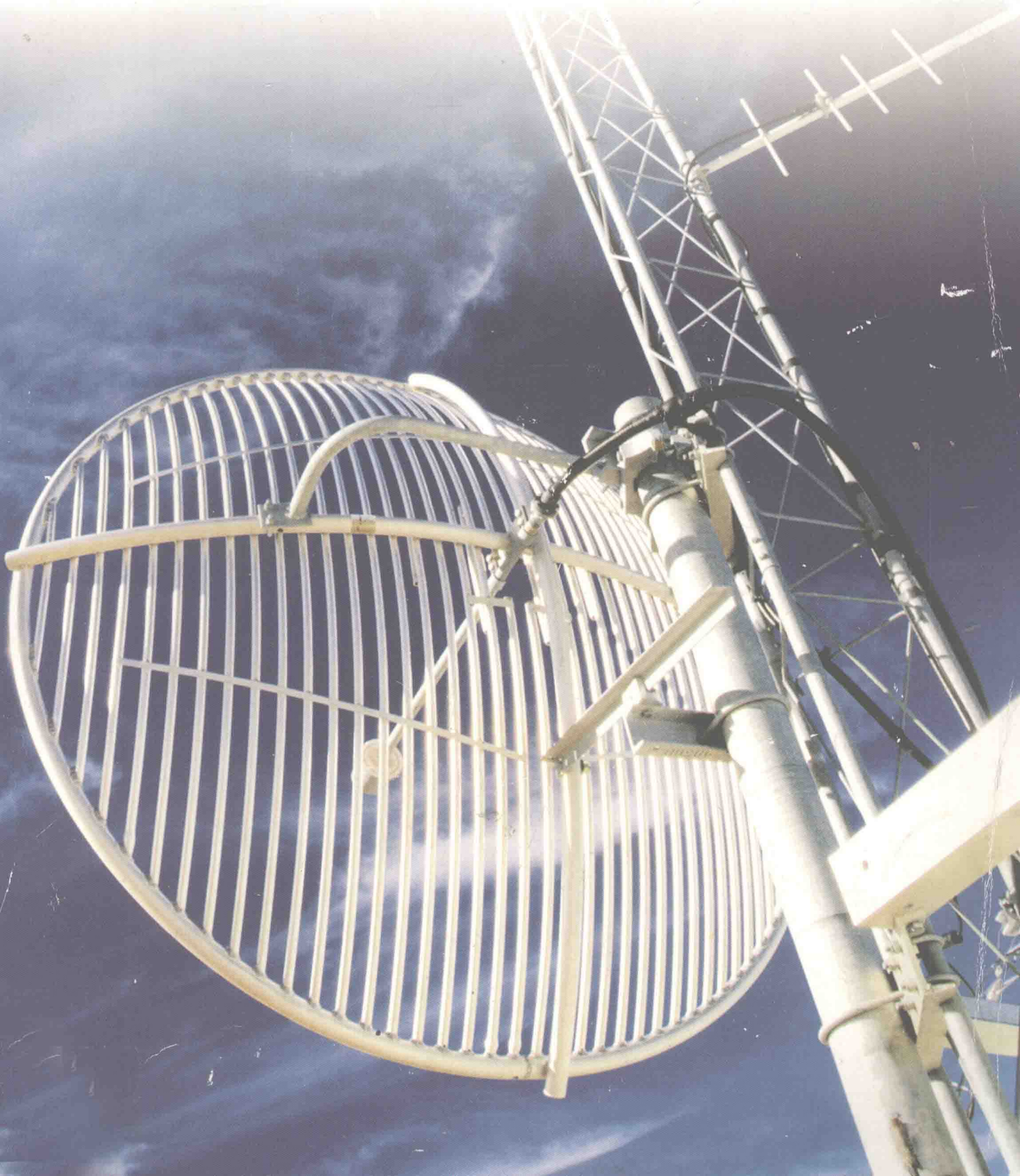


**A·N·N·U·A·L E·D·I·T·I·O·N·S**

# **Mass Media**

**02/03**



# Mass Media

02/03

*Ninth Edition*

## **EDITOR**

**Joan Gorham**

*West Virginia University*

Joan Gorham completed her undergraduate work at the University of Wisconsin and received master's and doctoral degrees from Northern Illinois University. She is currently associate dean for academic affairs in the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences and a professor of communication studies at West Virginia University. Dr. Gorham is the author of *Commercial Media and Classroom Teaching* and has published numerous articles on communication in instruction. She has taught classes dealing with mass media and media literacy at the high school and college levels, as well as for teachers throughout the state of West Virginia.

