

THE AMPLIFIER

MEDIA PSYCHOLOGY

DIVISION 46 OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

SUMMER 2003

President's Message

Elizabeth K. Carll, PhD

The Role of Psychology and New Media Technologies



Elizabeth K. Carll, PhD

The rapid transformation of electronic technology is changing the way we communicate with others. Virtual communities and friendships were almost nonexistent a decade ago. Having conversations and relationships with those we rarely, or in some cases never, see adds a unique aspect to these relationships as intimacy is fostered without proximity. It will be interesting to see if these types of relationships, in the long run, will be similar to in-person friendships and whether they will result in different types and degrees of bonds with others.

Research in this area is almost nonexistent and the impact of these emerging technologies on social change will define new research and practice areas for psychology.

The development of robotics for manufacturing, telemedicine and healthcare, and household assistance is already occurring and will dramatically change our lives. Imagine that you no longer have a laptop or PC at home but a mobile computer unit, a household robot, that can answer all your questions, deal with emergencies, watch the kids when you go shopping, and be a social companion for the aged and homebound. It is likely that every household may have such a robot by the middle of the 21st century. This raises not only practical but ethical questions, as these robots will likely be superior to humans in most ways with the exception, perhaps, of truly creative thinking.

These questions form the basis for a special symposium at this year's APA Convention, *New Media Technologies, Psychology, and Social Change: New Horizons*, which I have organized in place of the usual presidential address. In addition to my discussion of psychology's role with regard to *Cutting edge Communication Technologies and Social Change in the 21st Century*, I have also invited several leading experts to discuss important is-

sues that will impact on social change.

Skip Rizzo, PhD, will present a first-of-a-kind convention talk on the application of virtual reality to TV news reporting. Most people get their information from TV news, which will become a 360-degree perspective through the eyes of the reporter. The viewer will experience being virtually, right there, on location. This technology will have enormous implications, as viewers will no longer be passive consumers of news.

Dorothy Singer, EdD, will discuss research on the impact of electronic media on the imagination of children and adolescents. Will people think differently being exposed to these types of technology at an early age? Will the impact be beneficial, detrimental, or make little difference whatsoever? Dr. Singer will discuss various computer games that have the potential for enhancing children's imagination.

Bryant Welch, JD, PhD, will discuss the impact of rapid technological advances on the loss of privacy and important clinical and legal implications. Interactive computers will respond to our every wish and simultaneously record our every word and behavior. We will be living in a virtual fishbowl where everything will be recorded in one form or another. The implications are both frightening and exciting. Will paranoid behavior increase, as others truly will always be watching us or will we become indifferent?

Many other interesting programs focusing on new technologies are featured in this issue, as part of our convention program, highlighting the diverse interest areas in media psychology. Eve Whitmore, PhD, program chair, deserves congratulations for organizing an exceptional convention program for the second year.

Be sure to join us at the Division 46 Social Hour on Friday August 8th, 5 PM–6:50 PM, (Fairmont Royal York, Salon A) which will provide a great opportunity to meet in person and catch-up with our virtual friends.

From the Editor

Barry L. Gordon, PhD



Barry L. Gordon, PhD

This summer pre-convention issue of *The Amplifier* looks ahead to the 111th APA Annual Convention in Toronto, on August 7 to 10, 2003. A tear-out **Convention Program Schedule** detailing all scheduled Division 46 programs, events, and social activities has been included for your convenience. We encourage you to bring it to the Convention as a handy one-page reference. Kudos go to Eve F. Whitmore, PhD, Convention Program Chair, for organizing the incredible variety of media related programs this year.

Our guest author for this issue is University of Michigan psychologist Brad J. Bushman, PhD, who gives us a fascinating preview of his Invited Address reviewing his work on the effects of television violence on advertising.

