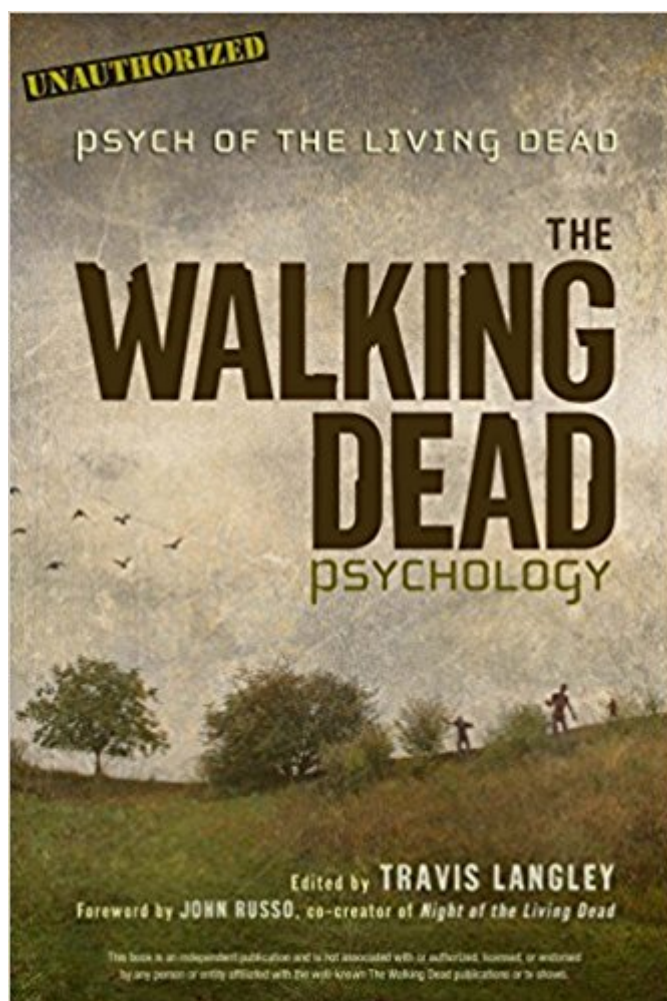


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# The Walking Dead Psychology: Psych Of The Living Dead



## Synopsis

Aim for the brain! The characters of *The Walking Dead* live in a desolate post-apocalyptic world, filled with relentless violence and death. In reality, how would such never-ending stress and trauma affect the psyche? By understanding the psychological forces that drive the series' action, fans can better grasp Robert Kirkman's compelling fictional universe. Which characters suffer PTSD, which show the most hope for recovery, and which instead show posttraumatic growth? Has Rick Grimes lost his mind? What's it like for kid like Carl growing up during the zombie apocalypse? Is the Governor a psychopath, a sociopath, or something even worse? What does that make Negan? What is the emotional cost of killing a walker or even another living person? What does Terror Management Theory tell us about what it means to fight constantly or survival? What is groupthink and how does it affect the decisions made by the people of Woodbury, Terminus, Alexandria, and Rick's "family"? How do they find hope? In 19 chapters from a range of esteemed contributors, plus "Case Files" sidebars by renowned editor Travis Langley with a foreword by George A. Romero's *Night of the Living Dead* co-creator John Russo, *The Walking Dead Psychology: Psych of the Living Dead* answers these and many other questions in a way sure to fascinate the millions of passionate graphic novel readers and TV viewers. What does it take to stay human when humanity has lost the world? Contributors include: John Blanchard \* Megan Blink \* Colt J. Blunt \* Josue Cardona \* Adam Davis \* William Blake Erickson \* Frank Gaskill \* Jennifer Golbeck \* Jonathan Hetterly \* Katrina Hill \* Alan Kistler \* Dana Klisanin \* Stephen Kuniak \* Martin Lloyd \* Stephanie Norman \* Patrick O'Connor \* Katherine Ramsland \* Clay Routledge \* John Russo \* Billy San Juan \* Janina Scarlet \* Steven Schlozman \* Lara Taylor \* Dave Vergaagen \* Mara Wood \* E. Paul Zehr \*

