



April 2002

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The Top Ten Films of 2001



Here are the top 10 grossing films of 2001. A good exercise is to try and account for the popularity of each.

An original list of 150 films, organized by box office grosses, was published in *Entertainment Weekly*, March 1, 2002. The top ten include:

1. Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (927. 2 million)
2. Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring
3. Shrek,
4. Monsters, Inc.
5. Rush Hour 2
6. The Mummy Returns
7. Pearl Harbor
8. Oceans Eleven
9. Jurassic Park III,
10. Planet of the Apes

- Were there any surprises? Explain.
- Which films didn't make it to this short list, but deserved to be seen by bigger audiences?

(Critically acclaimed films that had mediocre box office returns include Gosford Park at #85 and Memento at #88.)



Media Education in Japan: From Kimonos to Hip-Hop

Two years ago after the successful Summit 2000 conference co-organized by the Association for Media Literacy in Toronto, I was invited to participate in an Asian media literacy tour, making presentations in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Japan. It was a rewarding, whirlwind experience. Fortunately, because major changes in the government and/or education were taking place, media literacy's future seemed promising.

In my last visit to Japan, I was invited by Midori Suzuki, whose long standing pioneering work has centered on the Citizen's Forum in Kyoto, which has been important in recognizing the values of media literacy in education. (Suzuki translated the Ontario Media Literacy Resource Guide in 1991.) This time the instigator for my March 2002 visit was Akiko Sugaya from Tokyo. She had spent several years in the United States as a journalist and took up the cause of media literacy (attending conferences, interviewing media education leaders, and reading the literature) with a passion that would shame her North American counterparts. How else can one describe her success in writing a book on the vital role of media literacy which last year became a Japanese best seller!

With ample references in her book to the success of the Ontario-based Association for Media Literacy, I was able to arrive this time with high profile credentials. I spent several days in Tokyo and participated in a media literacy symposium with high school teachers, professors of communication and broadcasters, and presented a media literacy workshop for what they labelled as the "Mell" program (Media and Expression, Learning and Literacy). The Mell group pointed out that their goal was not to bash the media and they insisted that media studies should include a category entitled "media play," a term that suggests a light hearted, fun element. To illustrate, we were divided into groups and, armed with sticky notes, individuals would insert their own drawings on a big sheet, working with either a new visual idea or one that was inspired by someone else. This was, I presumed, an exercise in group aesthetics.

Throughout the symposia, it was rewarding to talk to a wide variety of people, from broadcasters to classroom teachers. (Incidentally, almost every introduction involves the ritualistic presentation of your business card attended by appropriate bowing.)



Yoshimi Uesigi, Barry Duncan and Sophia Wu

Throughout the trip I was fortunate in having the company of Sophia Wu, the distinguished media educator from Taiwan along with Yoshimi Uesigi, from Nagoya, and currently a visiting educator in Toronto researching material for a doctoral dissertation on Ontario media education. Thank you Yoshimi for being my translator as well as my pipeline to Japanese culture – both popular and traditional.

My typical workshop presentation made the case for grounding media literacy work in the key concepts of media, illustrating them with texts drawn from such sources as TV commercials and the footage of September 11. I provided, for discussion purposes, a list of the key elements for the success of media literacy in the classroom. These are of paramount importance for the future of Japanese media education because media literacy is NOT recognized formally in the curriculum which, in spite of some forthcoming potential spaces for interdisciplinary work, is still too rigid, conservative, and generally lacking in critical thinking skills. My sense was that Japanese media educators are trying to create an auspicious climate for media literacy activities so that it will be seriously considered in the near future by their education officials. At the moment, it borders on being a subversive activity. Thoughtful, visionary media education leaders such as Akiko Sugaya, Midori Suzuki, and Shin Mizukoshi are quietly working behind the scenes.

In this regard, one successful strategy for gaining credibility was a partnership with local television stations in which television producers and technicians collaborated with students in a production class to create a successful TV program. In the process, everyone gained visibility, and everyone felt better about the values of media literacy. Hearing TV producers testifying about



having a new perspective on their work through grappling with pedagogical challenges was very revealing. Naoya Hayashi's student production from Nagano on the art of making good noodles was held up as an ideal example of success.

Other highlights included sitting in on a high school television production class in Nagano, participating in a media education forum in Nagoya, visiting Shinshu Television in Nagano and several other television stations for interviews. There were several interviews with the Japanese press, including one with a reporter who had laboriously researched media literacy and had numerous penetrating questions. (I have never had anything as demanding and insightful from the North American media.)