This issue also marks the debut of **Practical Technology**, a new regular column by Manny Tau, PsyD, Website and Listserv Administrator. His first installment offers a wealth of information to psychologists on how to design and implement a professional and effective website. Dr. Tau also played a major role in organizing and presenting our successful distance education CE course held in early June, the first of a series in development by our Distance Education Committee.

As always, we appreciate and encourage you to submit any articles, news, book reviews, or letters to the editor regarding our Division and/or media psychology. Submission guidelines are published in each issue. Please e-mail me your submissions or suggestions at cyberdoc@attbi.com. Thank you.

Publication and Submission Guidelines

The Amplifier is the official newsletter of APA Division 46, Media Psychology, and is published three times each year (Spring, Summer, and Fall). Unsolicited contributions from members are welcomed and encouraged. Articles must be relevant to media psychology and should not have been published elsewhere. All submissions should be sent to the Editor by e-mail at cyberdoc@attbi.com. Submissions must be received by February 1 for the Spring issue, April 1 for the Summer issue, and October 1 for the Fall double issue. Authors should ensure that their manuscripts comply with all APA publication and ethical guidelines.

People News

Kay Kosak Abrams, PhD, recently transitioned her popular *It's Just Life!* lecture series to CD and audiotape. The 45-minute public lectures offered valuable information followed by a question-and-answer session for those who desired to have specific questions answered. Dr. Abrams is currently developing a new lecture series for this year. She has been a licensed psychologist in Maryland since 1993, and her mission is to bring psychology to the community through speaking, writing, and media. In addition to an independent practice, she serves as a clinical consultant and public speaker to schools and mental health agencies. Her areas of expertise are behavioral assessment and management of young children, parent coaching, adolescent psychology, and eating disorders. Additional information is available on her website at www.KayAbrams.com.

Irene Deitch, PhD, Division 46 Member-at-Large, was appointed by the International Council of Psychologists to serve as **Non-Governmental Officer (NGO) to the United Nations Public Information Office**. As a member of the **NGO Committee on Mental Health**, she also serves on the Life Span Issues (Children, Families and Aging) subcommittee.

Dr. Deitch is producer and host of *Making Connections*, an award-winning cable television program. The hour-long show deals with timely issues of concern to individuals, families, and communities. Psychologists and other expert guests discuss relevant topics, their books, or recent research. Dr. Deitch also works closely with community organizations on special interests that include aging, health, support groups, violence prevention, and childhood disorders.

Manny Tau, PsyD, Division 46 Website and Listserv Administrator, just launched the **Digital-psychologist**, a dynamic new e-mail discussion group in response to requests by participants of the Division 46 distance education course held in June. The number of subscribers doubled to 64 within the first 24 hours it went online. The goal of the Digital-psychologist listserv is to provide an unrestricted resource on the integration of Internet and online technologies into both professional and personal arenas. Discussion topics can be anything technology related, and everyone from novices to experts are welcomed to join. The Digital-psychologist listserv is hosted on a secure private commercial-grade web server with no advertisers nor spammers. To subscribe, please use the website interface at www.Listwerx.com/lists.htm.

Practical Technology

Manny Tau, PsyD

Division 46 Website and Listserve Administrator

Web Design: Does It Pop?

A wealth of articles, books and research on the effects and integration of information technology in our society, culture and daily lives are emerging and provide valuable insights. A recently published study by Palmiter & Renjilian (2003) on mental health clinician's websites asked the question, "If a consumer were seeking out therapy how helpful do you believe it would be for him or her to be able to review the therapist's Web page, assuming the page was informative, in advance of the first meeting?" (p. 166). Eighty percent of the consumers and 47% of clinicians reported that it would be "very helpful"; 18% of consumers and 43 % of clinicians reported that it would be "a little helpful"; and 2% of consumers and 10% of clinicians indicated that it would be "not helpful" (Palmiter & Renjilian, 2003). This study indicates that clinicians are quite disconnected from their consumers regarding the value of web pages. The first installment of this new column will focus on design and implementation issues of websites for both the individual practitioner and organizations. The goal of a website is to drive visitors from the web presence to the physical presence, or, in our case, utilization of services and resources. Having this perspective denotes an active approach to a web presence, as opposed to a passive one. But let's focus first on the basics of a website.