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# To the Reader

In publishing ANNUAL EDITIONS we recognize the enormous role played by the magazines, newspapers, and journals of the public press in providing current, first-rate educational information in a broad spectrum of interest areas. Many of these articles are appropriate for students, researchers, and professionals seeking accurate, current material to help bridge the gap between principles and theories and the real world. These articles, however, become more useful for study when those of lasting value are carefully collected, organized, indexed, and reproduced in a low-cost format, which provides easy and permanent access when the material is needed. That is the role played by ANNUAL EDITIONS.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, in 1999 the average American spent 3,405 hours—the equivalent of 142 days or 85 40-hour work weeks—consuming mass media messages. Of these hours, 1,548 were spent watching television (690 hours of that was network programming), 1,076 listening to the radio, 313 listening to recorded music, 155 reading newspapers, 97 reading books, 80 reading magazines, 56 watching videos at home, 12 watching movies in theaters, 33 playing home video games, and 33 on the Internet. Along with school, the church, and the family, mass media have great potential for shaping American society. And, just as schools and families have been blamed for a variety of society's ills, these media have taken their fair share of criticism.

The mass media are a part of the fabric of American society. Learning how to evaluate media messages critically—asking, Who created this message? What is its intent? How objective is it? How does what I am seeing or hearing reflect and/or shape real-world realities?—is a part of being literate in today's society. The organization of these readings reflects this media literacy perspective. Unit 1 introduces concerns that have been raised about the impact of mass media use and content on children, on daily living, and on society. Unit 2 explores media as sources of news and information, along with the public's changing attitude toward news coverage. Only time will tell whether the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., have forever changed both how the media delivers and how the audience responds to news stories. Unit 3 introduces perspectives on media ownership, regulation, and ethics. Unit 4 addresses the relationships among advertisers, media content, and popular culture. Finally, unit 5 takes a look ahead at the shape of tomorrow's media.

This anthology provides several features that should be very helpful to the reader. These include *table of contents* abstracts, a *topic guide* that suggests how the articles relate to course studies, a list of relevant *World Wide Web* sites that can be used to further explore the topics, and a *test your knowledge* form to access how the articles will enhance text information.

You will find that the writers included in this collection frequently use television as a reference point in describing how mass media messages are shaped and interpreted. This is a reflection of the media focus of the public press

and of television's rapid acceptance and continuing presence as the "massest" of mass media. Most of the articles, even those that are primarily descriptive, include an editorial viewpoint and draw conclusions or make recommendations with which you may disagree. These editorial viewpoints are more frequently critical than they are complimentary. They are not necessarily my opinions and should not necessarily become yours. I encourage you to debate these issues, drawing from the information and insights provided in the readings as well as from your own experiences as a media consumer. If you are an "average" American, you have spent a great deal of time with mass media. Your own observations have as much value as those of the writers whose work is included in these pages.

The articles selected for inclusion in this ninth edition of *Annual Editions: Mass Media* reflect three issues of particular concern at the beginning of the new millennium. The first is the ongoing debate over the degree to which the U.S. government and legal system should rightfully be involved in regulating either media messengers or media messages. Of particular concern is media violence and the degree to which violent content is available to, even marketed to, children. The second is an ongoing debate over how news is selected and packaged, and over the appropriate response to rising disinterest in "hard news" among media consumers. The third is a heightened awareness of a media landscape profoundly altered by corporate mergers and technological change.