After a media literacy symposium in Nagoya, 30 of us went for dinner and we were ushered into two different sections of the restaurant. As I was leaving and passed by the people with whom I had not dined, they rose to their feet and gave me a round of applause. I made a short speech commending their initiatives, shook hands and left while they were still clapping. I felt like a minor celebrity. (I was thinking if only my Toronto colleagues could see me now!)

There was plenty of time for sight seeing, which included the awesome castle in Matsumoto; the beautiful Buddhist temple Zenko-ji in Nagano – where the monks fortuitously blessed us with their prayer beads as they left the temple; the amazing curative hot springs in Matsumoto; and the abundant pop culture phenomena. (See column below.) A big thank you to my hosts who were so generous in their hospitality and to the many people who contributed to making my whirlwind tour such a success.

Notes On Exploring Japanese Pop Culture

In the hotel where I stayed in Tokyo, a city that could be the prototype for Blade Runner, one of the elevators had a picture of a Japanese woman in the traditional kimono, looking dainty and demure. The other elevator had a picture of a blonde, western model, a kind of Grace Kelly look-alike, exuding aristocratic cool. It seems to me that in Japan that kind of juxtaposition serves to explain or at least raise questions about its many cultural contradictions and dilemmas. The Japanese want to keep many traditions, but they envy and avidly consume western ways and models.

The following are a few snapshots of Japanese popular culture together with a few allusions to Japanese traditional ways. N.B. several of these observations were crystallize thanks to an assistant professor of communications at the University of Tokyo who was able to take me to some of the more lively pop culture emporia.



While there is a slight increase in crime, the Japanese crime rate is still low; the people in large crowds are orderly and basically very polite. Yet we know about the popularity of violent video games and anime. Then there is "manga" – the violent, action-packed comic books (which are not exported). Ten million copies of these comics are published each week to satisfy the voracious appetite of males 15-25. Manga readers outnumber those reading serious literature or technical books. One commentator noted that the humour is so low as to be in the dirty joke category. These comics are a kind of vicarious catharsis – a controlled way of releasing the pressures bottled up in the darker recesses of the mind.

- Judging by the line-ups in the big department stores, one would never know that Japan is in a recession. I suppose that shopping as self-validation is no different than our experience in



North America, but more frenzied and kinetic. I was struck by the incredible amount of consumer choice. In a stationery department, for example, there would be over 100 different kinds of paper with varied, accompanying designs. In ABAB, a large department store, there was a clothing department aimed at young people entitled, "Me Jane." Raunchy, very aggressive gangsta rap whose lyrics would be understood by only a few was playing in the background. The music was simply to create a kind of edgy, youthful ambience.

- If one were to judge from walking about the streets of Tokyo, 50 per cent of the teen girls and a sizable number of the boys dye their hair brown. The cool look of the girls is inspired, in part, by the teen heart throb Ayumi Hamasaki, a 22 year-old pop singer on posters everywhere. Here come the clones. One day we saw dozens of 10-12 year-old girls lining up outside a television studio to catch a glimpse of a teen heart throb band.
- Sexism is institutionalized and budding feminism is low key. Watch the television news or many magazine shows and you will witness the "cute young woman," whose primary role is to laugh and/or agree with the male anchor. One of the most interesting people I met was Akiko Ogawa, who will be teaching media studies at Nagoya University next year. She had spent four years as a news reporter, but left because the men at the television station were not prepared to change their format, alter their sexism or approve her innovative ideas for news stories.

- The walkways leading to the large and famous temples in Japan all seem to attract the tackiest merchandise: a thousand different ways to package rice or hustle cheap kimonos, and dozens of pop icons such as Pokemon, Hello Kitty paraphernalia, and dolls and posters of little girls in short shorts with big sailor-moon eyes. (Does anyone know the pop culture origin of these very UN-Japanese-like faces?)