Manny Tau, PsyD

Designing a Professional Website

The arena of website development is filled with many different approaches and tools. Don't let this intimidate you. A website consists of multiple web pages linked by a menu, and can be created with relative ease if you have experience with word processors and other graphic-based software such as PowerPoint. FrontPage is included in many Microsoft Office bundles, and is a great way to begin experimenting with web page creation. Its word-processing-like interface automatically codes the *HTML* (hypertext markup language) that web browsers decode to produce what you see on your screen. I won't get into the specifics of the software, but rather focus on approaches.

Consider these recommendations for designing a website:

- Use common fonts. Fonts like Arial and Verdana are aesthetically clean. Fonts with serifs, such as Times New Roman, tend to clutter up the screen and strain the eyes.
- Use aesthetically pleasing colors in a manner that looks professional, as opposed to a "home-brewed" site that looks amateurish. This is your business presence, much akin to a brochure.
- Though the vast majorities of screen resolution of monitors/displays are XGA (1024x768 ppi) and higher, keep in mind there are older displays still being used in SVGA (800x600 ppi) resolution. Creating a page using 100% width or 750 pixels width will fully display your pages without having a horizontal scroll bar appear in a web browser, and accommodate lower screen resolutions if you go this route.

- Menu systems are commonly found in the left column or the top of the page of each page. Stick to this. Create a menu system that is intuitively easy and not complicated.
- Avoid using large graphic files, as they tend to slow down the loading of the page for the majority of Internet users with dial-up connections. This is not an issue for the growing number of broadband users.
- Put some thought into the masthead design, which should be used on each page in the same location. Impression management is the operative concept here.
- Avoid using too many Java scripts on a page. You run the risk of clashing and unexpected errors and results. Java scripts and Java applets are commonly used for customized features such as pop-ups, scrolling ticker text, and page visit counters.
- Make sure the web pages can print out fully without any portions cut off. This can be easily checked by clicking "Print Preview" in the dropdown "File" menu in your web browser (e.g., Internet Explorer, Netscape). Hardcopies of web pages often function as type of brochure passed around to others.
- Make sure that the title of the page and the title tag in the HTML coding has your name in it. Search engines look for these things.
- Use the *meta tags* feature intelligently. Fill it with germane descriptors and key words that folks will use when they do a search. The more words you use, the better your chances that the search engine spiders will find it and log it into their database.
- Most importantly, obtain your own domain name for an autonomous web presence. Having a website URL (website address) that is long and attached to a proprietary online service account (e.g., AOL, MSN, Yahoo, etc.) is not professional looking and is difficult to remember.

Creating an Active Website

There is so much more to be taken into consideration about the mechanics of site development, but let us now focus on a broader issue. I've come across many practitioner and organization sites that are a passive, vanity-type presence with no dynamic content and no call to action. A passive site is one with content that is static; nothing changes (e.g., "This is me; this is what I do; this is where I am located..."). Unfortunately, I see these quite often and they are boring and ineffective. There is no reason for a visitor to return to a passive site or recommend it to others.

