



January 2002

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Attacking Harry Potter

Are there advantages to using negative reviews of popular films that both critics and audiences love? Case Study: *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*



Mr. Cranky ©

Mr. Cranky is hard hitting film criticism you can look up on the Net at www.mrcranky.com/movies/. I have found the reviews to be witty, entertaining and often bang-on the money.

Teaching Strategy

- Choose films that are critically well received and are box office successes.
- Ask students to respond to the criticism of Mr. Cranky, showing why they agree or disagree with his observations.
- Ask students to write a primarily negative review of a critically acclaimed film. What did they learn through this exercise?

Mr. Cranky's Review of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*

"What does director Christopher Columbus remove from the movie? He removes the audience's ability to identify with Harry Potter. While he's at it, he also removes the crucial sense of fear and tension Harry experiences at Hogwarts – in the book, he is constantly afraid of being expelled. That's all missing. It's all missing because people like Christopher Columbus don't have the slightest idea what compels people to love something. All they understand is how to sell something. They understand marketing and survey forms. They think the key to getting audiences to connect with the kids on the flying brooms is to spend enough money to make the flying brooms as realistic as possible.

Continued...



The wonder is missing. Harry isn't afraid of anything. Snape seems more smarmy than evil. Malfoy just looks like a brat. There's no connection between Harry and Hedwig. Didn't anybody have a clue this would happen when they hired a guy who directed Bicentennial Man? It's like hiring Charles Manson to baby-sit your children."

And speaking of Harry...

Making Sense of the Media: Exploring Harry Potter

On November 22 The Association for Media Literacy event on "Youth Making Sense of the Media" was held in the newly renovated shooting stage in the ChumCityTV building in Toronto. Sixty people attended and, by all accounts, it was a major success.

The panel was made up of Kathleen McDonnell, author of the newly published *Honey, We lost the Kids*; George Strombolopoulos, host of the "New Music;" Dede Sinclair, educator and member of the AML executive; and Ian Esquivel, media teacher and AML executive.

With the recent opening of the film *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, we had the ideal way to talk about issues such as the marketing hysteria around the film, as well as the pros and cons of producing a literal-minded adaptation of the book. The title of Kathleen's presentation – "Who owns Harry Potter?" – was astutely answered through investigating its three contenders: JK Rowling, Warner-Bros/AOL, and the youthful fans.

Dede Sinclair and Ian Esquivel looked at how kids talked informally about the book and film and posed the big question: "Does our imagination get lost in the film adaptation?" In this regard, Ian's video interviews with his grade nine students were very telling.

George Strombolopoulos, who talked about youth and the protest movement, specifically focussed on the Summit of the Americas last May in Quebec city. He made the case for the unfortunate limitations of the mainstream media coverage and the value of having the voices of youth talking about anti-globalization and the political messages of popular music. George was very open about corporate power. He reminded us: "One would never see the mainstream media attacking McDonalds."

The audience raised many points about what it means for today's youth to be media savvy, the perils of corporate connections and what it means to be a critical thinker. A fine event that contained a pedagogy of hope.

Adbusters Magazine Reports on Their Success Stories in 2001

- Thousands of reports from jammers "in the field" – the listserv now has 60,000 members!
- Buy Nothing Day celebrated in more than 50 countries by over a million people
- Corporate America Flag sparks 5,000+ letters after September 11th and prompts an investigation from national security in New York
- *Adbusters* magazine finally goes bimonthly, circulation hits 80,000
- 8,000 visitors per day on the Adbusters Web site



And a few of our goals for 2002:

- *Adbusters* magazine to hit the magic 100,000-circulation mark – available on news stands around the world
- Buy Nothing Day an eco-holiday on par with Earth Day
- Special issue/campaign for "Rio + 10" World Summit on Sustainability (Johannesburg, in September)
- TV Turnoff Week – a new, more activist focus on media democracy
- "Politics of Food" special issue/campaign under development
- Our largest on-line project ever – Adbusters TV, a social activist channel on the Internet

And more surprises at www.adbusters.org.