- Karaoke bars are omnipresent and, yes, I made my taste-shattering debut! One of the favourite songs was from a teen group that punctuated their song with a chorus of "Fu Fu, Wow Wow!" which everyone joined in on and simultaneously made funny swaying gestures with their hands. Goofy but fun. Pop culture commentators suggest that the Japanese repress their feelings so much that karaoke is the easiest way to let off steam. Would other Japan watchers agree?
- There were several articles running in the Japan Times (in English) on the dance crazes taking place in Japan, including the trance, salsa, and hip-hop. Sample quote: "Americans are born into hip-hop, whereas Japan imported it. We must create something original to be able to compete on the same level."
- I already knew about the ubiquitous McDonalds and the Gap. But those Starbucks Coffee cafes are painfully ubiquitous. Will the traditional Japanese tea rooms – low key, ritualistic and relaxing – be able to thrive against this corporate juggernaut?
- The video arcades and gambling machines were everywhere. (The porno arcades are close behind.) The noise level was deafening. One place that was a contrast was a store that dealt in trade-ins of pop action figures and figurines, such as those associated with Pokemon. Here was an opportunity to extend or trade in your collectibles.
- Hot springs hotels in places like Nagano and Matsumoto become places where the Japanese take short holidays so they can pamper themselves. Bathing in the hot springs involves carefully following certain rituals at different stages, e.g. scrubbing your back, placing a folded towel on your head. I had some assistance, but my performance bordered on a Monty Python show.



- What other country would make the blooming of the first cherry trees a front page news story? They were just beginning in mid-March in Tokyo, although the blossoms for plum trees were advancing and photographers were lining up to shoot them. The Japanese lose themselves in the cherry blossom's collective brilliance and when they gather together in lively circles beneath the blossoms, their inhibitions melt away. Their appreciation of this evanescent beauty is touching, and inspires one to return.

Cultural Paradigms: how they shape what we do in the media classroom

The following three models represent three different ways, or paradigms, for looking at art, literature, and media such as television drama, sitcoms and feature films. Because so many teachers of media also teach literature, these models render in sharp relief the different ways we have examined our work. The goal in presenting this is to show that the assumptions in each model privilege the kind of "readings" that are made available. There is no implication here that one paradigm is necessarily better than the other, although cultural criticism is the richest and most important because it recognizes cultural complexity and encourages resistant readings of texts. Historically, cultural heritage was in fashion until the 1960s and then response to literature emerged, which was followed by the perspectives effected by the work on cultural studies. To effectively deconstruct texts, innovative teachers are probably using pieces from all three models. Finally, as a public relations strategy, I have shown these paradigms to my teaching colleagues (often traditional "English Lit" criticism types) and, because the concepts and key questions are graphically organized, they can be readily understood and even made palatable. Try it and send me your reports!

There seems to be a world wide consensus that media literacy is best contextualized by the insights and contexts of cultural criticism, which includes a more politicized view of personal response (dubbed reception theory by critical theorists) that many professors of English would be willing to support.

Applications:

- Submit an episode of a sitcom or drama to the key questions attached to each model.
- Are there any unexpected insights that were generated by doing this exercise? You may want to try adapting these models for application to student discussion of texts. (I once divided a class of media teachers into three, and each group had to apply a different model to the analysis of the opening sequence of Citizen Kane. It seemed to work well.)

If anyone would like a copy of the original six-page article by Marnie O'Neil, send me an e-mail with your snail mail address.

Cultural Paradigms:

Cultural Heritage

Statements	Typical Questions
<p>There is a meaning in the text put there by the author, which trained readers can uncover</p> <p>Good texts are universal, unified and consistent</p> <p>Texts are the unique creations of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the theme of this story/film? • What is the creator's intention? • How does the writer help us experience the pleasures and pitfalls of climbing? • Identify the attitudes of the main characters



inspired authors

Good literature develops the aesthetic sensibilities of the sensitive reader

Focusing on characterization is a natural way to read a text

towards the police.

- What is the tone of this work?
- Why has the writer chosen to write in this way?

Personal Response

Statements

Literature reflects life

Readers bring their personal experience to texts and make their own meanings.

Different readings of the same texts are due to differences in personal interpretations

Interactions with the text provides a lived-through experience for the readers

Literature provides examples of possible ways of being

Typical Questions

- What do you think this story is about?
- What do you think will happen to the hero when the hero returns home?
- Why do you think the character acted this way?
- In what ways do people behave like this in real life?
- In this situation, how would you have behaved?

Cultural Criticism

Statements

Texts are sites for the construction of plural, often conflicting and contradictory meanings.

Texts promote interested versions of reality.

Readers can resist the dominant meaning of texts.

Texts construct subject positions in terms of gender, race and class.

Empathic reading through character is a learned practice.

Typical Questions

- What are the possible readings of this text?
- How are readers positioned?
- How are readings of character constructed?
- How are particular readings of characters marginalized or privileged?
- How are cultural issues of gender, race, class or religion produced by different readings of texts?
- What attitudes and values appear to be endorsed by different readings?

Adapted from *Teaching Literature as Cultural Criticism* by Marnie O'Neill, English Quarterly. Vol. 25, No. 1.



