

and third person theory focus on perceptions of the persuasibility and beliefs of socially relevant others.

The fourth stage is labeled *Societal and Media Theories* and draws attention to the societal level (hegemony and public sphere theory) and accumulative individual level effects over longer periods of time, such as differential media exposure and cultivation theory. The hegemony, public sphere, and to some extent, cultivation traditions are associated with progressive political views and a critical perspective. The channel effect and differential media exposure theories are in large part neutral or even apolitical in orientation. This cluster is loosely linked, and although intellectually identifiable, it is not characterized by a high level of internal cross-citation.

The fifth stage, *Interpretive Effects Theories*, includes the related traditions of agenda-setting, priming, and framing theory. The authors in these traditions do much more than provide evidence of significant media effects. This research demonstrates an important extension and refinement of extant theory. In addition to assessing attitude change and learning as a result of exposure to media messages, these scholars examine how exposure may influence salience of, interpretation of, and cognitive organization of information and opinions to which individuals are exposed. When analysts characterize communication research as moving from media effects to media processing they may be referring to the new emphases in this fifth cluster of research (Chaffee, 1980).

Finally, perhaps as a placeholder for things to come, there is a newly evolving theoretical tradition focusing on new technologies and interactive properties, *New Media Theories*, in our terminology. At the moment, we are listing a single theory here under the headings human computer interaction (HCI) and/or computer-mediated communication. Much of the early work here focuses on human communication in organizational settings, contrasting mediated from face-to-face communication processes, so strictly speaking it only marginally represents a mass communication. Significant use of the Internet at home for interpersonal and mass communication evolved only in the late 1990s, so given the successive delays of the conduct of research, publication, and citation this work is just now establishing itself (Joinson, McKenna, Postmes, & Reips, 2007).

Methods

Sample and design

Our analysis of the structure of cumulative media effects theory is based on data drawn from the Institute for Scientific Information's extensive database of social scientific citation patterns collected since 1956. The database is accessible online as the *Thompson Reuters ISI Web of Knowledge* by subscription or through subscribing libraries.