Letter to Kalle Lasn, founder and publisher of *Adbusters* Magazine

Congratulations Kalle and your staff at Adbusters for your achievements in 2001 and your ambitious goals for the new year. We media types remember when you started as a modest advocacy periodical printed on newspaper catering to a small Canadian audience. Now your largest number of subscribers is American. You print on glossy paper and your pictures are often enigmatic, post-modern representations of strange urban landscapes. You seem less satiric now than a few years ago when your comic line-up included Absolut Nonsense, Joe Chemo and Calvin Fool. You offer us many long essays that reveal the toxicity of a society bent on excessive consumption. Some colleagues I know are having trouble mining their anguished existential meanings. Perhaps they should try harder.

Media educators have long used your work in the classroom. You should know that there are also many who are against offering media courses solely dedicated to media bashing. In fact, we encourage negotiated and resistant readings and even the notion of pleasure. We believe that we are not empty vessels who mindlessly soak up all the allegedly malevolent messages of popular culture.

I have appreciated your contribution to global activist agendas as advanced by today's culture jammers. The battle in Seattle and Quebec City were major triumphs. The face of protest has changed forever.

Best wishes Barry Duncan

P.S. Sometime you might want to invite media educators to do a whole issue on media literacy. I think everyone would find it an eye-opener.



Kandahar

A powerful feature film set in Afghanistan humanizes a war-torn country that is at the top of the news

In my last "Barry's Bulletin," I referred to the value of experiential alternatives to the typical mainstream coverage of the war in Afghanistan. These included a tour of a reconstructed refugee camp in the public square of Toronto city hall and a Canadian Broadcasting Company news item reporting on the experience of some Alberta teenagers who participated in a weekend refugee camp simulation. Now to add to the list of imaginative ways to convey the powerful experiences of a country in chaos we have the dramatic 85 minute feature film *Kandahar*, which has run in Toronto and other Canadian cities since last October. It opens in January in the United States. As we all know, Kandahar is in the news because it was the last city held by the Taliban in the war in Afghanistan.



This film, directed by the brilliant Iranian filmmaker Mohsen Makhmalabaf, effectively conveys the rugged landscape of the country, the dangers of travel and the customs enforced by the Taliban such as women being forced to wear the burqa, the total body covering with the head piece of constricted mesh screen which frames their view of the world. The plot is simple: Pazira, a Canadian journalist from Canada, returns to her homeland to search for her sister in Kandahar. Her sister has lost her legs to a land mine and is so depressed that she intends to commit suicide at the time of the solar eclipse occurring three days hence. En route, Pazira is robbed and wounded is treated by a sympathetic American black Muslim doctor, who masquerades as a Taliban.

There are riveting scenes of boys reciting the Koran, their bodies in constant motion; an encounter of a wedding party travelling across the inhospitable landscape all dressed in colourful clothing. And one truly surreal episode centering around a crowd of men who have lost a leg or arm to the ubiquitous land mines, frantically racing on crutches to a Red Cross parachute drop of precious wooden legs and arms. The film resembles a documentary partly because most of the actors are refugees living in camps close to the Afghan border, where the film was shot.

I have heard of several Toronto high school classes who have seen the film and come away both informed about Afghanistan under Taliban rule and moved by this powerful semi-biographical story of a Canadian journalist seeking her sister. The film was well received at the Cannes Film festival and the Toronto International Film Festival.

Some teaching suggestions

1. Research key information about Afghanistan. (One superb resource is an article by the filmmaker himself published in *Z Magazine*, December 2001, "A country abandoned: Impressions of Afghanistan.") Learn about its long history as a country dominated by local war lords and wars with international warlords including the British, the Russians and the Taliban.
2. "Kandahar is an enigmatic and possibly allegorical fable about a lone figure on a dangerous journey, and so belongs to what may be the oldest storytelling existence. The fact that this lone figure is a woman, voyaging into the traditional-medieval nightmare of Afghanistan under the Taliban, makes clear that Makhmalbaf's artistic vision is traditional and radical at the same time." (*Salon*, December 2001) Discuss what you believe this film critic is implying by this notion of the 'radical' and the 'traditional.'



