

DECADE *of* BEHAVIOR

APA Distinguished Lecture Program: *Understanding the Process of Public Opinion Formation and Changes*

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Psychology,
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Hosted by: [The American Association
for Public Opinion Research](#)

**Annual Meeting of the American
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Research
Nashville, TN
Sheraton Music City Hotel
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Dr. Richard Petty's talk, "*Understanding the Process of Public Opinion Formation and Changes*," centers on the Decade of Behavior theme of "democracy." His work yields a range of fascinating and important insights into how persuasion unfolds in Democratic countries and has interesting implications about how Democratic countries should react to public opinion shifts.

The American Association for Public Opinion Research is the world's foremost professional organization of survey researchers, and the annual conference brings together researchers from academia, industry, and government to address issues of public opinion dynamics and the interplay of public opinion with government. Although the association's members come from many different disciplinary perspectives, there has been relatively little involvement of psychologists in the organization to date. Yet psychologists' expertise and literature are very relevant to understanding how people form opinions on public issues and how government and individual citizens interact with one another as policy-making transactions unfold throughout history. Dr. Petty's lecture will build bridges between the study of public opinion and basic psychological theories of personality and information processing, highlighting the potential for psychology to offer new hypotheses to be studied through surveys.