Consider these recommendations to create an active website:

- Have interactive features, such as a bulletin board. The most highly used bulletin boards include a question and answer forum, and are a great way to involve your site visitors. If you don't want to custom script these yourself, there are many free and paid web-based services that can be easily integrated into a site, such as a guest book, news feed, polls, photo albums, and more. Check out **Bravenet.com** and **XaraOnline.com** for their free services.
- A downloads area is a great way to distribute items of interest to others, such as forms, reference documents, packages of articles, e-books, PowerPoint presentations, useful freeware, etc. This area is like a public filing cabinet for visitors to take interesting and useful items.
- Consistently update the site with new articles or tidbits of information, and give visitors something new to read with their visits.
- A links area that is constantly being added to and filled with

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Place Trust ad here

APA 2003 Convention Program for Division 46

Eve Fisher Whitmore, PhD
Convention Program Chair

Our Division 46 convention program this year is an exciting variety of innovative presentations ranging from symposia on technology and psychology to a comedy jam celebrating Dr. Albert Ellis's 90th Birthday. A tear-out **Division 46 Program Schedule** is included in this issue of *The Amplifier* for your convenience. Please note that all program times and room assignments are subject to change, so be sure to double-check both the *Convention Program* and *Program Supplement* included in your onsite Convention registration packet for the latest information.

On **Thursday morning**, Drs. Marlene Maheu and Mary Gregerson kick off the convention with a CE Ethics Workshop on *The Changing Face of Psychology: Policy, Telehealth, Practice, and Academe*. **Thursday afternoon**, Dr. Harriet Schultz chairs our exciting Media Watch program this year, *Analyze That: Good and Bad Movie Therapy*.

On **Friday morning**, Division President Dr. Elizabeth Carll will chair a Special Presidential Symposium, *New Media Technologies, Psychology, and Social Change: New Horizons*, with Drs. Skip Rizzo, Dorothy Singer and Bryant Welch. Dr. Carll will discuss, as her president's address, *Cutting Edge Communication Technologies and Social Change in the 21st Century: Psychology's Role*. You don't want to miss the dynamic presentation on **Friday afternoon** by Dr. Kimberly Young and her colleagues, *Cyberslacking and Internet Deviance in the Workplace*. Finally, our annual Social Hour will be held on **Friday evening**, and is co-sponsored by Division 10.

On **Sunday morning**, Dr. Barry L. Gordon chairs a special Division 46 symposium, *New Frontiers in Distance Education for Professional Psychology*, with leading innovators Drs. Judith E. N. Albino, Leigh Jerome, and Hudnall Stamm. Other fabulous symposia on Sunday morning include topics related to suicide, Internet self-help programs for depression and binge eating, cybersex and cyberaffairs, and computer-based behavioral health prevention programs.

Other special Division 46 programs include a "broom closet" symposium on **Saturday morning**, *Positive Psychology in the Media—A Global Perspective*, with APA past presidents Drs. Phillip Zimbardo, Patrick H. DeLeon, Charles Spielberger, and Jack G. Wiggins. Also on Saturday morning, Telehealth and New Technology Chair Dr. Marlene Maheu and Fellow Dr. Al Cooper represent Division 46 in our Convention Cluster Track with Divisions 29, 30, 31, 39, and 42. Dr. Maheu will speak on *Cyber-Infidelity and other Internet problems: Where the superhighway paves the road to hell*, and Dr. Cooper will discuss *Internet Sexuality: Cutting-edge technology, cutting-edge problems and solutions*.

You won't want to miss our two Invited Addresses starting on **Thursday afternoon** with Dr. Brad Bushman, University of Michigan, *If the television program bleeds; Memory for the advertisement recedes*.

On Friday afternoon, Dr. Frank Farley chairs *The APA Comedy Jam with Albert Ellis's 90th Birthday—No Joke!* There may be standing room only, so be sure to arrive early to insure a good seat!

On **Sunday morning**, Dr. Alan Entin chairs our special Film Screening and Discussion, *Let's Go to the Movies—"Oui, Mais" ("Yes, but...")*. Our thanks go to Dr. Entin, Division 42, and Yves Lavandier, the film's director for arranging a special showing of this wonderfully sensitive film. Our final event of the Convention is the Division 46 Board of Directors Meeting on **Sunday afternoon**.