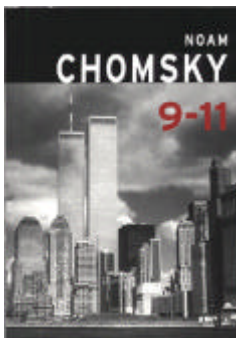
3. How has the filmmaker effectively used the rugged landscape which becomes like a central character in the film? How might this knowledge allow you to empathize with their huge refugee population and the one million people currently dying of hunger?
4. What are your personal reactions to the following scenes? In each case discuss the film techniques used to make them effective.
 - The boys in the school learning the Koran as well as engaging in rifle practice.
 - The scene in which the disabled men run madly for the parachute drop of artificial arms and legs.
 - The wedding party of women at the well in the desert.
 - The encounter with the American doctor.
5. The filmmaker said "I had to change location in making the film many times. But my focus was humanitarian, not political." What do you think he meant by this observation?
6. The imminent solar eclipse is a fitting symbol for the narrative action and for the stark mood the film generates. Discuss the themes and effects created by the briefly glimpsed eclipse.
7. What are the social, political and educational limitations put on the women of Afghanistan.? How are these revealed in the film? How do some women overcome them? Write an imagined diary entry for a day in the life of an Afghan woman before the Taliban warlords were vanquished.
8. One critic notes that the film contains "moments of sublime visual poetry that at once heighten and complicate their humanitarian messages. The message and the camera go in opposite directions. The burqa is an abomination that's understood, but it does not prevent one from thinking that it is also photogenic." Referring to appropriate scenes, agree or disagree with these comments.

Media Clips

Noam Chomsky can't always deliver the goods!

Loyal Chomskyites have been betrayed recently by the man himself as he lectures around the world to audiences expecting fresh insights on current events, specifically regarding the background to the war in Afghanistan.

This fall, Chomsky was treated like a rock star in sold-out lectures in Lahore and Islamabad. According to Christopher Johnson (*NOW Magazine*, Dec 5, 2001) he goofed badly in "dusting off his tired 1980's cold war commentaries." He showed his ignorance about making Pakistan and India one state, overlooked important gender issues and stated that there was no clash of religions. Chomsky admitted that he had been reading about the history of the region for only a month. The audience was not impressed.



Nonetheless, Chomsky's recently published book entitled *9/11* covering radio and Internet interviews from Sept. 19 to Oct. 15 contains valuable perspectives on terrorism, US foreign policy and the limits of media coverage. The major reservation about such an 'instant book' is that the content is largely taken from interviews and public lectures; the structure seems arbitrary, not organic.

Few media critics would refuse to acknowledge the influence of Noam Chomsky, America's leading dissident, in understanding the background to news coverage, the impact of corporate concentration in the United States and that government's intervention in the affairs of other countries.



Media educators and cultural workers need academic heroes, public intellectuals and insightful critics with an international reputation. Hence the elevation of people such as Noam Chomsky, Camille Paglia, Neil Postman, Marshall McLuhan, George Gerbner and film critics such as Andrew Sarris and the late Pauline Kael. If they make any mistakes, however, heaven help them.

Recommended Resources

The National Film Board

The National Film Board of Canada is pleased to promote its brochure "Safe Schools and Communities" which contain their videos that address safety issues bullying, homophobia, intolerance, violence and drugs. Please log onto www.nfb.ca/publications, to view their resources for teachers and other professionals.

Telemidium Fall 2001 issue dedicated to "Global Studies & Media Literacy"

A real Keeper!

