disciplines, and given our book's breadth and depth, and with the growth and demand for knowledge in media psychology and technology, the present Handbook is especially timely and significant and should fill a notable gap in the literature.

The following paragraphs provide a preview and an overview of the diverse chapters and topics included in this Handbook. Our book begins with a chapter on the history of media psychology, by Dr. Michael S. Broder, who is uniquely positioned to author this chapter as he was president of APA's Division 46 during the year of its inception, and a radio host for 17 years in Philadelphia, NYC, and nationally for both NBC *Talknet* and ABC *Talkradio*. Michael has made countless radio and TV guest appearances, including *Oprah* and *Today Show*, and has been featured in *Newsweek*, *Time*, *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and many others. Next, Dr. Pamela Rutledge offers a succinct overview of the major theories and constructs in media psychology. Dr. Rutledge is the Director of the Media Psychology Research Center, Newport Beach, CA, and professor emerita of media psychology at Fielding Graduate University. As Dr. Rutledge notes, media psychology is situated within the broader discipline of psychology, and though media psychology topics often overlap with other media-related disciplines, its theoretical foundation in psychological science sets it apart. Dr. Rutledge's chapter describes some of media psychology's most used theories and related constructs, setting the stage for the content present in many of the other chapters.

Dr. Eva Telzer and Maria Maza explore the rapidly emerging science regarding the developing brain and connections to social media. Dr. Telzer is a Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience and the co-director of the Winston National Center on Technology Use, Brain, and Psychological Development at UNC-Chapel Hill, where Ms. Maza is a graduate student. Their chapter examines how adolescents' neurobiological development may interact with their social media experiences to shape developmental outcomes. They explore how unique neurobiological changes during adolescence impact adolescents' sensitivity when perceiving, processing, and responding to social information in digital contexts. They suggest bidirectional links by which the adolescent brain may be tuned to experience social media in unique ways, and the social media experiences may further tune and shape the developing brain, thereby impacting subsequent health and well-being. Dr. Susan

J. Eddington, 2023 President of APA's Society for Media Psychology and Technology, examines political advertising, persuasion, propaganda, and fake news in her chapter. Dr. Eddington notes that information pollution (i.e., misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation) has become a threat to democracies and their ability to govern and to ensure the well-being of their citizens. She argues that though legacy media organizations have historically been the primary source of news and information about important topics that affect citizens' lives, in the US people no longer have a shared sense of truth because information pollution has led to mistrust of journalists, journalism, and major institutions. Social media and political advertising play a role in the spread of information pollution. She further describes how media effects theories help explain how people can be susceptible to information pollution, though technology also can play a role in designing interventions, including inoculating individuals against its effects.

In his chapter, Dr. Bernie Luskin describes a course and curriculum for teaching media psychology. Dr. Luskin served as president and CEO of Philips Interactive Media and divisions of other Fortune 500 companies. He has been CEO of eight colleges and universities and served as faculty including at UCLA, USC, Claremont and Fielding Graduate Universities, California State University, and Pepperdine University. Luskin developed and launched the first MA, PhD program in Media Psychology at any university, is past president of the APA Society for Media Psychology and Technology, and is an APA Fellow. He produced the first Sesame Street, Grolier's, and Compton's *Encyclopedia* on interactive CD and received two Emmys for documentary television series. Dr. Luskin provides a rationale and content necessary to develop a foundation course in media psychology, as well as information on related career and professional opportunities. A focus of his chapter is on neuropsychology and media communications, including a discussion of synesthesia, semiotics, and semantics as they interact to foster perception and understanding. Dr. Grant J. Rich, 2024 President of the Society for Media Psychology and Technology, and lead editor of the present volume, offers a chapter exploring a media psychology perspective on book banning and censorship, past, present, and future. He describes some historical examples of book banning around the globe, including a discussion of who initiated the bannings, and why, as well as the results and implications of their actions. He includes examples from a range of sociopolitical positions. In particular, he describes notable cases of banning of books written by psychologists and provides descriptions of the book banning past and present in the USA, outlining some of the diverse viewpoints. He presents relevant research from psychology and related disciplines and suggests directions for future research.