Media Clips

Have Black Actors Finally Made It?



This year's Oscars provided high visibility to black actors: Sidney Poitier for lifetime achievement, Halle Berry for best actress, and Denzel Washington for best actor.

Debate the following proposition:

"In 2002, Academy Award recognition for black actors will do little to help improve their representation in Hollywood films."

Pop Music Critiques the Media

Media teacher Dominic Ali posted this list on the Media-L list-serve. It is a short list, but one that might inspire updates from your students. He writes: "These songs might make students think about the way music is produced and consumed."

Suggested Class Assignment:

- Ask students to find three songs from different musicians who have critiqued the media.
- Once this is done, ask students to copy out the lyrics.
- Identify and explain the media issues that are raised by each song.
- Compare the songs in terms of how effective the song medium is in addressing these issues.

Food for thought: Are there any lyrics in pop music that take a positive view of the mass media and popular culture?

Here's a modest first list to get things started:

- Disposable Heroes of Hypocrisy: "Television, Drug of a Nation" (This one should be the media educators' anthem!)
- Bruce Springsteen: "57 Channels (And Nothing On)"
- Public Enemy: "She Watch Channel Zero?"
- Don Henley: "Dirty Laundry"
- The Police: "Too Much Information" (About media overload.)
- The Buggles: "Video Killed the Radio Star" (This was the first video that MTV ever played.)
- Gil Scot-Heron: "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised"
- Public Enemy: "Politics of the Sneaker Pimps" (Addresses sports licensing.)
- Public Enemy: "How to Kill A Radio Consultant"
- The Clash: "This is Radio Clash" (A concept for a pirate radio station featuring alternative media.)
- Public Enemy: "Burn Hollywood Burn" (Explores portrayals of black people in Hollywood movies.)



Celine Dion: Are we grateful for her return?

Celine Dion is one of the most popular singers in the world and arguably Canada's biggest pop culture export. After a two-year absence, in which she took a rest from her hectic schedule and gave birth to a boy, she has returned to the stage launching her new release "A New Day Has Come."

Throughout her extraordinary career, her talents have earned her legions of loyal fans in every single part of the world, making her the rarest of things – a truly global superstar. "What distinguishes this new album from anything Celine has previously recorded is the unprecedented warmth and sheer intimacy of her vocal performance," says Paul Burger, President Sony Music Europe.



Source: CBS.com

Many teens are not big fans of Celine and her popular, over-the-top stadium filling songs leave them cold.

- Nonetheless, how would you account for her popularity?
- Will people begin to tire of her?
- Does the gossip associated with her and her husband enhance or diminish her career?
- Will the venue in Las Vegas where she intends to perform for the next three years deliver the crowds she needs?
- Establish some criteria for musical success and then compare her career with that other controversial diva – Madonna.

On-line with Mike Gange

Anyone who has examined the history of the media education movement in terms of the impact of local initiatives which can become important state- or province-wide and even national sign posts, will realize that it takes only one or two individuals to get the ball rolling. Enter Mike Gange, Mr. Media Literacy for New Brunswick. Mike is an affable, tenacious, task-oriented guy with a dry sense of humour (quirky is his own term) who, two years ago, founded the Association for Media Literacy, New Brunswick.



His earlier career in journalism became a major asset not only for his teaching, but also for writing his regularly featured book reviews and the amazing "Mike Gange's Diary," reflections on his recent visitations to Canadian and American media industries. These have ranged from the free wheeling studios at CHUM Ltd. in Toronto to the calmer bureaucratic scene at NBC in New York. An inventive teacher, a fast learner and a visionary, Mike Gange is in the media education game for the long haul.

B.D. How did you get started in media literacy?

M.G. Before I was a teacher, I was a reporter for five years in radio, television, and print. I had a good time, where ever I was, so when I became a teacher, it seemed like a good idea to incorporate some of those ideas into my classroom. Whether I was teaching French or Law, I made media work as part of the lesson plan.

After 10 years at a junior high school, I requested a transfer to FHS. My first year there, I taught everything – Law, Math, English, French, Career and Life Management – 4 different courses to prepare each term, nothing repeated. One day, someone said they did not want to teach media



studies any more; I think she was burnt out from all the work. I said, could I have that? It came my way.