As always, those involved in producing this anthology are sincerely committed to including articles that are timely, informative, and interesting reading. We value your feedback and encourage you to complete and return the postage-paid *article rating form* on the last page of the book to share your suggestions and let us know your opinions.



Joan Gorham

Editor

# Topic Guide

This topic guide suggests how the selections in this book relate to the subjects covered in your course. You may want to use the topics listed on these pages to search the Web more easily.

On the following pages a number of Web sites have been gathered specifically for this book. They are arranged to reflect the units of this *Annual Edition*. You can link to these sites by going to the DUSHKIN ONLINE support site at <http://www.dushkin.com/online/>.

**ALL THE ARTICLES THAT RELATE TO EACH TOPIC ARE LISTED BELOW THE BOLD-FACED TERM.**

## Agenda setting

- 8. Can TV Improve Us?
- 13. Nightly News Blues
- 14. You Can't Report What You Don't Pursue
- 15. Where TV Has Teeth
- 18. Blackout on the Dial
- 20. A Tale of Two Massacres
- 31. Nice TV

## Catharsis theory

- 4. Media Violence and the American Public: Scientific Facts Versus Media Misinformation

## Children and media

- 1. TV Without Guilt: Group Portrait With Television
- 2. The Suddenly Crowded Queen-Size Bed: A Wake-Up Call to TV and Movie Fright
- 9. Class Clowns

## Credibility

- 19. Details, Details
- 28. Ethically Challenged

## Cultivation theory

- 2. The Suddenly Crowded Queen-Size Bed: A Wake-Up Call to TV and Movie Fright
- 4. Media Violence and the American Public: Scientific Facts Versus Media Misinformation
- 20. A Tale of Two Massacres

## Ethics

- 20. A Tale of Two Massacres
- 28. Ethically Challenged
- 29. The Reporter and the Hit Man
- 32. Primetime Pushers

## Fact checking

- 21. The Real Computer Virus
- 28. Ethically Challenged

## Family values

- 1. TV Without Guilt: Group Portrait With Television
- 31. Nice TV

## Federal Communications Commission (FCC)

- 4. Media Violence and the American Public: Scientific Facts Versus Media Misinformation
- 18. Blackout on the Dial
- 22. Unshackling Big Media
- 23. Taming the TV Giants
- 24. Media Money: How Corporate Spending Blocked Political Ad Reform & Other Stories of Influence
- 27. The Children's Television Act in Its Second Year

## Gatekeeping

- 14. You Can't Report What You Don't Pursue
- 20. A Tale of Two Massacres

- 29. The Reporter and the Hit Man

## Government influence

- 22. Unshackling Big Media
- 26. Washington to Hollywood: Oh, Behave
- 27. The Children's Television Act in Its Second Year

## Media

- 8. Can TV Improve Us?
- 16. The Media and Politics: It's More Than the News
- 18. Blackout on the Dial
- 27. The Children's Television Act in Its Second Year

## Media effects research

- 2. The Suddenly Crowded Queen-Size Bed: A Wake-Up Call to TV and Movie Fright
- 4. Media Violence and the American Public: Scientific Facts Versus Media Misinformation
- 8. Can TV Improve Us?

## Media ownership

- 14. You Can't Report What You Don't Pursue
- 22. Unshackling Big Media
- 23. Taming the TV Giants
- 24. Media Money: How Corporate Spending Blocked Political Ad Reform & Other Stories of Influence
- 25. The Reinvention of PBS

## Media sex

- 8. Can TV Improve Us?

## Media use

- 1. TV Without Guilt: Group Portrait With Television
- 2. The Suddenly Crowded Queen-Size Bed: A Wake-Up Call to TV and Movie Fright
- 12. Explaining the Rage
- 13. Nightly News Blues

## Media violence

- 2. The Suddenly Crowded Queen-Size Bed: A Wake-Up Call to TV and Movie Fright
- 4. Media Violence and the American Public: Scientific Facts Versus Media Misinformation
- 5. The Whipping Boy
- 24. Media Money: How Corporate Spending Blocked Political Ad Reform & Other Stories of Influence