Dr. Gayle S. Stever and J. David Cohen write on audience effects in media, providing a framework for studying audience effects. Dr. Stever is a professor of psychology at Empire State University of New York and has worked in the field of media psychology for 35 years with a focus on the study of celebrities and their fans in parasocial relationships. Her publications include *The Psychology of Celebrity* (2018) and *Understanding Media Psychology* (2021), and she is an associate editor for the *Journal of Popular Media Psychology*. J. David Cohen, MA, is a visiting instructor of psychology at Empire State University of New York and is a co-author

of *Understanding Media Psychology* (2021). Stever and Cohen note that audience research has entered a new era in the twenty-first century where the demarcation between producer and consumer is no longer as clear as it once might have been. As a result, audience studies continually negotiate the nature of the roles of those who produce media and those who are media consumers. They describe key concepts and theories that are relevant to the understanding of audience members and the ways that they respond to media. A controversial but critical topic in media psychology is pornography. In their chapter, leading scholars on the topic, Dr. Chelly Maes, Dr. Laura Vendenbosch, and Dr. Paul J Wright, examine online pornography consumption by adolescents and young adults (i.e., youth). These authors provide an overview of the theoretical and empirical work devoted to investigating the impact of pornography use on youth, including conditional boundaries and underlying mechanisms explaining this impact, while highlighting inconsistencies in the field. Their contribution also notes challenges and future directions in the field of pornography research, especially the potential of model specification issues and the heightened value content-specific approaches would provide the field. They also note that future research is needed to explore the potential benefits of pornography use by youth.

Dr. Lenore Walker is a professor emeritus at Nova Southeastern University's College of Psychology and a leading authority on women's issues, including battered women's syndrome. Her chapter on gender and the media is coauthored by Dr. Brandi Diaz, who is currently completing a postdoctoral fellowship in forensic assessment through the Minnesota Department of Human Services. The two authors describe the complex and longstanding intersectionality of how the media presents and portrays body image, sexuality, and gender. They note that the media often perpetuates harmful images of women, reinforcing traditional and conservative gender stereotypes, and address several domains of gender and sexuality in the media. Among the topics covered, they discuss how the media can contribute to negative body image and dissatisfaction, the sexualization and objectification of women in the media, the portrayal of gender in the media, and how gender violence is reported. They also provide recommendations for how mental health and media practitioners can address such inequities and misrepresentations in the media. Dr. Katherine Marshall Woods is a clinical psychologist in Washington, DC, and a member of the core faculty at The George Washington University Professional Psychology Program. Dr. Marshall Woods has contributed blogs for *The Huffington Post*, the former American Psychological Association's (APA) *PsycCRITIQUES*, and blogs with *Thrive Global and Medium*. She has authored the book, *Best Psychology in Film* (2019). Her chapter, on film, describes how psychological dynamics are ever present within cinematic works. She examines many films within psychotherapy and within the classroom setting meant to enhance students' learning and discusses who is represented in the films and their sequels for the inclusion of people of minority identities that are both hidden and viewed. In their chapter, El-Lim Kim and Dr. Craig A. Anderson present a critical review of the accumulated research findings on aggression and popular media, with a specific focus on fictional violence (e.g., violence in popular media such as television, movies, and video games)

and real-world violence (e.g., news coverage of violent crimes and terrorism). Possible consequences of media violence exposure—including increased aggressive affect, cognitions, and behaviors—are discussed in terms of the General Aggression Model. The authors offer evidence from cross-sectional, experimental, and longitudinal studies and conclude with a discussion of the implication of media portrayal of fictional and real-life violence as a risk factor for human aggression and negative psychological well-being. Dr. Anderson has published extensively on the topics; his recent awards include the 2017 *Kurt Lewin Award* from the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, the 2018 APA Society for Personality and Social Psychology's *Distinguished Scholar Award*, and the 2021 APA Society for Media Psychology and Technology Distinguished Lifetime Contributions to Media Psychology and Technology award. El-Lim Kim is currently a PhD candidate in social psychology at Iowa State University. She has obtained her master's degree in developmental clinical psychology from Ewha Women's University in South Korea and has several peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters on media effects and human aggression.

Dr. Don Grant, a past president of the Society for Media Psychology and Technology, offers an insightful chapter on how recognized addiction models and our relationships with digital media intersect. Dr. Grant notes that while countless benefits of digitized engagement are easily identifiable, allegations regarding possible negative consequences of their use and utilization—including potential addictive risks for some users—have begun to emerge. He notes, for instance, that while gaming disorder has been officially recognized as a disease by the World Health Organization (WHO), to date no other cyber-based behaviors have been recognized as such by either WHO or the American Psychiatric Association. He acknowledges that while more research regarding this emerging technology is vital, how our current device-driven beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors might align with those already well established as correlated with addiction is a topic of significant ongoing interest to researchers, treatment professionals, governments, organizations, and users. Dr. Grant is a popular media guest, with media credits that include *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times*, *Time*, *People*, *Forbes*, *The Hollywood Reporter*, *ABC News*, *CBS News*, and *The Daily Show*.