Telemidium is the only journal of media literacy emanating from the United States with a national focus. At 40 pages, the current issue is one of the most ambitious in recent years. (As a contributor, I can hardly be objective. My guide to 9/11 was reproduced, I also did a book review and co-wrote the lead article with Carolyn Wilson entitled "Global Studies and Media Education: Survival skills for the New Millennium.") As I said in my guide, "If there was ever any doubt about the need for global studies, with or without media education, the horrific events of Sept. 11 clinched it." With 20 contributors to this issue, ranging from Douglas Rushkoff to Rose Pacatte, readers are offered an amazing range of interdisciplinary perspectives. I guarantee you and your colleagues will be impressed. Congratulations to the staff at National Telemidium Council for putting this together. (If you have read this far, have you considered taking out a membership?) National Telemedia Council, Inc. 1922 University Ave., Madison, WI 53705 (608) 218-1183 Ntelemedia@aol.com.

The International Journal of Media Education: Important new journal for media educators has just been launched

One of the criticisms of media education is that there is too little research being carried out and not enough compelling writing that would provoke useful debates and discussion. Of course, there are some media lit chat lines with some worthwhile exchanges and there are now Web sites and periodicals which have interesting lesson plans. What is missing is the in-depth look at issues and the opportunities to respond to important thinkers in the field. This situation is especially true in the United States where there is a nascent but fragile media education movement that can be alarmingly insular. In short, we should all be learning about the most productive classroom pedagogy's and many other areas which research might illuminate. To our rescue is Andrew Hart, professor at the University of Southampton who intends to fill the gap through the recently launched quarterly "The International Journal of Media Education" (IJME).



The editor indicates there will be four strands addressed: Media Products and Processes; Media Teachers and Teaching; Media Classrooms and Learning; and Connections between Media learning and Industrial Practices.



The first issue is 83 pages in length. It contains five articles and seven reviews. As an academic publication produced at low cost, there are no fancy photographs or graphics. Except for one, all the major articles are by UK scholars. Since this is only the first issue, we trust that there will be scholars and educators in other countries writing for subsequent issues.

North American media educators will surely ask what's in it for us? Well, to begin with, there is Robert Ferguson's brilliant, polemical lead article, "In Defense of Media Education." Most of the critics he engages with can be found in almost any country and he confronts them head-on. Tapping into his 30 years experience in the field, Ferguson cuts through some typical media studies liabilities: spot the sexism, spot the racism routine, and the downgrading of media pleasure. He writes, "For media education to be more than a mere inventory of media provision, it must be socially, aesthetically, politically involved."

Besides reviews of some important new books, other articles include, "Media Studies and the Establishment" by Andrew Goodwyn; "Texts and Contexts: Examining Media in English" by Alun Hicks; "Publish and be changed?: Making Sense of Visual Arts Education" by Dave Allen, and "The Paranoiac Space of the XFiles" by Jan Jagodzinski and Brigitte Hipfl. While not everything in IJME will be relevant to the classroom, there is still worthwhile information and insights throughout. The biggest liability for this promising journal is the prohibitive cost, e.g. overseas subscription is £50 for a private subscription. We wish Andrew good luck with this important venture.

Check the Web site for more details at www.trentham-books.co.uk/

Addendum



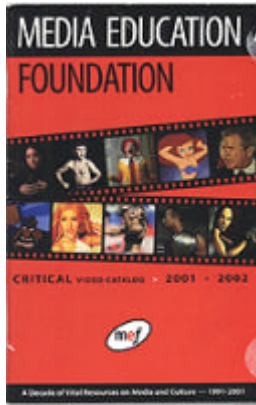
Through many international conferences and publications, we got to know Andrew very well. Sadly, we learnt this week that Andrew Hart died on January 13th. He made a major contribution to the development of media education. The launching of the new journal will serve as a fitting tribute to his work. He will be missed.