## Minority images

- 6. The Color of Ratings
- 7. Gimme a Break!
- 20. A Tale of Two Massacres

## Movies

- 2. The Suddenly Crowded Queen-Size Bed: A Wake-Up Call to TV and Movie Fright
- 34. The Disc That Saved Hollywood

## **MTV**

- 3. "I Want Your Sex"
- 26. Washington to Hollywood: Oh, Behave
- 35. Resurgent Radio
- 36. Broadband's Coming Attractions

## **Narrowcasting**

- 35. Resurgent Radio
- 38. Exposure to Other Viewpoints Is Vital to Democracy

## **News reporting**

- 6. The Color of Ratings
- 10. Meeting the Challenge
- 11. "We Have a Breaking Story ..."
- 12. Explaining the Rage
- 13. Nightly News Blues
- 14. You Can't Report What You Don't Pursue
- 15. Where TV Has Teeth
- 16. The Media and Politics: It's More Than the News
- 18. Blackout on the Dial
- 19. Details, Details
- 20. A Tale of Two Massacres
- 21. The Real Computer Virus
- 28. Ethically Challenged
- 29. The Reporter and the Hit Man
- 37. Ethical Challenges in Online News

## **New technologies**

- 16. The Media and Politics: It's More Than the News
- 21. The Real Computer Virus
- 23. Taming the TV Giants
- 33. A Tough Sell
- 34. The Disc That Saved Hollywood
- 37. Ethical Challenges in Online News
- 38. Exposure to Other Viewpoints Is Vital to Democracy

## **Political coverage**

- 12. Explaining the Rage
- 16. The Media and Politics: It's More Than the News
- 17. Playing Favorites?
- 24. Media Money: How Corporate Spending Blocked Political Ad Reform & Other Stories of Influence

## **Prosocial effects**

- 8. Can TV Improve Us?
- 25. The Reinvention of PBS
- 27. The Children's Television Act in Its Second Year
- 31. Nice TV

## **Public broadcasting**

- 25. The Reinvention of PBS
- 35. Resurgent Radio

## **Radio**

- 18. Blackout on the Dial
- 35. Resurgent Radio

## **Ratings**

- 6. The Color of Ratings
- 13. Nightly News Blues
- 26. Washington to Hollywood: Oh, Behave
- 31. Nice TV

## **Regulatory policy**

- 23. Taming the TV Giants
- 24. Media Money: How Corporate Spending Blocked Political Ad Reform & Other Stories of Influence
- 26. Washington to Hollywood: Oh, Behave
- 27. The Children's Television Act in Its Second Year
- 32. Primetime Pushers

## **Right to privacy**

- 14. You Can't Report What You Don't Pursue
- 29. The Reporter and the Hit Man

## **Social learning theory**

- 3. "I Want Your Sex"
- 8. Can TV Improve Us?

## **Soft news**

- 13. Nightly News Blues
- 14. You Can't Report What You Don't Pursue

## **Target marketing**

- 28. Ethically Challenged
- 29. The Reporter and the Hit Man
- 30. Inventing the Commercial
- 31. Nice TV
- 32. Primetime Pushers

## **Television**

- 1. TV Without Guilt: Group Portrait With Television
- 2. The Suddenly Crowded Queen-Size Bed: A Wake-Up Call to TV and Movie Fright
- 5. The Whipping Boy
- 6. The Color of Ratings
- 7. Gimme a Break!
- 8. Can TV Improve Us?
- 9. Class Clowns
- 10. Meeting the Challenge
- 11. "We Have a Breaking Story ..."
- 13. Nightly News Blues
- 15. Where TV Has Teeth
- 20. A Tale of Two Massacres
- 23. Taming the TV Giants
- 25. The Reinvention of PBS
- 26. Washington to Hollywood: Oh, Behave
- 27. The Children's Television Act in Its Second Year
- 30. Inventing the Commercial
- 31. Nice TV

# World Wide Web Sites

The following World Wide Web sites have been carefully researched and selected to support the articles found in this reader. The easiest way to access these selected sites is to go to our DUSHKIN ONLINE support site at <http://www.dushkin.com/online/>.