Another emerging topic of significance and relevance to media psychology and technology are mobile, web-based and tablet clinical applications for psychology. In their chapter, Dr. Stephanie Miodus, Dr. Stephanie Joseph, and Dr. Frank Farley explore this emerging topic. The three authors note how the rapid growth of media, namely, digital platforms, social media, and the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI), has transformed the clinical and health fields and society in general. They explore how the proliferation of various forms of media (e.g., apps, films, podcasts) can be applied clinically to support individuals with mental health (e.g., anxiety, depression) and neurodevelopmental disorders (e.g., autism) and those with special medical needs (e.g., cancer), as well as limitations to their applications. The authors bring a wealth of clinical experience with children and adults and discuss the clinical implications of social media and AI apps in patient care. We are pleased to have the work of Dr. Skip Rizzo represented. Dr. Rizzo is the Director of MedVR at the

USC Institute for Creative Technologies, and an acknowledged leader in AI (artificial intelligence), AR (augmented reality), and VR (virtual reality) as relates to psychology. His chapter reflects his over 25 years of pioneering research on VR and focuses on virtual reality as a tool to enhance trauma-focused therapy.

The COVID-19 pandemic of the past several years has been unprecedented in the scope and scale of its impact in many ways on the economic, cultural, social, political, and psychological lives of so many in the USA and the world. Among the many impacts of the pandemic were ways in which media and technology were used to communicate—or miscommunicate—health information. In their chapter, Dr. Lening A. Olivera-Figueroa and Urbashi Bhattacharjee explore the dynamics of pandemics, information, fake news, and modern media and technology as they interact with human psychology in myriad and complex ways. In addition to discussing misinformation and conspiracy theories related to COVID-19, they provide insights into AI techniques that could collectively contribute to the creation of robust, reliable systems to detect and mitigate the proliferation of fake news, especially as relates to pandemics.

New technologies often mean societies must negotiate new ethical and social challenges that result from such innovations. Dr. David Shapiro explores ethical issues in media psychology. As he notes, when people think about ethical issues in the media, they usually think about talk shows; however, there are many other areas of relevance, as highlighted in APA's Ethics Code. He describes several such areas which include the potential misuse of psychological insights and testing in both the media and in courtroom settings, that some psychologists who do not have the necessary credentials represent themselves in misleading or fraudulent manners, and that the law, in several areas, does not account for psychology's limitations, thus potentially allowing substandard testimony to be admitted into judicial settings, harming both the individuals involved and the integrity of psychology as a discipline. He is a Professor Emeritus in the College of Psychology at Nova Southeastern University, with 50 years of experience in forensic psychology, is board certified (ABPP) in forensic psychology, and has taught, trained, and conducted research in the forensic area. He has been actively involved not only in teaching courses on ethics but has also served on ethics committees at both state and national levels and on the APA Ethics Committee and the ABPP Ethics Committee.

Another emerging topic related to media psychology and technology is what is being termed cancel culture. Dr. Joanne Broder explores the complex dynamics of cancel culture in the media. Noting the present paucity of data and research on this novel phenomenon, she explores how persons or organizations tend to become canceled, clarifies distinctions between getting canceled versus being held accountable, identifies the roles (target, instigator, trolls, and bystander) in a cancel situation, describes strategies for preventing and moving on from Cancel Culture, and examines the future of Cancel Culture. Dr. Broder is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association (APA) and a media psychologist who writes, coaches,

and speaks to lay and professional audiences about bridging the gap between research and practice in media psychology. She is a Past President of the APA Society of Media Psychology and Technology, where she initiated the Device Management and Intelligence Committee, and was a founding Editor of the APA peer-reviewed journal, *Psychology of Popular Media*.

