

# Psychology and the media

Science



In my opinion the media today dilutes down the science of psychology to a simple word used to sell an item or idea, the media also exaggerates the use of psychology to do so.

I searched the internet for news on psychology, I chose the internet because it is the easiest news source to access and probably the most popular. What I found was a few scholarly sources, but mostly articles on sex and how to get rich/skinny/beautiful quick, with of course the use of psychology. The internet not only distorts the image of psychology but provides a poor education on the topic. When portrayed in the media, psychology is presented more as common knowledge and less as an actual science. In many articles online there is no evidence supporting the facts and statistics presented. For example, an article on [dailymail.co.uk](http://dailymail.co.uk)

titled 'Redheads 'have more sex than blondes or brunettes' the author raves about how redheads have more sex with more partners more often, it's psychology! The article though, neglected to provide evidence to such statements. In the end of the article an actual psychologist named Christine Baumanns stated that this may not be the case. Articles like these make psychology look like a simple idea, an idea that doesn't need to be studied, or verified. I noticed that in most of the articles I discovered online, there were very few actual psychologists and if there was a credible source, they were just in there making a quick note to the subject. In a few articles I read the topic was sex, and in those articles sex was mentioned more than enough. I think this dumbed-down the article and made it more readable to common people, in some cases this could be good but I don't think it helps save the name of psychology. In this particular article (Why British women

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go off sex (unlike the French and Germans)) only one psychologist is noted, Dr Petra Boynton.

Unfortunately she is only mentioned at the very end of the story, which is where most people usually stop reading, especially when sex isn't being mentioned anymore. The term psychology is used so much in the media, in news articles, television, blogs, magazines and much more. A lot of the time the word psychology is mentioned in the title of the subject and never mentioned again afterwards. The word is used to appeal to a reader, listener, or viewer and draw them in. Rarely though is the subject matter actually psychological at all for example, The Psychology of stripping, Psychology Major Factor in risk Preparedness, or The psychology of Bullying; all these articles failed to mention anything relating to psychology they shallowly claimed to be psychological and didn't mention anything scientific afterwards. Like these articles the media does not present the many different fields and types of psychology, in fact they don't present more than about five if any. The fields of psychology that are represented in the media are usually about celebrities and their drug addictions.

Television reality shows constantly flaunt celebrity psychologists who seem to make peoples problems magically disappear and make the world better. Another field that is flaunted is economic psychology, news stations broadcast that they have the new way to savemoneyand the new spending trends they've discovered that will save you millions of dollars. I think though, the most overrepresented field is the field of physicalhealthand beauty, articles claim that psychological studies show that this and that will make you happier and in the end make you better looking. Others say that if

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you make more money you will be skinnier. I think the wrong types of psychology are being overrepresented and over exaggerated. The fields of psychology that are being underrepresented are the fields pertaining to medical and mental health. So many huge breakthroughs have been made in the world of psychology that can help so many people with mental illnesses and disabilities, but people would rather hear that Lindsay Lohan is going back to rehab.

Now a day's psychology is being used to solicit an idea or product. The media contorts psychology to make an idea sound more reliable. Journalists create stories with unreliable sources and exaggerated facts to draw in readers. Psychology is seen as a simple knowledge and not as the amazing science that it is. Articles are published under the name of psychology containing little to no science. The media stretches the image of psychology with celebrities and make it seem magical, the media fails though, to broadcast the simple amazing breakthroughs. The media more that distorts the image of psychology, it defames it.