## AE: Mass Media 02/03

The following sites were available at the time of publication. Visit our Web site—we update DUSHKIN ONLINE regularly to reflect any changes.

### General Sources

#### General Communication Resources

<http://www.uiowa.edu/~commstud/resources/scholarsdesktop/>

An encyclopedic resource related to a host of mass communication issues, this site is maintained by the University of Iowa's Department of Communication Studies. It provides excellent links covering advertising, cultural studies, digital media, film, gender issues, and media studies.

#### The Media and Communications Studies Site

<http://www.aber.ac.uk/~mcswww/Functions/medmenu.html>

Many Internet resources covering everything from advertising to the impact of the media on perceptions of gender, ethnicity, and class can be found here. Access the home page of the Association for Media, Communication, and Cultural Studies, a British organization, and the online International Journal of Media and Communication Studies.

#### Netcomtalk/Boston University

<http://web.bu.edu/COM/communication.html>

The College of Communication at Boston University presents this multimedia publication site for daily perusal of a wide variety of news items and topics in media and communications. Click on "COMNews Today" for the latest happenings in mass media.

#### NewsPlace

<http://www.niu.edu/newsplace/>

This site of Professor Avi Bass from Northern Illinois University will lead you to a wealth of resources of interest in the study of mass media, such as international perspectives on censorship. Links to government, corporate, and other organizations are provided.

#### Resources for Journalists

<http://www.usu.edu/~communic/resources/links.html>

This list of online resources for journalists covers general sites and includes a site of the week and helpful Web pages that reporters in the technological age should know about. Web search tools, outline style guides and writing assistance, and careers guidance and jobs are also available here.

#### Writers Guild of America

<http://www.wga.org>

The Writer's Guild of America is the union for media entertainment writers. The nonmember areas of this site offer useful information for aspiring writers. There is also an excellent links section.

## UNIT 1: Living With Media

#### Center for Media Education

<http://www.cme.org>

Open this site to explore the impact on society of television and other electronic media through discussion of such topics as the effects of television violence, television and online advertising, and media images.

#### Children and the Media Program

<http://www.childrennow.org>

Children Now's site provides access to a variety of views on the impact of media on children. Public opinion surveys of young people, independent research on television and print media, industry conference proceedings, and more are available. An Internet resource list is included.

#### Freedom Forum

<http://www.freedomforum.org>

The Freedom Forum is a nonpartisan, international foundation dedicated to free press, free speech, and free spirit for all people. Its mission is to help the public and the news media understand one another better. The press watch area of this site is very intriguing.

#### Geocities

<http://www.geocities.com/Wellesley/1031/#media/>

This site presents a negative perspective on how the media portray women. By clicking on its many links, you can find such varied resources as an archive on misogynistic quotes and a discussion of newspeak and doublethink.

#### National Coalition on Television Violence

<http://www.nctvv.org>

NCTV's home page will lead to definitions of the problem of television violence, explanations of how it affects people and what can be done about it, a bibliography, and a list of related organizations.

## UNIT 2: Covering News

#### Cable News Network

<http://www.cnn.com>

CNN's interactive site is considered to be an excellent online news site.

#### Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting

<http://www.fair.org>

FAIR, a U.S. media watch group, offers well-documented criticism of media bias and censorship. It advocates structural reform to break up the dominant media conglomerates. Parts of the site are currently under construction.

#### National Association of Broadcasters (NAB)

<http://www.nab.org>

NAB is dedicated to promoting the interests of broadcasters. Information on television parental guidelines, laws and regulations, and research on current issues are available.

#### Organization of News Ombudsmen (ONO)

<http://www.infi.net/ono/>

This ONO page provides links to journalism Web sites. ONO works to aid in the wider establishment of the position of news ombudsmen on newspapers and elsewhere in the media and to provide a forum for the interchange of experiences, information, and ideas among news ombudsmen.

#### Television News Archive

<http://tvnews.vanderbilt.edu>

By browsing through this Vanderbilt University site, you can review national U.S. television news broadcasts from 1968



onward. It will give you insight into how the broadcast news industry has changed over the years and what trends define the industry today.