Media Education Foundation Critical Video Catalogue 2001 - 2002

Media educators can be grateful that there are several video resource companies to serve the needs of the changing classroom. The National Film Board has a solid collection ranging from the portrait of Noam Chomsky in *Manufacturing Consent* to a new CD-ROM, *Between the Lines*, which consists of a series of media projects in which students act as producer, editor and director. (It was conceived by Ontario media educator Neil Andersen). For those who want strong socio-political media criticism there are some impressive resources from California Newsreel, Paper Tiger Video and Media Education Foundation. For this bulletin, I would like to zero in on the Media Education Foundation. In the next bulletin, I will sample media education resources from Canada's National Film Board.



Celebrating its 10th anniversary, much of the Media Education Foundation's success is largely thanks to Sut Jhally, its dynamic founder and executive director who is also a professor of communications at the University of Massachusetts. Jhally gained undeserved notoriety for producing *Dream World*, a controversial work in which excerpts from 200 music videos were skillfully edited to demonstrate shocking, sexualized messages. Jhally has now produced over forty videos for the current catalogue, and fourteen are new.



Divided into four categories, the topics cover the socio-political domains of gender, race and class. Here are a few examples. Under "Media , Gender & Culture," there are *Killing us Softly* (#3) – advertising's image of women as presented by Jean Kilbourne, now a minor media celebrity because of this series – and *Tough Guise*, which addresses violence, media and the crisis in masculinity.

Under "Commercialism, Globalization & Media," there are *Toxic Sludge is Good For You: The Public Relations Industry Unspun* and *Pack of Lies: The Advertising of Tobacco*. Under "Race, Diversity, & Representation," there is Stuart Hall on *Representation and the Media* and Bell Hooks on cultural criticism and transformation. Under "Educational Strategies, Skills & Literacies," there are *Getting the Message Across: A video about Making Videos* and *Tomorrow's Children: Partnership of Education in Action* with Riane Eisler.

Typically, each video focuses on an important theme and uses experts – usually prominent academics – to present their analyses. These would include Jean Kilbourne, George Gerbner and Henry Giroux. (Nine of these star academics who figure in the videos are also listed as advisers to MEF.) Generally, throughout the videos there are suitable clips to support the themes. These are drawn from advertising, feature films, and television programs. There are superb video clips from films for the video *Mickey Mouse Monopoly* that illustrates the pervasive sexism. Then there is a plethora of sexist advertising sampled in the *Killing us Softly* series. Without this audio-visual support, we would be looking solely at talking heads, a deadly dull exercise, at least for high school students. (One video I looked at *Teen Sexuality in a Culture of Confusion*, primarily used voice-overs of advertising visuals; it proved to be an alienating experience.)

I must confess that it is very rewarding to see the academic bright lights such as Stuart Hall and Mary Pipher (*Reviving Ophelia*). Their personalities and strong beliefs powerfully emerge. An academic who projects an engaging image can be a real plus: Mary Pipher and Jackson Katz (*Tough Guise*) are compelling presenters. As a generalization, the academic commentators present a hard-hitting critique of the repressive ideology that pervades the dominant media. There is nothing here about the nature of pleasure, or liberatory, resistant readings, nor considerations about the artistry and aesthetics. And, I should add, that I didn't expect it from a resource that preaches a demanding politicized critical pedagogy, more suited for a college audience than high school. Many media teachers could make the case that the ideas emerging from the expert voices in these videos would be better organized pedagogically through Socratic teaching and student-directed activities which might elicit their own critical insights. (I would add, however, that I could see good academic Grade 12 classes relishing much of the material.) It is important to realize that many of these videos are being used by people who work in mental health clinics and transition shelters for abused women.

Clearly, there is an overwhelming density of ideas, impossible to absorb and work with at one, uninterrupted viewing. Teachers who use these videos in the classroom would be advised to find several places to stop the tape. Some of the videos have study guides which you can download from the Web site. They are well-organized and very thorough. For example, the one I looked at for *Tough Guise*, on the construction of masculinity, was a model of both student-directed and teacher-directed activities.



