

Advances in Foundational Mass Communication Theories

Edited by
Ran Wei

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Advances in Foundational Mass Communication Theories

Providing leading-edge perspectives on the legacy theories of mass media and society, this collection advances the foundational theories of mass communications, which have sustained the field of study over the past fifty years. Many of these contributions were originally published as a Deutschmann Scholarly Essay in the *Mass Communication and Society* journal, and together they comprise a remarkable source of knowledge, equipped to lead mass communications theory through the emergence of new technologies, and the evolution of communications, in the 21st century.

Moreover, the contributions gathered in this volume contradict any critics who may claim the theories of the 20th century have outlived their usefulness, for these prove to guide contemporary research as forcefully as ever in the digital era. Validating the classic media theories across time and their various forms constitute the second focal section of this volume. Finally, senior media scholars offer their views on the future directions in which mass communication theories can be advanced.

The chapters in this book were originally published in various issues of *Mass Communication and Society*.

Ran Wei is the Gonzales Brothers Professor of Journalism at the University of South Carolina, USA, and current Editor-in-Chief of *Mass Communication and Society*. His research focuses on new media studies, and has won numerous awards, including the Best Article of the Year award in 2013 by *International Marketing Review*. His current research focuses on mobile communication, new media, and the processes and effects of media messages in various contexts (political, social, promotional, health and risk) that involve a wide range of media channels and devices (traditional and emerging). He is a pioneering scholar in mobile communication research, and his mobile phone studies are widely cited. He serves on the editorial board of *Mobile Media & Communication*, and has been a guest editor of *Media Asia*.

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Reassessing the People's Choice: Revisiting a Classic and Excavating Lessons for Research About Media and Voting

Stephen Lacy and Michael Stamm

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Chapter 3

Reading Lasswell's Model of Communication Backward: Three Scholarly Misconceptions

Zachary S. Sapienza, Narayanan Iyer and Aaron S. Veenstra

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Beyond the Four Theories of the Press: A New Model of National Media Systems

Jennifer Ostini and Anthony Y.H. Fung

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The First-Person Effect and Its Behavioral Consequences: A New Trend in the Twenty-Five Year History of Third-Person Effect Research

Guy J. Golan and Anita G. Day

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Chapter 6

A Media Sociology for the Networked Public Sphere: The Hierarchy of Influences Model

Stephen D. Reese and Pamela J. Shoemaker

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Chapter 7

Studying Journalists and Journalism Across Four Decades: A Sociology of Occupations Approach

David H. Weaver

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Chapter 8

New Directions in Agenda-Setting Theory and Research

Maxwell E. McCombs, Donald L. Shaw and David H. Weaver

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Chapter 9

The End of Framing as we Know it . . . and the Future of Media Effects

Michael A. Cacciatore, Dietram A. Scheufele and Shanto Iyengar

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Chapter 10

Yesterday's New Cultivation, Tomorrow

Michael Morgan, James Shanahan and Nancy Signorielli

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Chapter 11

A Three-Decade Retrospective on the Hostile Media Effect

Richard M. Perloff

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*Diffusion Theory in the New Media Environment: Toward an Integrated
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David J. Atkin, Daniel S. Hunt and Carolyn A. Lin

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*Mass Communication Research at the Crossroads: Definitional Issues and
Theoretical Directions for Mass and Political Communication Scholarship in an
Age of Online Media*

Richard M. Perloff

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Introduction: Extending the Deep Legacy of Our Field's Top Scholars

Ran Wei

This book is about theory, more specifically, about long-standing mass communication theories, which form the foundation of the discipline now for nearly a century. The established body of knowledge regarding the processes and effects of mass communication in society was built upon these foundational theories (Lowery & DeFleur, 1995), which footed the media effect research tradition in the field (Sherry, 2004). Despite the challenges from the digital media, they remain the touchstones of the field as well as our legacy. The range of theory-based knowledge about mass media and society is vast and expanding; to deepen it, the Deutschmann Scholar essays published in *Mass Communication and Society* made accessible the top scholars in the field to junior scholars and graduate students.

A FAST GROWING FIELD IN PERSPECTIVE

By any account, the number of journalism and communications programs offered on college campuses in the United States has continued to grow. University communications programs now total more than 750, and the total of accredited schools of journalism and mass communications reached 118 in 2016. In the age of ubiquitous media and saturated communication in our society, it is easy to take such high numbers for granted. Considering the relatively short history of mass

communications as a field in institutions of higher education, we cannot take this growth and expansion for granted.

Mass communications research was filled with challenges in the formative years following World War II. After a brief stint at mass communication research, prominent scholars such as Carl Hovland of Yale University went back to their home disciplines (in his case, psychology) after the war. Focusing on communication-centered issues, mass communications researchers were guided by scientific research principles and began to move toward an independent, or what Pooley (2008) called an “institutionalized field” (p. 46), in the 1960s. It took a few trailblazers to do the pioneer work in building and growing the field in the years that followed.

Paul J. Deutschmann (1917–1963), dean and pioneering faculty member of the College of Communication Arts and Sciences at Michigan State University, was a visionary leader. As the AEJMC website states, he was a central force in the movement to use scientific methods to study journalism and mass communications. Deutschmann had been a newspaper editor in Oregon and Colorado, who received his Ph.D. in mass communications from Stanford University. Deutschmann’s research was dedicated to the resolution of human problems, and was among the first to identify—and quantify—the social importance of mass media. *The Paul J. Deutschmann Award for Excellence in Research* was created in the 1960s by the AEJMC Elected Standing Committee on Research, to honor an academic who has built an outstanding record of achievement in journalism and mass communication research. When no qualified candidates are identified, the award is not given. As a result, in the nearly half century of the award’s history, only 24 awards have been bestowed, on 26 scholars. Clearly, *The Paul J. Deutschmann Award for Excellence in Research* is known as the field’s most prestigious award.

The first Deutschmann scholar was Chilton “Chick” Bush of Stanford University in 1969, who was recognized as a great innovator. He was credited with introducing the first-of-its-kind interdisciplinary doctoral program in the country (three of the first four students later became deans or directors of major journalism schools). The next recipients of the prestigious award were Ralph O. Nafziger in 1972 and Wilber Schramm in 1973, two of the most familiar names in mass communications research.

Where are the Deutschmann scholars now? In planning for this book, we verified that nearly half of them have passed away. Most are fully retired or semi-retired, and only four of the scholars remain active faculty members (see Table 1 in appendix).

EXCELLENCE IN MASS COMMUNICATION RESEARCH: THE RICH LEGACY

The Deutschmann scholar essays, therefore, serve to celebrate the achievements of our top scholars; a group of high-achieving individuals whom we also call mentors,