Finally, the book closes with an exploration of the intersection of media with psychological science by Dr. V. K. Kumar, one of this book's coeditors. As Dr. Kumar notes, George Miller's famous dictum of "giving psychology away" does not appear to be a problem anymore. With advances in technology, professionals and the lay public are finding it easy to publish in a variety of formats. However, scholars and citizens have raised concerns about the authenticity of psychological information so abundantly reported in the media. He explores possible sources of misinformation when writing about psychological research-based information for public consumption and offers some suggestions for improving this process. He provides numerous examples from the media and psychological science to support his analysis. Given that recent 2023 Gallup poll survey data (Brenan, 2023) indicate that only 32% of Americans say they trust the mass media "a great deal" or "a fair amount" to report the news in a full, fair, and accurate way (tying Gallup's lowest historical reading, previously recorded in 2016), the significance of this topic should be clearly evident. It is worth noting that in the late 1970s, in contrast, over 70% of Americans said they trusted the mass media "a great deal" or "a fair amount." Such a sea change in attitudes should be a point of concern not only for psychologists but for all who seek to live and thrive in a well-functioning democracy.

We hope that this Handbook will offer some insight into the dynamics, processes, and mechanisms by which media and technologies intersect and continually cocreate individuals and societies. Here we share the mission of the American Psychological Association, to "promote the advancement, communication, and application of psychological science and knowledge to benefit society and improve lives" (APA, 2023). Hopefully, readers can utilize this Handbook to better understand media, technology, their applications, and each other to ultimately work toward implementing positive social change.

Walden University

Juneau, AK, USA

West Chester University of Pennsylvania

West Chester, PA, USA

Temple University

Philadelphia, PA, USA

Grant J. Rich

V. K. Kumar

Frank H. Farley

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About the Editors

Grant J. Rich, (PhD, Psychology, University of Chicago) is President of the Society for Media Psychology and Technology (APA's Division 46). Dr. Rich is a Fellow of APS, APA, and five of APA's divisions including D46 (Media). Dr. Rich has extensive experience in managing organizations and projects; for instance, he served D48 successfully for 3 years as its APA Convention Program Chair, and, for 4 years, was Editor of D52's substantial quarterly *International Psychology Bulletin* (IPB); receiving its President's Award for Extraordinary Service. Among other honors, he received the Academic Service Award from the American University of Phnom Penh and twice was a NEH Fellow. Dr. Rich has published over 110 peer-reviewed journal articles/book chapters/entries in leading journals including *American Psychologist*, *Journal of Positive Psychology*, *Humanistic Psychologist*, and *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, and *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment, and Trauma*. He is the senior editor of nine academic books, including *Pathfinders in International Psychology* (2015); *Internationalizing the Teaching of Psychology* (2017); *Human Strengths and Resilience* (2018); *Teaching Psychology Around the World*, Volume 4 (2018) and 5 (2020); *Psychology in Southeast Asia* (2020), *Psychology in Oceania and the Caribbean* (2022); and *Psychosocial Experiences and Adjustment of Migrants: Coming to the USA* (2023). Dr. Rich is a leader in online and global education, serving as Senior Contributing Faculty at Walden University, where he has worked since 2013. His publications include several books/articles focused on diversifying psychology education (e.g., via online education/media/MOOCs), four articles on attitudes toward media celebrities, and articles/chapters on creativity, particularly with respect to popular/classical musicians, including cinematic depictions. Dr. Rich serves on several editorial boards, including *PLOS One* and APA's *Traumatology* and *Peace & Conflict*. He has also published over 100 book reviews and offered more than 110 professional presentations in the USA and internationally, including APA, AERA, AAA, APS, IAAP, and ICP. Dr. Rich has an abiding interest in behavioral health technologies, including prescription digital therapeutics (PDTs) and their precursors, such as the Experience Sampling Method (ESM) approaches. He is the recipient of the 2023 Frances Mullen Award for Distinguished Contributions to International Psychology (ICP: International Council of Psychologists).