As you can see, our program this year is very innovative and exciting! As a Division 46 member, please support your colleagues by attending the Division's symposia and encouraging other members and nonmembers to attend. With your help, we could significantly increase our membership. Please encourage at least two nonmembers to join our Division, and invite them to attend our annual Social Hour, where we will have lots of membership applications to hand out. Please contact me, at EWhitmore@zoominternet.net, or Membership Co-chairs Rochelle Balter and C. Gerald O'Brien to receive additional applications. You can also refer new members to our Division 46 website at www.APADiv46.org where they can download a membership application form. I hope you enjoy our program at this year's APA Convention, and look forward to seeing everyone in Toronto!

Film Screening and Discussion: "Oui Mais" ("Yes, But...")

Alan D Entin, PhD, ABPP

Division 46 invites you to join us Sunday morning for our special Film Screening and Discussion of the French feature film *Oui, Mais (Yes, But...)*. It is a witty and compassionate film about families, adolescent relationships, and therapy at its best. It also has the best portrayal of a psychologist that I have ever seen. Discussants include Drs. Harriet Schultz, PhD; Nancy Elman, PhD; and Diane Johnson.

The heroine of the film is a 17-year-old girl in the midst of discovering her sexuality. Her mother is overbearing and alcoholic, her father distant, and her boyfriend comes on a little too strong. She does not know how to handle the triangles in her life. To cope with the stress of dealing with her parents, compounded by the difficulties of puberty and her emerging sexuality, she decides to enter therapy. She learns about family systems, how to be less reactive to the demands and threats of others, and to be responsible for herself.

It is a wonderful movie. The film has not yet been released for showing in the United States and is being presented for this special showing through the graciousness of the director Yves Lavandier.

Ouis, Mais will be shown on **Sunday, August 10, 11:00 am - 12:50 pm**, in the **Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Constitution Hall 105**. The film has English subtitles.

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APA 2003 Convention: Division 46 Program Schedule

THURSDAY, 8/07/03

8:00-11:50 AM CE Ethics Workshop: *The Changing Face of Psychology: Policy, Telehealth, Practice, and Academe.*
Presenters: Marlene Maheu, PhD, Mary Gregerson, PhD.
Westin Harbour Castle Toronto Hotel, Dockside I Room.

12:00-12:50 PM Symposium: *Evaluating the Quality of Internet Mental Health Information.*

Co-chairs: John M. Grohol, PsyD, Janet Morahan-Martin, PhD.
Participants: John Mack, MA, Robert S. Kennedy, MA, Janet Morahan-Martin, PhD.
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Meeting Room 716A.

1:00-1:50 PM Symposium: *Analyze That: Good and Bad Movie Therapy.*

Chair: Harriet T. Schultz, PhD.
Participants: Harriet T. Schultz, PhD, Armond Aserinsky, PhD.
Discussant: Alan D. Entin, PhD.
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Meeting Room 718B.

3:00-3:50 PM Invited Address: *If the Television Program Bleeds: Memory for the Advertisement Recedes.*

Chair: Roger D. Klein, PhD.
Presenter: Brad Bushman, PhD.
Discussant: Timothy C. Brock, PhD.
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Meeting Room 801A.

FRIDAY, 8/08/03

9:00-9:50 AM Presidential Symposium: *New Media Technologies, Psychology, and Social Change: New Horizons.*

Chair: Elizabeth K. Carll, PhD.
Participants: Elizabeth K. Carll, PhD, Albert "Skip" Rizzo, PhD, Dorothy Singer, EdD, Bryant L. Welch, JD, PhD.
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Meeting Room 718A.

2:00-3:50 PM Symposium: *Cyberslacking and Internet Deviance in the Workplace.*

Chair: Kimberly Young, PsyD.
Participants: David N. Greenfield, PhD, Paul M. Mastrangelo, PhD, Richard A. Davis, MA, Kimberly Young, PsyD.
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Meeting Room 717A.