## UNIT 3: Players and Guides

### The Electronic Journalist

<http://spj.org>

This site for *The Electronic Journalist*, an online service of the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ), will lead you to a number of articles having to do with journalistic ethics, accuracy, and other topics.

### Federal Communications Commission (FCC)

<http://www.fcc.gov>

The FCC is an independent U.S. government agency whose mission "is to encourage competition in all communications markets and to protect the public interest." Access to information about such topics as laws regulating the media is possible.

### Index on Censorship

[http://www.oneworld.org/index\\_oc/](http://www.oneworld.org/index_oc/)

This Great Britain site provides information and many international links to show "how free speech affects the political issues of the moment."

### International Television Association

<http://www.itva.org>

The home page of the International Television Association, which describes itself as "the premier association for video, multimedia and film professionals," is useful for links to other media resources, discussions of ethical topics, explanation of such issues as "fair use," and debate over the impact of the Internet.

### Internet Law Library

<http://www.phillylawyer.com/94.htm>

Featuring abundant resources in communications law, this site includes the most recent developments on this subject.

### Michigan Press Photographers Association (MPPA)

<http://www.mppa.org>

Ethical issues in photojournalism are featured at this site sponsored by the MPPA.

### Poynter Online: Research Center

<http://www.poynter.org>

The Poynter Institute for Media Studies provides extensive links to information and resources on media ethics, media writing and editing, visual journalism, and much more. Many bibliographies and Web sites are included.

### World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

<http://www.wipo.org/eng/>

Click on the links at WIPO's home page to find general information on WIPO and intellectual property, publications and documents, international classifications, and more.

## UNIT 4: A Word From Our Sponsor

### Advertising Age

<http://adage.com>

Gain access to articles and features about media advertising, such as a history of television advertising, at this site.

### History of Cable

[http://twcnny.com/about\\_us/history/index.cfm](http://twcnny.com/about_us/history/index.cfm)

This site will provide information as to how and why cable television was started. Go from here back to the Pennsylvania Cable & Telecommunication Association home page.

### USA DATA

<http://www.usadata.com/usadata/general.htm>

Browse through this site of a "media reporting" company to get a sense of the elements involved in programming and advertising decisions made for television and other media. USA DATA notes its ability to provide clients "with reliable market and consumer behavior-specific data."

## UNIT 5: The Shape of Things to Come

### Citizens Internet Empowerment Coalition (CIEC)

<http://www.ciec.org>

CIEC is a broad group of Internet users, library groups, publishers, online service providers, and civil liberties groups working to preserve the First Amendment and ensure the future of free expression. Find discussions of the Communications Decency Act and Internet-related topics here.

### Educause

<http://www.educause.edu>

Open this site for an e-mailed summary of info-tech news from various major publications and for many other resources meant to facilitate the introduction, use, access to, and management of information resources in teaching, learning, scholarship, and research.

### Link, Digital Campus

<http://www.linkmag.com>

This interactive "campus magazine" provides current news in education, analysis of current events, and much more of interest to students.

We highly recommend that you review our Web site for expanded information and our other product lines. We are continually updating and adding links to our Web site in order to offer you the most usable and useful information that will support and expand the value of your Annual Editions. You can reach us at: <http://www.dushkin.com/annualeditions/>.

# UNIT 1

# Living With Media

## Unit Selections

1. **TV Without Guilt: Group Portrait With Television**, David Finkel
2. **The Suddenly Crowded Queen-Size Bed: A Wake-Up Call to TV and Movie Fright**, Joanne Cantor
3. **"I Want Your Sex"**, Eric Nuzum
4. **Media Violence and the American Public: Scientific Facts Versus Media Misinformation**, Brad J. Bushman and Craig A. Anderson
5. **The Whipping Boy**, Jib Fowles
6. **The Color of Ratings**, Av Westin
7. **Gimme a Break!** John McWhorter
8. **Can TV Improve Us?** Jane Rosenzweig
9. **Class Clowns**, Joshua Gamson

## Key Points to Consider

- After reading the unit's first article, compare your family's use of television with the way television was used in the Delmar household. Beyond the question of quantity of television watching, how accurately do you feel this portrait reflects the typical family's relationship with television? Explain.
- In your opinion, does media content primarily reflect social reality or does it shape social reality? Should it do otherwise? Why or why not?
- Do you agree with criticisms of media portrayals of women, men, minorities, sexuality, and violence? Defend your answer. To what degree can scientific research resolve questions of effects of such portrayals? What positive examples of each can you think of?