V. K. Kumar, PhD, is Professor Emeritus at West Chester University of Pennsylvania, where he taught for 45 years. Prior to that, he taught at Case Western Reserve University for 6 years. He also taught summer sessions as a visiting professor two times at the University of Iowa and once at the University of Alberta-Edmonton, Canada. He served as the 2014 President of the APA Society for Humanistic Psychology. He also served as the 2020 President of the APA Society for Media Psychology and Technology. He has served as Editor/Coeditor of *The Amplifier Magazine* of the Society for Media Psychology and Technology from 2008 to 2022. He has published over 170 scholarly works, which include articles based on empirical work, review-based articles, edited books, book chapters, book and film reviews, blogs, editorials, and columns as an officer in the Society for Media Psychology and Technology in *The Amplifier Magazine*. He has served as a consulting editor and as a peer reviewer for a variety of journals and served as a special issue editor for the *Journal of Group Psychotherapy, Psychodrama & Sociometry on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Psychodrama*, *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis*, and the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*. He is an elected Fellow of APA in several societies: Teaching of Psychology, Experimental Psychology and Cognitive Science, Educational Psychology, Psychological Hypnosis, Humanistic Psychology, Health Psychology, Media Psychology and Technology, and International Psychology. He received the 2015 Distinguished Lifetime Contribution Award in Media Psychology and Technology and the 2018 Distinguished Professional Contribution Award in Media Psychology and Technology Award from the APA Society of Media Psychology and Technology. He and his coauthors (including several students) have received awards for their papers in Hypnosis published in the *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis* and presented as part of divisional programming of the Society for Clinical Hypnosis at APA annual conventions. He received his license as a psychologist in Pennsylvania in 1991 and maintained it until the end of 2023. As a psychologist, he held practice privileges at the Brandywine Hospital (1993–2006), Coatesville, PA, and at the Center for Cognitive Therapy, University of Pennsylvania (2002–2012). He received the Community and Congressional Affairs Volunteer Recognition 1000 Hour Pin in September 2004 for his voluntary service at the Coatesville Veterans Administration Medical Center, Coatesville, PA.

Frank H. Farley, PhD, a Past President of the American Psychological Association (APA) has been president of numerous APA Divisions, including the Society for Media Psychology and Technology as well as Divisions 1, 3, 10, 15, 26, 32, 48, and 52. He has also served as former president of the International Council of Psychologists (ICP) and the American Educational Research Association (AERA), among other leadership positions. He has published over 250 scholarly articles and 7 books and has been elected fellow of numerous professional organizations including the American Association for the Advancement of Science, New York Academy of Sciences, APA, AERA, Association for Psychological Science, Psychonomics Society, International Association of Applied Psychology,

Canadian Psychological Association, Society for the Scientific Study of Sexuality, Eastern Psychological Association, and Midwestern Psychological Association. He has engaged in over 1000 media interviews, contributions and coverage, including TV (e.g., CNN, NBC, FOX, ABC, CBS, CBC Canada, “Newsy” TV, Russian TV), Radio (e.g., USA—Voice of America; CANADA—CBC; Corus Radio Network’s all-Canada Roy Green Show; UK—BBC World Service; France24; Russia; Australia), newspapers (e.g., *USA Today*, *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *LA Times*, *London Times*, *Denver Post*, *Philadelphia Inquirer*, *Toronto Sun*, *Vancouver Sun*, *Montreal Gazette*, *Ottawa Sun*, *Edmonton Sun*, *Victoria Citizen*, *Daily Memphian*, Associated Press news service, *San Francisco Chronicle*), and magazines (e.g., *Time Magazine*, *People Magazine*, *Psychology Today*, *Newsweek Magazine*, *US News and World Report*, *Runners World*, *VIA Magazine*—AAA’s magazine, *Powder Magazine*, *Shape Magazine*, *Outside Magazine*, *Physics World*, *Men’s Health*, *Popular Science*, *O, The Oprah Magazine*). Among his notable professional contributions to media psychology was his creating and chairing in 1994 “The Assembly of the 21st Century” held at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, with a veritable who’s who of almost 35–40 public psychologists (e.g., Phil Zimbardo, Albert Ellis, Elizabeth Loftus) participating, to debate the status and future of this great field. Dr. Farley also created and ran for some years a monthly seminar on psychology and public policy for the US Senate and House of Representatives on the fourth Friday of every month on Capitol Hill in DC.

Chapter 1

A Brief History of Media Psychology (1.0)



Michael S. Broder

Arguably, the *spiritual* forerunner to the aspects of media psychology (1.0 or pre-Internet), to be explored in this chapter, are the early advice columns in American newspapers dating back to (“wise old”) Benjamin Franklin (Gudelunas, 2008), who in the 1700s and under the pen name “Mrs. Silence Dogwood,” offered advice on the issues of the day in the *New England Courant* and the *Pennsylvania Gazette* (as if he needed yet another invention for his resume!).