4:00-4:50 PM Invited Address: *The APA Comedy Jam with Albert Ellis' 90th Birthday—No Joke!*

Chair: Frank Farley, PhD.
Participants: Frank Farley, PhD, Lenore Walker, EdD.
Discussant: Albert Ellis, PhD.
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Constitution Hall 106.

5:00-6:50 PM Social Hour. Co-Sponsored by Div 10.
Fairmont Royal York Hotel, Salon A.

SATURDAY, 8/09/03

9:00-10:50 AM Symposium: *Positive Psychology in the Media: A Global Perspective.*

Chair: Robert J. Fazio, MA.
Participants: Philip G. Zimbardo, PhD, Patrick H. DeLeon, PhD, Charles D. Spielberger, PhD, Jack G. Wiggans, Jr., PhD.
Discussants: Mary S. Gregerson, PhD, Rochelle Balter, PhD, JD.
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Meeting Room 716B.

SUNDAY, 8/10/03

8:00-8:50 AM Symposium: *Improving Media Coverage of Suicide: The Role of the Psychologist.*

Chair: Daniel Romer, PhD.
Participants: Madelyn Gould, PhD, Herbert Hendin, PhD, Kathleen Hall Jamieson, PhD.
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Meeting Room 714A.

9:00-9:50 AM Symposium: *New Frontiers in Distance Education for Professional Psychology*

Chair: Barry L. Gordon, PhD.
Participants: Judith E. N. Albino, PhD, Leigh W. Jerome, PhD, B. Hudnall Stamm, PhD, Robert L. Glueckauf, PhD.
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Constitution Hall 105.

10:00-10:50 PM Symposium: *Internet Self-Help Programs for Depression and Binge Eating.*

Chair: Richard C. Bedrosian, PhD.
Participants: Nanci Pradas, PhD, Richard C. Bedrosian, PhD.
Discussant: B. Hudnall Stamm, PhD.
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Meeting Room 714B.

11:00-11:50 AM Symposium: *Assessment and Treatment of Cybersex and Cyberaffairs.*

Chair: Barry L. Gordon, PhD.
Participants: David N. Greenfield, PhD, Barry L. Gordon, PhD.
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Meeting Room 801A.

11:00-12:50 PM Film Screening and Discussion: *Let's Go to the Movies—"Oui, Mais" ("Yes, But...")*

Chair: Alan D. Entin, PhD.
Participants: Harriet Schultz, PhD, Nancy Elman, PhD, Diane Johnson, PhD.
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Constitution Hall 105.

12:00-12:50 PM Symposium: *Computer-Based Behavioral Health Prevention Programs: Psychologists' Role in Product Development.*

Chair: Tara M. Cousineau, PhD.
Participants: Jonas Bromberg, PsyD, Lord E. Lord, PhD, Davis Michael, PhD, Tara M. Cousineau, PhD.
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Meeting Room 718A.

12:00-2:50 PM Board of Directors Meeting.
Crowne Plaza Toronto Centre Hotel, Kingsway Room.

If the Television Program Bleeds, Then Memory for the Ad Recedes

Brad J. Bushman, PhD



Brad J. Bushman, PhD

In public surveys, the most common complaint about television is the amount of violence depicted on the screen. About 60% of the programs shown on television are violent (National Television Violence Study, 1998). Hundreds of studies have shown that viewing TV violence causes an increase in societal violence (Anderson & Bushman, 2002; Bushman & Huesmann, 2001; Paik & Comstock, 1994). Nevertheless, advertisers continue to sponsor violent programs.