My first year teaching media, I said "these kids need to learn about media as if they were going to work in the media: real hands-on stuff." It worked. The next year, I found out about the Ontario Teachers of Media Literacy, the AML, and found the guide book they had prepared in conjunction with the Ontario government. As I read this, I said, "man I am already doing this!" Finding that book was like getting the good housekeeping seal of approval...I was already there, only now I was like a dog with a bone. I knew I was on the right track and kept pushing the kids to do more.

B.D. What are the connections to media literacy and your background in journalism?

M.G. Journalism is one small branch of the tree, media studies is the tree. The journalism I teach the kids to do is real life stuff – movie reviews, CD reviews, book reviews – and the students get to realize that somebody has to interpret the work they see or experience, somebody has to think about it, write it as they see it. This helps them more easily understand the concept of "Construction of Reality."

I really like Pauline Kael's writings as a critic: "The role of critic is to say what isn't there, what ought to be, and what is there that need not be." These kids have a valid opinion, we hear them in the hall all the time, and in journalism or media classes they can state their opinions out loud, as long as they can back it up with facts. This also helps them become better critical thinkers, as they learn when to listen to someone editorialize, and when to listen to facts.

B.D. What did you have to do in order to get a media literacy group in N.B.?

M.G. New Brunswick has about 35 high schools, which is about the same size as some districts in Ontario. Trouble is, we are geographically the same size as Ireland. It takes 7 hours to drive from the northernmost school to the southernmost school. I actually have a very long range plan. In the beginning, I read everything I could about media education as a pedagogy. Then I volunteered to do in-service or summer sessions in media courses for government-sponsored Professional Development days. I did that for three years, always maintaining contact with those who enrolled. Then I decided to gather all those that I knew, and invited them to a PD meeting on a Saturday. I applied for and got some seed money, to bring everyone together. I have tried to make inroads with teachers in P.E.I. and N.S. too, although with limited success so far.

I promised all those people that we would meet again at the next provincial PD day, which will be in May 2002 in Fredericton. I have volunteered my house and BBQ to get us together. I offered to do sessions on media usage in the classroom at the high school council days. My next step is to fill a void: a lack of specialized PD designated for the media studies and journalism teachers, as well as those in other areas who want to teach more media literacies. (Nothing of this sort is sponsored by the Department of Education.) To do this we will host a 2-day conference in Fredericton, partly sponsored by the private sector. When I approached the Department of Education, they were luke warm – so I went ahead and arranged it myself. The next step is to get those 35 people teaching media studies in N.B., and anyone else who wants to join us, to attend the U.S. Conference planned for Baltimore in 2003. In 2004, I am hoping to convince the Department of Education in either N.S. or P.E.I. to put up some seed money so that we can do something similar in their provinces. I will again turn to the private sector if need be, because although teachers of media studies know what's needed to improve media education, we don't seem to be getting very much support from any levels of government. With media educators such a specialized group, if Departments of Education aren't going to help us, then we need to help ourselves.

B.D. What are a few highlights of AML N.B. so far?

M.G. We are planning a conference called Fresh Air 0-2, which will have some first rate speakers and some great things happening. We will be getting together 35 – 50 top-notch teachers, who will get to meet some of Canada's great speakers and thinkers in our field. We have many people who are networking more now. That is exciting. No one has a monopoly on new ideas.



B.D. What is your vision for media literacy in N.B. in five years time?

M.G. First we need to convince the Department of Education that we are for real, with specialized PD needs, and that we can become the leaders in media teaching to all other levels. We need to have a media festival similar to provincial drama festivals, to highlight the most talented of our students, show off their works, and garner some attention from the press and the public. After that, we need to get the universities involved. We need to have one of the three English universities in N.B. have a chair in media education, perhaps sponsored by a corporation, or an agency, so that we can have leadership at that academic level. That will be, I believe, our biggest hurdle.



B.D. How would you compare your philosophy of media literacy with some of the Key players – Canadian, American and beyond?

M.G. I pay a great attention to what I read on media-awareness, on the media-I, in books. While I can't tell where I got these ideas from specifically, I like to think I am on the cutting edge of what are now considered best practices elsewhere: Students need to produce media in order to be able to understand media. Students need to be challenged, so their thinking is logical, rational, critical – and not fallacious, unfounded cynicism. Students need to write their answers and defend them to others. Students need to be confident that their work is valid and will be treated seriously and fairly by the person assessing it. Students need to know their observations are helping to shape the country, so I bring in many political speakers who might help shape their thinking. An MP who says there is a reason for not legalizing marijuana has a lot more impact than anything I can say.

