

psychology/media studies

While much has been written on the history of media effects research in the United States, a casual review of the literature could reasonably lead one to believe that little if any such work was conducted until the 1940s. The anthology, consisting of over 30 public domain works originally publishing from the late 19th century to the mid-1930s, demonstrates the rich and varied study of media effects before mid-century—much of it centered on the concept of “suggestion.” What media scholars know today as “persuasion,” social psychologists of the early 1900s would have understood as the process of suggestion. The works collected in *Early Media Effects Theory & the Suggestion Doctrine* include the original statements on the subject from many of the leading social theorists of the age, among them figures such as Gabriel Tarde and Gustave Le Bon in France and James Baldwin, Edward Ross, and Floyd Allport in the United States.

*Patrick Parsons* is professor emeritus at the Donald P. Bellisario College of Communications at Penn State.