Perhaps the most obvious reason that advertisers sponsor violent TV programs is because they believe that violent programs draw larger audiences than do nonviolent programs. A larger audience leads to a larger consumer population. However, violent TV programs have often attracted smaller total audiences than have nonviolent programs. Advertisers still value violent programs for at least two reasons. First, violent programs attract younger viewers. Viewers of violent programs tend to be men aged 18 to 34, followed by women aged 18 to 34. Younger viewers are highly valuable to advertisers. They are more inexperienced than are older consumers. It takes a lot of money, time, and effort to persuade older consumers to switch brands or to try something new. It is much easier to persuade younger consumers. Second, violent programs are less expensive for advertisers to sponsor than are nonviolent programs, in terms of cost per thousand viewers in the 18–49 year age range (Hamilton, 1998).

Advertisers want viewers to remember their ads. An ad may be interesting, enjoyable, and persuasive, but it may not be effective if the potential buyer cannot remember the brand advertised or the message contained in the ad. This article reviews the scientific literature on the effect of televised violence on memory for ads.

A comprehensive search of the research on TV violence and memory for advertisements uncovered 16 studies involving 2,474 participants. The results of these 16 studies were then integrated using a technique called *meta-analysis*. The meta-analysis revealed that the average correlation between having violence in a program and the viewer remembering ads during that program was $-.20$. A negative correlation like this means that the more violence there is in the program, the less likely the viewer is to remember the ad! Probability analysis shows that the odds are less than 1 in 1,000 that this result could be due to chance. Consequently, we can conclude with confidence that TV violence impairs memory for ads. The impairment occurs for males and females, for children and adults, and for people who like and do not like to watch TV violence.

The above 16 studies only examined the violent content of the program. However, we recently conducted a study where we manipulated the violence content of the ad as well as the content of the program. The results showed that TV violence impaired memory for violent ads and

for neutral ads. Violent ads were not recalled more frequently when they were shown in a violent TV program. Overall, violent ads were less memorable than neutral ads.

The meta-analytic results reported in this article clearly indicate that if the television program bleeds, then memory for the ad recedes. But why does the impairment occur? One possible reason is that TV violence puts people in a bad mood (e.g., it makes them angry). Our research has shown that viewing violence made people angry, and the more angry people were, the less they remembered about the ads. There are at least three reasons why anger might impair memory. First, negative mood states interfere with the encoding of information (Ellis, Thomas, & Rodriguez, 1984). Second, the angry mood induced by viewing violence might prime or activate aggressive thoughts that interfere with rehearsal of the ads. Third, angry people might try to remedy or repair their bad mood, which takes a lot of effort. During the time that advertisers hope viewers are absorbing ads, viewers might actually be focusing on themselves, trying to calm the anger brought on by what they have just seen on the screen. The possible reasons for the impairment should be investigated in future research (e.g., arousal, priming of aggressive thoughts).

It is unlikely that moral appeals from parents and other concerned citizens will influence the TV industry to reduce the amount of violent programming. **Profits** really determine what programs are shown on television. If advertisers refused to sponsor them, violent TV programs would cease to exist. According to former CBS Programming Chief Jeff Sagansky, “The number one priority in television is not to transmit quality programming to viewers, but to deliver consumers to advertisers. We aren’t going to get rid of violence until we get rid of advertisers.” (Kim, 1994).

Several years ago, a spokesperson for the J. Walter Thompson Company stated, “The more we probe the issue, the more we are convinced that sponsorship of television violence is potentially bad business, as well as a social risk.” (Advertising Age, 1977). The scientific evidence reviewed in this article supports this conclusion. Advertisers might want to think twice about sponsoring violent programs.

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Paik, H., & Comstock, G. (1994). The effects of television violence on antisocial behavior: A meta-analysis. *Communication Research*, 21, 516-546.

Brad J Bushman, PhD is Professor of Psychology and Communication Studies at University of Michigan. His research has challenged societal myths (e.g., violent media have a trivial effect on aggression; venting anger reduces aggression; violent people suffer from low self-esteem; violence and sex on TV sell products; warning labels on TV programs work). His research has been published in the top scientific journals (e.g., *Science*) and has been featured on television (e.g., *Jim Lehrer NewsHour*, *ABC News 20/20*, *Discovery Channel*), on radio (e.g., *NPR*, *BBC*), in magazines (e.g., *Newsweek*, *Sports Illustrated*), and in newspapers (e.g., *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*). Dr. Bushman is presenting an Invited Address on **Thursday, August 7, 3:00 - 3:50 pm** in the **Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Meeting Room 801A**.