Students also need to model their work on someone who is there. I try to bring in my reviews every month and we talk about the piece as a text. I have no bad feelings if some student trashes my work – if it's done constructively. The important thing is that they use logic, rational thinking, and defend and support their position.

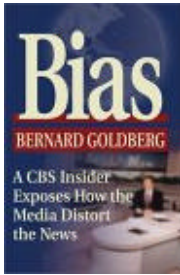
I consider the books I choose to review as part of my ongoing Professional Development. I get to read some of the best, newest, freshest ideas, relating to media studies, news media, thinking skills and pop culture. For example, books about McLuhan would be about media studies. Books by reporters like Ted Koppel would be about the news media. Naomi Klein would serve as one of the thinking skills, while Gene Simmons, from the rock group KISS would be part of the pop culture. When I am done with the books, I donate many of them to the school library.

In whatever we are discussing in class, I try to get the latest take on it. I keep our course very fresh. I have taught it now for seven years, twice each semester, and I have never taught it the same way. Something is always different. I am confident that I am a good teacher, but I am not afraid to learn new things. I am hardly "Teacher of the Year" because I am perhaps too quirky, too different, too unique. But I am good at what I do and I reach some kids others people might not have been able to. I feel I learn as much from the students as they learn from me.



Recommended Resources

What Media People Are Reading in Spring 2002



Bias: A CBS Insider Exposes How the Media Distort the News

Bernard Goldberg (Regnery) N.B.

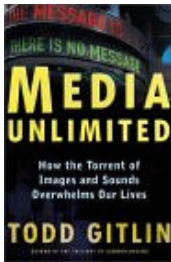
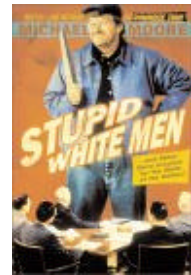
Listed as number three on the current American best seller non-fiction list.

Goldberg repeatedly voiced his concerns to network executives about the often one-sided liberal nature of the news coverage. But no one listened to his complaints – or if they did listen, they did nothing about the problem. Finally, Goldberg had no choice but to blow the whistle on his own industry, to break the code of silence that pervades the news business. Bias is the result.

Stupid White Men and Other Sorry Excuses for the State of the Nation

Michael Moore.

Another book from that hilarious subversive, Michael Moore. The celebrity author has it in for that ugly special-interest group that's laying waste to the world as we know it: stupid white men. Whether he's calling for United Nations action to overthrow the Bush Family Junta, calling on African-Americans to place "whites only" signs over the entrances of unfriendly businesses, or praying that Jesse Helms will get kissed by a man.



Media Unlimited: How the Torrent of Images and Sounds Overwhelms Our Lives

Todd Gitlin (Metropolitan).

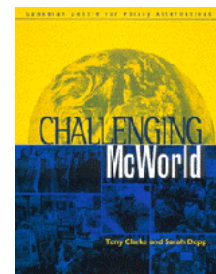
Gitlin is an important media critic whose books such as Prime Time and Twilight of Common Dreams have made a significant contribution to understanding the media. In Media Unlimited, Gitlin takes aim at the excess of media images and sounds and ultimately provides some useful judgements on what the flow adds up to. (N.B. To be reviewed in the May Bulletin.)

Book Review

Challenging McWorld by Tony Clarke and Sarah Dopp, 2001. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 410-75 Albert St., Ottawa, ON K1P 5E7. Price \$15.00 – 148 pages

E-mail orders ccpa@policyalternatives.ca

An ongoing debate among teachers concerns the values and potential implementation of protest and social change. Informing students about injustice and oppression is one thing, getting them to take some concrete action is another. It used to be that hiding your political and ideological positions was 'de rigeur.' Teachers were supposed to be politically detached and neutral. But now the boundaries are becoming blurry. Forum Magazine (the quarterly magazine for Ontario secondary teachers), for example, in the Fall edition contained articles on exhorting students to join the Maquila Solidarity Network and exhorting teachers to avoid the



misinformed corporate-generated curriculum for environmental studies available from several North American corporations. Clearly the face of protest and social action have changed.

Thanks to important work of organizations such as the Council of Canadians, The Polaris Institute, and books such as Naomi Klein's *No Logo*, we now have the critical analysis to ponder today's shifting paradigms, including corporate globalization, government complicity with the dominant media, and the loss of public space. But after careful analysis and reflection, we need meaningful action. Enter *Challenging McWorld* by Tony Clarke and Sarah Dopp, two activists with their compendium of useful strategies.