Much later, in the twentieth century, Pauline Phillips, a.k.a. Abigail Van Buren, began her wildly popular column “Dear Abby.” Pauline’s twin sister Esther (Eppie), then took over a rival advice column begun by Ruth Crowley, which started in the *Chicago Sun-Times* during the early 1940s called “Ask Ann Landers.” Although many lesser-known advice columnists have come and gone, the two sisters and their successors’ (all of whom were laypeople) competing columns have practically cornered the newspaper advice column market since (Gudelunas, 2008).

The success of these advice columns along with some of the early self-help books by such iconic lay authors as Dale Carnegie (1936), Napoleon Hill (1937), and others was probably most instrumental in convincing both electronic media outlets and major publishers of books and magazines that there was certainly a hunger for this type of information.

Radio psychology began as “public service” programming as early as the 1920s. Polish American experimental psychologist Joseph Jastrow (1928) and others, not as well-known at the time, found their radio guest spots to be a highly effective medium for giving the public authoritative talks on their research and other psychologically oriented topics (Behrens, 2009).

Many decades later, a panel of radio historians at the 1991 National Association of Radio Talk Show Hosts (NARSH) convention confirmed that throughout the

M. S. Broder (✉)
Independent Psychologist, Philadelphia, PA, USA
e-mail: mb@michaelbroder.com

“golden age of radio” (mid-1920s to 1950s), psychologists often appeared on news and daytime “conversation programs”—to give their expertise on various issues such as child rearing, grieving, and coping with the era’s news and world realities such as the Great Depression, war, and other aspects of a rapidly changing world.

In the 1950s, media psychology got its first bona fide A-list star. Psychologist Joyce Brothers made her inaugural TV appearance on a hugely popular prime-time quiz/game show: *The \$64,000 Question*, winning the jackpot as an expert on boxing! Her extremely likable and non-threatening TV persona led to her hosting several radio and TV programs, and to making guest appearances on many top TV shows as both a psychologist and an entertainer. She went on to become the celebrity face of psychology for her millions of fans, over several decades, until her death in 2013. Long after she stopped hosting programs, she continued to write bestsellers and be invited to TV’s biggest shows to give her opinions and advice, and even to participate in comedy bits, often transcending psychology and even parodying herself (Gutgold, 2016). One of the things that made her so appealing was that she shattered the common “humorless and smug” stereotype that many in the public had about psychologists at the time, by never seeming to take herself too seriously and providing a witty, self-assured role model who enabled many fans to consider that attitude for themselves, as well.

Joyce Brothers, PhD, becoming a household name paved the way for the evolving concept of media psychology to include many celebrity performers with psychological training/credentials who came along much later, such as “Dr. Ruth” Westheimer, and “Dr. Phil” McGraw who went on to become A-list celebrities in their own right.

In a 1987 invited address to the APA convention, “*Four Decades of Success with the Media*,” Albert Ellis stated that he—along with his pioneering cognitive behavioral therapy approach, REBT—gained much of his early popularity by appearing as a semi-regular guest in the 1950s on the original *Today Show*, with Dave Garroway (Ellis, 1987). Psychologist Wayne Dyer was a regular on Johnnie Carson’s *Tonight Show* starting with his trademark book (Dyer, 1976), and became an iconic author/speaker as a result. These are but two well-known examples of psychologists whose books and other work got massive boosts as a result of their media guest appearances.

Although there are a few anecdotal accounts of psychologists hosting long-form radio programs or providing short-form spots on local stations during the 1950s and 1960s, it was not until the 1970s that psychologically oriented call-in radio programs began to catch on in a significant way in major markets. Hosts of various radio call-in programs found that psychologists often made excellent guests, due to their knowledge of and credibility with many contemporary topics, including relationships, parenting, motivational issues, and of course, understanding and/or coping with whatever the psychological “malady du jour” (often inspired by news coverage of a celebrity, athlete, or politician) happened to be (Wedding, 2017).

Hosting offers most typically came as a result of being what program directors considered a “great guest,” who by virtue of their radio performance could generate a good caller response, as well as address complex topics in short easily understandable *soundbites*; that provided listeners a satisfactory and sometimes humorous

explanation, while making both the host that brought them on look good, and displaying an optimal or at least an acceptable degree of “*radio presence*” (a term that was used often in the radio industry but was generally defined as “you know it when you hear it”).

For psychologists, radio executives *operationalized* radio presence (in left-brain terms) as the ability to connect with an invisible audience, by conveying a certain non-threatening *warmth* along with the degree of humor, self-confident opinion, and knowledge to address the topic or issue (no matter how daunting), in a way that inspired callers—but even more crucially, *listeners*—to feel good about *themselves*. However, similarly to the persona one employs when doing psychotherapy, some professionals were natural at this, while others found developing it to be a challenge or struggle, didn’t acknowledge this media reality at all, or were even put off by the idea of it.

