

Personal Statement for a Media Psychology Program

The mind fascinates me: The way it develops, how it shapes reality, how the interactions of tiny cells in the brain shape the course of our whole lives. I have always taken an interest in what was going on inside other people's heads, but as I've come to understand more about psychology, what fascinates me the most is how blind we can be to the dynamics playing out in our minds every day.

My interest in psychology was first sparked early in my high school career. Though somewhat scientifically inclined, I found that what interested me most was not the equations we learned about in physics and chemistry, but the motivations and perceptions of my fellow students, and the subtle social dynamics that I observed inside and outside the classroom. I wanted to learn how our identities, beliefs, and behaviours are shaped through our interactions with others, so I decided to major in Social Psychology. My undergraduate studies deepened my understanding of, and fascination with, the interplay between an individual mind and its social context.

During my studies, I acquired a solid foundation of knowledge about concepts like social influence and group dynamics, but I also took classes on various topics not strictly related to my major. I was particularly interested in how other fields intersect with psychology—the classes I took on media studies, biology, and literature all enhanced my understanding of psychological concepts by providing different lenses through which to look at the issues involved.

In applying for this research program, my intention is to build on the multidisciplinary approach I have taken in my studies so far, combining knowledge from disparate fields of study to better understand psychological concepts and issues. The Media Psychology program stands out to me as the perfect environment for this kind of research, given its researchers' openness to collaboration across diverse fields. I am impressed by the department's innovative interdisciplinary projects that focus on the shifting landscape of media and technology, and I hope that my own work can follow a similarly trailblazing approach.

More specifically, I want to develop my understanding of the intersection of psychology and media studies, and explore how media psychology theories and methods might be applied to neurodivergent minds. I am interested not only in media psychology but also in psychological disorders, and how the two interact. This is something I touched on during my undergraduate studies and that I'm excited to delve into further.

In the course of this research program and beyond, I hope to pursue research into the relationship between media consumption and conditions like ADHD and autism. The work of Bernard Luskin on media psychology has been a major influence on my own research interests and was what first drew my attention to the faculty; the prospect of working among researchers committed to interdisciplinarity is highly attractive to me. I believe that the novel methods being developed in this department are crucial in illuminating how our minds adapt to a world of mass media, and my ambition is to contribute to advancing knowledge in this field.