This book is for teachers and students, from high school to university. It is divided into four sections: 1. Exposing Corporate Rule – on campus and in classrooms; 2. Work and Community; 3. Canada and the World; and 4. Methods and Tools. Within each of these large sections there are numerous mini units – over 30 – each of them containing discussion starters, such as "What are the different ways in which young people are targeted for marketing in your community and school?," a short overview essay, quick facts such as "Wal-mart has become the world's top retailer with its superstore chains followed by five other U.S. companies, two Japanese firms, one German and one French," and resource materials – books and periodicals. The section "Around the World," for example, is broken into four-page units – Global Fortune 500, "New World Government," "Global Casino," "Militarism," and "Human Rights."

I like the ways that the authors take advantage of students' direct experience as often as possible – to resist commercialization in our schools, or unfair practices in the workplace. There are plenty of suggestions for concrete action, unlike some of the exponents of critical pedagogy who talk a good line about empowerment but often lose us in their abstruse presentations. Clarke and Dopp are sensibly grounded. Their use of YNN (The Youth News Network – a Canadian organization modelled on Channel One) is an ideal case study to show how teachers, students and the local community can share information and strategies and effectively stage a campaign to protest school board and school administration decisions. (YNN now seems to have been banished from entering Canadian schools.)

If media literacy teachers – among several groups – are going to venture into global studies and world issues they will need to address these challenges in creative ways. *Challenging McWorld* provides us with dozens of excellent examples of corporate globalization, followed by practical action strategies which assure us that student empowerment has a good name.

Upcoming Events

CHUM Television Donation to fund Media Literacy Centre at London Public Library.

Many media educators may be aware of CHUM's contribution to media literacy in Canada. Their activities have included: funding original media education programming for secondary school students and educators; underwriting teacher training sessions and institutes across Canada and funding conferences and other initiatives. Their latest initiative is their \$200,000 donation to the London, Ontario Public Library for the establishment and operation of North America's first library-based Media Literacy Centre. The centre is scheduled to open in August 2002.

The Media Literacy Centre is a resource center designed to support media students, educators, librarians, parents, consumers and members of the public exploring the nature and role of the media. The Center will house print, audio visual and electronic material about media literacy and dedicate a number of computer work stations to media literacy work.



The National Telemedia Council Announces its Media Education Writing Awards for Emerging Professionals

(Proposal Deadline: May 30, 2002)

In the fall of 2003, the National Telemedia Council, in conjunction with its fifty-year anniversary celebration, will devote a special juried issue of *Telemidium* (the only journal of media education published in the United States), to research on media education. This special issue, limited to fifteen articles, will focus on work by emerging professionals in the early stages of their involvement with media education research. We are looking for a variety of articles keying on traditional or emerging media technologies, written by practitioners who are not necessarily young in age but rather new to the study of media education – classroom instructors, academics, media critics and producers – individuals who will add something new to the field and whose work might well continue to offer insight as we move into the future.

In addition to publication in *Telemidium*, the author of the best article determined by the jury of reviewers will receive a \$1000 award. Also, up to five other articles will be considered for \$500 awards.

Guidelines for Proposals for Submission:

Proposals for this special issue are due no later than May 30, 2002. At that time, interested persons should send three clear, double spaced copies of a proposal of no more than three pages, to NTT's Writing Awards for Emerging Professionals, 1922 University Avenue, Madison, WI 53705. Be sure to include a cover page with your name, address, telephone, number, and e-mail address, as well as your curriculum vitae. The paper proposal should contain a summary of the final draft of the paper. All proposals will be read by two or more reviewers. The editorial board will include: David Considine, Richard Fehlman, and Neil Andersen, with other reviewers to be added as needed. Authors will be contacted by June 30th, 2002 if their proposal has been accepted. Final drafts will be due January 15th, 2003.

How I spent my summer vacation...

Summer Institutes

Appalachian State University will offer two one-week sessions in Media Literacy. The first session will offer the gateway class in Media Literacy and will run on the Boone, North Carolina campus from the afternoon of Sunday July 21st, through Thursday July 25th. The course will be taught by David Considine. Housing can be arranged on campus.

The advanced class (Media Literacy and Curriculum Development) will run in the university's New York City loft, from Sunday July 28th to Saturday August 3rd. It will be team taught by Kathleen Tyner, author of *Literacy in a Digital Age*, and David Considine. Seats are limited. For more information regarding both classes visit their Web site at www.ci.appstate.edu/programs/edmedia/medialit/.