Finally, these videos are costly. (Assuming that school boards and not individual schools would be purchasing the videos, this may not be a big problem.) While there is a \$100.00 reduction in effect for the high school vs. college level prices, the typical cost is \$75.00 - \$125.00 (in US funds).

Sut Jhally and MEF should be congratulated for their pioneering efforts in producing these important resources. We look forward to learning about their new projects.

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Tel (413) 584-8500
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In Canada the distributor is Kinetic Video 511 Bloor St. W. Toronto M5S 1Y4 (416) 538-6613
www.kineticvideo.com.

Upcoming Events

Forum on 9/11 to be held in Toronto

What kind of debates and discussions are educators, especially media educators having about 9/11? Here is a description of the forum organized by the Association for Media Literacy in Toronto at The Ontario Institute for the Studies in Education for February 7th, 7.00 - 9:00 PM

"Responding to the New World Order After 9/11: Directions for Education, Media and Culture "

- How can people seeking a civil society effectively address a world in which globalization and the aftermath of 9/11 reveal tensions and contradictions in our public and private institutions?
- What will be the long term impact on our evolving culture?
- What should be the role of education, especially media education?

The panel participants include: Barrie Zwicker, media critic and host/producer of Vision TV's *Media File*; Rachel Giese, a social activist and weekly columnist for the *Toronto Star*; Carol Arcus a high school English and media teacher; Ali Mallah a social worker and President of the Canadian Arab Federation, Toronto Chapter. Watch for a report in the next bulletin.

The Final Word

Well, Media Educators, what videos do we need now?

In the spirit of this bulletin's focus on video resources for media education, what additional media education videos are needed or, if they exist, which ones haven't we heard about? What ingredients should they contain to make them worthwhile viewing and teaching resources?

Let me begin with one that is urgently needed: a solid documentary on ownership and control of the media. There would be interviews with some of the key global players such as Rupert Murdoch, Izzy Asper (Canada's media monopoly baron), Disney's Michael Eisner, Ted Turner for AOL Time-Warner-Turner. It would address the how's and why's of integrated marketing (see especially the Viacom corporation for the ideal model). Such a documentary would feature leading critics such as Mark Crispin Miller, Robert McChesney and Noam Chomsky.



What would be the important elements to be included in Future Videos made for Media Educators?

First, we would need to have a range of experts: media practitioners, producers, directors, editors, animation artists, with the judicious use of academics and cultural mandarins (e.g. Noam Chomsky, Douglas Rushkoff). One of the best models for conveying information in a lively and informative style is "The Merchants of Cool," the 30 minute PBS program seen in February 2001. It revealed a nice blend of elements: witnessing the marketing practitioners and 'cool' hunters at work with young people, together with a good balance of critical commentary.



There are some excellent commentators/academics, cultural workers, practitioners out there. Who would be some of the best? To get us thinking about who might be included in addition to the list of academic stars used for the Media Education Foundation series, here is my wish list to get the ball rolling.

- UK media educators Len Masterman, Cary Bazalgette, Robert Ferguson and David Buckingham debating the current needs and future directions for the media education movement.
- North American media educators debating key trends in the media classroom, from David Considine to Kathleen Tyner, from John Pungente to Carolyn Wilson.
- Paul Rutherford (professor at the University of Toronto) exploring the use of propaganda.
- Neil Postman: this well known and influential academic should face some dissenting critics regarding his attractive but rather regressive thesis about media and technology.
- Derrick De Kerkchove and Liss Jeffrey, (The McLuhan Program, University of Toronto) talking about the impact of media environments and the grammar of the media using the insights of their inspiring master, Marshall McLuhan.
- Clive Thompson, contributing editor to *Shift*, the provocative Canadian cyberculture magazine. Here is a lucid and articulate presenter on the impact of the new communication technologies.
- Sherry Turkle, (MIT) and author of *Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet* makes the case for the impact of using computers – especially for chat lines and identity formation.
- Linda Hunter, (University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada's answer to Jean Kilbourne), does gender analysis connected with media representation.
- Geoff Pevere (the articulate and versatile film critic of the *Toronto Star*, discussing movie trends and the role of popular culture.
- John Stauber, Centre for Media and Democracy, author of the important study *Toxic Sludge is Good For You* on the perils of the PR industry.
- Kalle Lasn, founder of *Adbusters* magazine and author of *Culture Jam*, talking about the success of culture jamming initiatives. He could be interviewed along with Naomi Klein who has a different perspective on the goals of protest.
- Gene Del Vecchio, a California marketer and persuasive author of *Creating Ever-Cool* about how to market effectively to 'tweens.
- Henry Jenkins, professor from MIT, author of *Textual Poaching* on the nature of fan culture and viewer response.
- Robert Fulford, Toronto-based cultural mandarin and author of *The Triumph of Narrative Style*, dealing with an expanded definition of narrativity which extends into today's media.
- Richard Siye (Toronto collage artist), on the values of "subvertising." He produced a recent video satirizing the quasi-religious dimensions of the shopping mall entitled *Age d'Or*.



