

## KIDS AND MEDIA IN AMERICA

One important element necessary for understanding the role of mass media in the lives of young people is an accurate mapping of their patterns of media use. How much do they use which media and which media content, and under what circumstances? This book reports the only national random sample survey of U.S. children's and adolescents' use of all of the various media available to them conducted in at least the past thirty years. In addition to providing the first comprehensive look at how media-saturated our young people's lives have become, it is the first study to examine young people's overall media budgets and the first to attempt to describe distinctly different types of young media users. Extensive background information and chapters devoted to each of the various media, to the overall media budget, and to particular types of media users enable the authors to describe perhaps the most detailed map of U.S. young people's media behavior ever assembled.

Professor Donald F. Roberts has taught and conducted research on youth and media at Stanford University for more than thirty years. His books include *The Process and Effects of Mass Communication*, *Television and Human Behavior*, and *It's Not Only Rock and Roll: Popular Music in the Lives of Adolescents*.

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# KIDS AND MEDIA IN AMERICA

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*With*

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*Based on a Kaiser Family Foundation Study*



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This book is dedicated to  
our spouses,  
Wendy and Matt,  
and to “the second work in progress,”  
Greta

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One of the missions of the Kaiser Family Foundation is to inform and educate young people about various health issues relevant to them. In December 1997, Ms. Rideout convened a group of communication scholars at the Kaiser Family Foundation campus in Menlo Park to discuss the state of knowledge about the effects of sexual content in the media and to establish a research agenda in this area. One important gap in knowledge identified at that meeting was the lack of a comprehensive, up-to-date mapping of children's and adolescents' media use, a gap that Ms. Rideout believed the Kaiser Family Foundation could help to fill.

With the support of Drew Altman, the President and CEO of the Kaiser Family Foundation, and Matt James, Sr. Vice President and Director of Media and Public Education, Rideout assembled a research team to design and execute the study – the first-ever national random sample survey to focus on U.S. children and adolescents' use of all of the various mass media. That team consisted of Rideout herself, Dr. Mollyann Brodie, Vice President and Director of Public Opinion and Media Research, and the two senior authors of this book (at that time, Ms. Foehr was also employed by the Kaiser Family Foundation).

This team, with the able staff support of Ms. Theresa Boston, devoted several years to bringing the study to completion.

Once the broad outlines of the study and questionnaire were settled, Harris Interactive, Inc. (formerly Louis Harris and Associates), joined the project. Under the management of Dr. Dana Markow, Research Director, Harris Interactive assisted in the later stages of questionnaire construction, as well as designing (in conjunction with Kaiser staff and sampling consultant Dr. Marty Frankel) and carrying out the sampling, conducting all interviews and questionnaire administration, and providing the initial data set and top-line results. Thanks are due to the many people at Harris who were involved in this study.

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