Introduction to Media Literacy August 12-15, Toronto, a four-day immersion in Media Literacy offered by York University. This is a self-contained program although most participants are taking the course as part of a program that continues until February. Instructors are Neil Andersen, Barry Duncan, and Ian Esquivel. Contact baduncan@interlog.com.



Project Look Sharp, a Media Literacy initiative based in Ithaca, N.Y., is announcing its annual Summer Media Literacy Institute for K-12 educators in all curriculum areas. This four-day immersion in Media Literacy provides teachers and teaching support staff with the knowledge, skills and training to integrate media analysis and production into their curriculum. The four-day institute will be offered twice during the summer, July 15-18 and August 12-15. For information regarding registration fees, housing at Ithaca College, in-service or college credit, and to register, contact Eileen Jacobs at Project Look Sharp: looksharp@ithaca.edu.

More Than Meets the Eye: The World of Media Literacy, at the University of Dayton, Monday, June 17th through to Wednesday June 19th, 2002 – 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily. The instructor will be John J. Pungente, S.J., Director of the Jesuit Communication Project in Toronto, president of the Canadian Association of Media Education Organizations (CAMEO), co-producer of the award-winning educational video series "Scanning Television," and creator and host of "Scanning the Movies" – a national television program now in its fifth year on Canada's Bravo!

Course Description: Media literacy gives us the means to take an informed and critical look at the nature, the technique and the impact of the mass media. In this seminar, students will learn and apply the key concepts of media literacy to a number of media texts. They will learn the importance of critical thinking skills for all education programs – and for themselves as teachers. For more information, contact Jewell Truxal, Program Coordinator: Jewel.Truxal@notes.udayton.edu.

On Teaching Media Literacy, Vancouver, British Columbia, Monday, July 8th to Friday July 12th, 2002 – 8.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. Cost: \$60.00.

Part One: On Surviving Buffy Without the Fear Factor of Being the Weakest Link. Presented by John J. Pungente, S.J., Carolyn Wilson, and Dan Blake. Topics will include: The Key Concepts of Media Literacy, Prime Time Television, Reality TV, Media Violence, Values, Social Justice, Advertising (Selling to Teens), Resources and sessions on TV and Print News. Sponsored by CHUM Television and C.A.M.E.

Where: BCTF Building, 550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C.

Who: Teachers and Teacher-librarians, Grades 8-12

Deadline for registration is Friday, June 14, 2002 – Registration is limited. Contact: Dan Blake: dblade@bctf.ca.

Part Two: And Now for Something Completely Different. Monday July 15 to Friday July 19, 2002 – 8.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. Cost: \$60.00.

Presented by John J. Pungente, S.J., Carolyn Wilson and Dan Blake. If you're a media literacy teacher or teacher librarian who's either taught about the media for a while and/or taken a course, summer institute or night class to the extent that you've mastered the key concepts and got the meaning of *The Simpson's* down pat. And if you now you want to move on – to learn about the ideological constructs of the media's reporting on 9-11, or to explore Mark Crispin Miller's theories on media ownership, or to find the implications of branding and new marketing techniques by the Merchants of Cool, or to find how to take your class to the Mall and introduce them to "The Temples of Mamon," or even to dare to watch an entire episode of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and use it in class, then this four-day course is just for you – a next step in teaching about the media. Come prepared to enjoy – and to do some work! Sponsored by: CHUM Television and C.A.M.E.

Where: BCTF Building, 550 West 6th Avenue, Vancouver, B.C.



Who: Teachers and Teacher-librarians, Grades 8-12
For more information, contact Dan Blake: dblake@bctf.ca.

And Now for Something Completely Different in Victoria, B.C.

John Pungente will be conducting a second, And Now for Something Completely Different seminar on Monday, July 2nd to July 5th, 2002, in Victoria, British Columbia. The course will be held at the S.J. Willis Centre, 923 Topaz Avenue, Victoria and is open to teachers and teacher-librarians, grades 8-12 who have either taken Part One (see description above), taken the course taught in July 2001, or have experience as a media literacy teacher or teacher librarian. Sponsored by: CHUM Television with support from Island Network (Ministry of Education), and the Greater Victoria School District.

Deadline for registration is Friday, June 14, 2002. Registration is limited. Contact: Judith Reid: jreid@sd61.bc.ca.

Barry Duncan is an award-winning teacher, author, consultant and founder and past president of the Ontario-based Association for Media Literacy. Co-author of the best selling text book, *Mass Media and Popular Culture*, he has presented workshops and keynote addresses to thousands of teachers in Canada and around the world. You can contact Barry at baduncan@interlog.com.