Of course, while radio presence might get one *hired* to host, it is *ratings* (number of listeners), *market share* (percentage of listeners that have their radios on during showtime, listening to a *specific* program), and the resulting *advertising dollars* that determine practically everything else.

Toni Grant, a Los Angeles psychologist, was a pioneering example of someone who got her show on Los Angeles’ KABC (then LA’s talk-radio powerhouse) by first establishing herself as a highly-skilled popular guest in the post-Watergate mid-1970s, a time when talk-radio was in a slump and looking for new directions. Her ratings as a host then far exceeded expectations. This *phenomenon* spread quickly throughout the talk-radio sector of the industry, and soon talk-radio program directors were looking for their own market’s “Dr. Toni Grant.” Moreover, as listeners found these shows to be credible and informative as well as “voyeuristic” and entertaining, this brand of talk-radio was seen by some radio programmers as “lightning in a bottle.” Soon other major markets jumped aboard (Fleming, 1982). Licensed psychologists Joy Browne, Sonya Friedman, Judy Kuriansky, Laura Schlessinger, and many others were hired in their respective markets, then later in syndication, and proved to be reliable money makers for the media companies that employed them not only in the US but also internationally (Kuriansky, 1996).

This period was also the beginning of this author’s radio-hosting path in Philadelphia, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

However, APA and many psychologists did *not* share the enthusiasm. Notably, in my 1979 psychology licensing exam, a paraphrase of the correct answer to one ethics question, was that giving advice over the airways or even in a newspaper or magazine column was *unethical* (Shapiro, 2011). APA’s rationale for this position was simply that psychological advice can only be ethically and professionally given in the proper professional context (i.e., in a professional setting and consistent with clinical standards). As logical as this might *sound* in principle, *in practice*, for the many professionals affected, it felt murky, unclear, inconsistent with the times, and/or even *unconstitutional*!

After all, nobody flinched when medical or legal experts, for example, were on radio or TV disseminating information that audiences at home found to be relevant. What made psychology different? And isn’t it preferable for *psychologists*—as

opposed to advice columnist types with no professional training, for example—to convey information to the public on things such as eating disorders, addictions, phobias, depression, anxiety, self-esteem, and a wide variety of emotional issues? Of course, my answer to this question was always “yes”!

Moreover, when a psychologist is working for a media outlet, whether it’s radio, TV, or print, the mission is to *entertain* and *retain* as well as *educate* the audience, not to pretend to provide diagnosis, treatment, or a substitute for therapy to a radio caller, or someone who sends in a question to a column they are writing (Broder, 1999; Kuriansky, 2005).

Author’s Reflections

That was certainly the way I saw it when I began as the host of my first radio program in 1980. Thus, I have been much more of a *player* in the practical, political, and professional issues than an observer, when it comes to media psychology and how it evolved. For this reason, I cannot claim to be the most *objective* reporter on the topic, I am only a media psychologist who became deeply involved as an activist/practitioner of it, during that important window of time that saw media psychology go from being considered by many in the field as ethically dubious (at best), to being finally acknowledged as a major force for massively *strengthening* the psychology field. This was done by raising the public’s awareness of the power and relevance of media psychology, literally giving psychology away, and making the prospect of getting psychological help for those suffering from personal, marital, family, and/or relationship issues to be non-threatening and destigmatized.

After this was accomplished, media psychology expanded and went on to become much broader, in the areas of research and technology (2.0). However, this chapter focuses on the process that took place during media psychology’s *pre-Internet period*, which resulted in it becoming a bona fide specialty of the field, worthy of its own APA Division, and much more.

Making Media Psychology Legitimate: A Personal Journey

To set the stage for how media psychology made this crucial shift, I shall briefly note how I got involved in the first place, since I was to find that mine was far more typical a path for practitioners of this new specialty than I ever realized at the time.

Quite unexpectedly, media psychology found me, not the other way around. Although I never aspired to be a performer, or broadcaster, or ever even made an on-air appearance, my involvement with radio began serendipitously, as a way to get participants for my doctoral dissertation, which was a study on divorce adjustment. Unlike many of my doctoral student contemporaries who picked topics for which recruiting participants was far easier, I needed at least 50 recently separated