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## Customer Reviews

"The Walking Dead Psychology is the perfect blend of insightful scholarship, pop-culture savvy and bloody good fun. Highly recommended!" - Jonathan Maberry, New York Times bestselling author of Patient Zero and Rot & Ruin. "Those interested in #TWD and/or psychology, check it out." - actor Andrew J. West (Gareth on The Walking Dead). "Anyone who's a fan of the show or comic and who's at least slightly interested in psychology would find much to take away from this book. Not only will it enrich your appreciation ofÂ The Walking Dead, but the way it uses entertainment to explain the importance of psychological concepts, ...is quite simply good for yourÂ braaaains!" - The Pop Mythologist. "If you watchÂ The Walking DeadÂ and are even only a little bit interested in delving deeper into the show, you owe it to yourself to pick up this collection of essays examining the psychology behind the show." - MOARGeek. "It gave me a completely new understandingÂ for the series and made me really appreciate the work the writers put into truly developing these characters...Â Don't stress out thinking that you need to know a good bit about psychology before picking up this book... Thankfully, each contributor is great at breaking down their topic in understandable terms...Â this book should be next in your to To-Read list. It's an enjoyable and informative read. And once your finished reading the book, you can go back to your zombie survival plans." - All Geek to Me. "One of the most fascinating books I read this year.... Required reading for zombies with brains." - Brian Keene, bestselling author of The Rising, Ghoul, and The Last Zombie.

"The compelling question before us in this comprehensively insightful anthology assembled by Travis Langley is why?Â What is the cause in our psychological makeup of our continuing willingness--no, our actual craving--to be scared and entertained by the likes of Night of the Living Dead, The Evil Dead, The Return of the Living Dead, and on and on, right up to the present-day comic book and television blockbuster The Walking Dead...?"--John Russo (Night of the Living Dead co-creator), from his foreword. "No matter how realistic a story such as The Walking DeadÂ may be in depicting characters and their reactions, we know their world cannot become our own and it's clearly not close to becoming real. That lets us have fun watching characters in that world even as we worry about what the walking corpses and the living antagonists might do to them."--Travis Langley, PhD, from his introduction.

I absolutely loved this book. It takes a serious look at the psychological aspects of the show, both why viewers watch and the toll the Zombie Apocalypse (or any other type of apocalypse) takes on survivors and affects their behaviors. Psychology has always been a casual hobby of mine, and I am truly obsessed with the show, so this was right up my alley. The book is a collaborative effort of several Psychology professors and counselors, and they all offer interesting insights on varying aspects of the show. So why DO we watch? One of the authors posits that it is because we have a longing for a sense of community, deeper relationships, and connections. There are no cell phones or computers in the ZA. No television, no Internet, and none of the constant bombardment of stimuli that we are subjected to on a daily basis. The survivors have to rely on each other for everything and deep relationships are formed. When you place your life into the hands of others on a daily basis, forging such strong bonds is a major contribution to your survival. There is also a strong sense of nostalgia for things lost. The survivors feel it as they make their way through the wasted land filled only with walkers; something as simple as the ice cubes in Andrea's glass of lemonade at Woodbury are seen as a long-lost luxury. After Rick and Carl flee the prison and find refuge in an empty home, Carl looks at the video games in a kid's room and the big screen TV with longing...then rips the cord off of the useless TV to use to secure the front door. The viewers feel it, too. Seeing abandoned homes and signs of the people who lived there, seeing rusted cars grown over with kudzu, seeing a world that has ended for the vast majority of human beings...how can you not feel a sense of longing for what has been lost? The premiere episode of the show is called "Days Gone Bye" for a good reason. Another author believes that part of the show's appeal to so many of us is that it causes us to reflect on existential questions such as the meaning of our lives and to what purpose we would continue in such a scenario. It may cause us to confront our fears and think about how we would react in the ZA. Would we retain our humanity? Would we grow hungry with power like the Governor, or would we do whatever it takes to protect our family, like Rick is trying (and not always succeeding) to do? The author draws an analogy between survival in the ZA and survival in the death camps of the Holocaust. It's not a bad analogy because surviving both would take courage and the ability to confront the worst that humanity has to offer. How can anyone deal with such inhumanity (in the ZA, both from the walkers and from certain other survivors) and come through unscathed? It's natural to question our own abilities to deal with such extreme circumstances. As for the survivors' response, they are all suffering in varying degrees from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. They have all seen and done some incredibly horrible and brutal things and are under