- Robert Thompson, University of Syracuse, on reading television drama and understanding television trends. Thompson avoids typical media bashing and his enthusiasm for exemplary practice is contagious.
- Naomi Klein, journalist and activist who wrote the best selling book *No Logo* about branding, culture jamming, globalization and the role of protests.
- Katherine MacDonnell, Toronto author of *Kid Culture* and the recently published *Honey, We forgot the Kids* on understanding the response of 'tweens' to popular culture, from *Pokemon* to Harry Potter.
- Douglas Rushkoff, the charismatic, New York cyberguru and author of *Playing the Future*, talking about cyberkids and their interactive use of the new media

Dear reader, who else should be given a profile? Our main criterion should be that the person has something worthwhile to say and can communicate effectively on television. Send me your suggestions.

What key ingredients should pervade quality media education videos?

- Use of comedy, satire and parody. A few examples might include: Norm Macdonald, Dave Foley (*News Radio*), Elvira Kurt, Jon Stewart (*The Daily Show*) and Richard Slye (a Toronto-based artist who uses collages of hamburgers to signify the oppressive nature of much popular culture).
- Sequences using the "making-of" approach. We are all familiar with examples from *Star Wars*, *Jurassic Park* and *Titanic* showing viewers behind-the-scenes information. *Movie Television* from CHUM Ltd in Toronto is, in part, already doing this for movies.
- Use of conflicting points of view/debates: e.g. Neil Postman on the death of discourse vs. someone talking about potential empowerment.
- Using controversy over moral panics – violence, drugs, sexual representation – but showing a variety of perspectives to move us beyond anger, victimization and excessive protectionism.
- The necessity of adopting an expanded definition of media that would embrace media environments and pop culture artifacts; cross-media marketing; the role of fast-food, shopping malls and theme parks; the culture of toys and other pop culture icons; the role of fashion and trend tracking (see books by Faith Popcorn).

N.B. In the Association for Media Literacy, we have long argued for the use of key concepts of media to frame our media discussions. (Regrettably these have too often been watered down so that their original intention gets lost)

One important video that is needed would center on the notion that "All media are constructions." Such a video would show a variety of ways that media texts are constructed through editing, use of music, use of lighting, technical codes (camera angles, zooms etc.) Vs symbolic codes (such as a clenched fist); how even the media coverage of riots will take a point of view (see the film *The Edit*). Examples might include the saga of Elian Gonzale, the Cuban boy hero; and the conduct of the soldiers at OKA, Quebec in the big stare-down confrontation.

Another program would focus on the role of audience including a.) target audience and demographics and b.) how individuals and groups make sense of a media text and the valuable role of fan culture. (See the important work of Henry Jenkins in his book *Textual Poaching*.) This program would look at the role of media spectacles in popular culture and some of the key players: Princess Diana, Monica Lewinski, Elian Gonzales, O.J. Simpson, and Osama Bin Laden.

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.