Distance Education Course Exemplifies Information Technology

Barry L. Gordon, PhD
Chair, Distance Education Committee

The Division 46 Distance Education Committee demonstrated its commitment to provide cutting edge services by holding its first distance education course, *Integrating Internet and Information Technology Into Your Practice*, on June 7, 2003. The live CE course was co-sponsored by the California Psychological Association (www.calpsychlink.org), which granted 2 hours of APA CE credits. The Orange County Psychological Association (www.ocpapsych.org) hosted the course website offering detailed instructions and access to PowerPoint slides used during the course. TelSpan, Inc. (www.telspan.com) provided state-of-the-art teleconferencing services networking participants by their telephones. Instructors moderated the teleconference using an online webconferencing console. CPA Division VI (Media, Technology and Communication) worked closely with Division 46 and OCPA to develop the course's content and website.

Almost forty psychologists participated in the course, creating a virtual network from Hawaii to New York that spanned six time zones. Instructors Manny Tau, PsyD, and Barry L. Gordon, PhD, discussed how the Internet and other information technologies can be used by psychologists to enhance their professional services. Areas of focus included establishing a professional online presence, protection of information and confidentiality, and ethical and legal issues in offering psychological services online.

Participant feedback was extremely positive, with most people indicating that they found the 2-hour course to be appropriately challenging and

relevant to their professional activities. Most indicated that they would attend another Division 46 distance education course. Requests by participants to continue the dialog after the course led to creation of a rapidly growing e-mail discussion group, the **Digital-psychologist**, by Dr. Manny Tau (see **People News** in this issue for additional information).

Both the number of course participants and the revenue generated to the Division significantly exceeded initial estimates. We are very pleased that this groundbreaking use of digital media proved to be a both user friendly and cost-effective way to provide professional psychology education. We look forward to developing additional live distance education courses in the future.

Web Design

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- interesting websites. You should consider an area where visitors can leave links. Make sure that you set the links so that it opens a new browser. You don't want folks leaving your site if you can help it.
- On your home page, include a site referral script. This gives visitors a prompt to email their friends about your site from your site. The easier you make things for a visitor, the higher the likelihood they will use it.
 - On your contact page, include a graphic of a map to your office. Then hotlink this to your location in **Mapquest.com**. To do this, look up your location in Mapquest.com, then copy and paste the long web address in your browser's address field into the web address link field for the map graphic on your site.
 - Include an option to subscribe to an e-mail newsletter or an e-mail discussion group (a listserv). There are free and paid web-based services that even have templates for you to easily generate a professional newsletter. **Topica.com** offers free email discussion groups that you can create without annoying advertising banners. Remember, the idea is to capture your audience.

Elements of a dynamic website

After completing your website take a step back, visit the site and navigate around from the perspective of a visitor. Ask yourself the following six questions: (1) Does it **pop**; i.e., grab my attention; (2) is it intuitive to navigate around; (3) does it have updated information and resources that I'm interested in; (4) does it provide information and resources of which I wasn't aware; (5) is there a reason for me to return often to this site, and recommend this site to others; and (6) does it allow me to interact with it so I can voice my opinions and expertise?

If you find yourself answering yes to the above questions, guess what? You have a dynamic website! I hope this column provoked some thoughts about your website. Future columns will address other issues involving the integration of information technologies into both our personal and professional lives—practical technology.

Reference

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Division 46 Listserv and New Website

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Also, be sure to check out our *new* website, totally redesigned by Website Editor Manny Tau, PsyD. The website is located at <http://www.APADiv46.org>

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