constant stress and constant fear. All of this can result in unpredictable behavior and bad decision-making, both of which can cost you your life or the lives of those who are looking to you for protection, resulting in further stress and survivor's guilt. Many of the survivors have experienced psychotic breaks, such as Morgan after losing his son Duane, or Rick after Lori died. Michonne spent months by herself, talking to her dead boyfriend as if he were there. One of the big questions in the series has been, "Do you get to come back?" In other words, after all you've seen and done, do you get to survive with your humanity intact? It's a question that is still being answered for many of our survivors. The most interesting chapter to me was the one that considered Daryl Dixon's transformation from angry redneck to reliable soldier, and even to transformative hero. The author looks at Daryl in the context of Joseph Campbell's hero arc, in which the character embarks on a journey of self-discovery. Daryl is compared to the classical hero Ulysses, who experiences hardships and tests in his travels and learns much about himself in the process. Daryl was an abused child, growing up in sad circumstances; he looks for Sophia with such dedication because he thinks about how he wished he could have been saved when he was a child. It has taken the ZA to make Daryl realize his potential as a human being with meaning to his life, and a valuable, trusted member of the group. As such, Daryl is a symbol of much-needed hope in the apocalyptic world. If Daryl can overcome what he did and grow into a position of trust and leadership, then there is hope for all of us. Daryl sets the bar high and challenges us to become our own "better angels." The book also does a few case studies of some of the characters to see if they fit the profile of a psychopath. Shane, the Governor, the Claimers, Negan, and others are examined using professional criteria. The book concludes with the thought that zombies help us confront one of our biggest fears: our own mortality. We see that the zombies are simply bags of meat, without purpose or meaning other than finding their next meal (and hopefully it's not us). We all have a desire to find meaning in our lives, to be more than another bag of meat. The book feels that The Walking Dead succeeds in showing the human struggle to find meaning in life, even knowing that our mortality is inevitable, and that our struggle matters. So why do I love the show so much? Because it makes me think about all these things. Yes, you can say that it is "just a TV show," but I've always felt that good TV can speak to us on a level that makes us address certain things in ourselves and also connects us with others who feel the same way. The best shows make you wonder how you would react in certain situations, whether it's Walter White confronting a cancer diagnosis or Don Draper dealing with his past and the rapidly changing world around him. The Walking Dead makes us wonder what we would do in order to survive...or

would we even want to? And why? Highly recommended for anyone who is a fan of the show, comics, or novels.

Learning a lot more about The Walking Dead from reading this book. It breaks down everything from how Carl is being a man from his "new" world and how "if" this does really happen why we should find a group to belong to. Just little things that add up that helps out to understand The Walking Dead better. Its all combined by each chapter with different writers so this whole book is not just one writer. Pretty interesting read. I enjoyed it and it does have interesting things to think of. It was written in the later part of 2015 so this book does talk about Alexandria. I believe this book will do for any Walking Dead fan. Thanks people for reading...!

This is a book of essays written in regards to topics related to real life vs the show/comic. These are the types of conversations I enjoy having with friends regarding the show, so I enjoyed it. I also met Dr. Langley in Philadelphia at Wizard World Comic Con in 2016 and had him sign the book.

Walking Dead fans -this is a MUST read. Great take on the zombie apocalypse. Very good book.

The Walking Dead is a phenominon unlike anything else we have ever seen. Use this book to get inside the head of the dead! Great writing and interesting perspectives.

Interesting read!

Awesome Book

Loved this book! Arrived on time and read it within 24 hours. Recommend to anyone who likes knowing the "why".

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