**Links: [www.dushkin.com/online/](http://www.dushkin.com/online/)**

These sites are annotated in the World Wide Web pages.

### Center for Media Education

<http://www.cme.org>

### Children and the Media Program

<http://www.childrennow.org>

### Freedom Forum

<http://www.freedomforum.org>

### Geocities

<http://www.geocities.com/Wellesley/1031/#media/>

### National Coalition on Television Violence

<http://www.nctvv.org>

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## UNIT 1 Living With Media

Nine articles discuss the impact of mass media on daily living and on society.

<b>Unit Overview</b>	xiv
1. <b>TV Without Guilt: Group Portrait With Television</b> , David Finkel, <i>The Washington Post Magazine</i> , January 16, 1994 David Finkel presents a portrait of life in one American family—the Delmars—and <b>the impact of television</b> on the rhythms of its <b>daily routines</b> .	2
2. <b>The Suddenly Crowded Queen-Size Bed: A Wake-Up Call to TV and Movie Fright</b> , Joanne Cantor, from <i>Mommy, I'm Scared: How TV and Movies Frighten Children and What We Can Do to Protect Them</i> , Harcourt Brace & Company, 1998 Joanne Cantor argues that <b>television and movies</b> create <b>feelings of fear</b> and anxiety responses that persist long after children view traumatic content.	9
3. <b>"I Want Your Sex"</b> , Eric Nuzum, <i>Parental Advisory: Music Censorship in America</i> , Perennial/HarperCollins Publishers, 2001 Through the decades, critics of <b>rock and roll music</b> have claimed that there is a connection between listening to rock and the apparent decay of <b>sexual morals</b> . Eric Nuzum traces the history of rock, its themes, and its critics.	16
4. <b>Media Violence and the American Public: Scientific Facts Versus Media Misinformation</b> , Brad J. Bushman and Craig A. Anderson, <i>American Psychologist</i> , June/July 2001 Over the past 50 years, news reports of the link between <b>media violence and aggression</b> have changed from claims of a weak link to a moderate link and back to a weak link. In this article, two Iowa State University researchers analyze <b>statistical findings of scientific studies</b> , and they conclude that the link, which has strengthened over time, is clearly a positive one.	21
5. <b>The Whipping Boy</b> , Jib Fowles, <i>Reason</i> , March 2001 Jib Fowles argues that the belief that <b>television violence</b> causes hostile behavior is "a whipping boy, a stand-in for other clashes, real or imagined." This article summarizes <b>social conflicts</b> that contribute to <b>misdirected antitelevision violence crusades</b> .	34
6. <b>The Color of Ratings</b> , Av Westin, <i>Brill's Content</i> , April 2001 A veteran broadcaster interviews television news executives, producers, correspondents, and crew and concludes that in a <b>ratings-obsessed</b> management culture, stories about <b>minorities</b> are routinely rejected.	40
7. <b>Gimme a Break!</b> , John McWhorter, <i>The New Republic</i> , March 5, 2001 In his review of Donald Bogle's book <i>Primetime Blues: African Americans on Network Television</i> , John McWhorter provides a history of television's portrayal of <b>black characters and black issues</b> across the last half century. He concludes that there are clear signs that <b>the color line is dissolving</b> .	46

The concepts in bold italics are developed in the article. For further expansion, please refer to the Topic Guide and the Index.

8. **Can TV Improve Us?**, Jane Rosenzweig, *The American Prospect*, July/August 1999 ✓

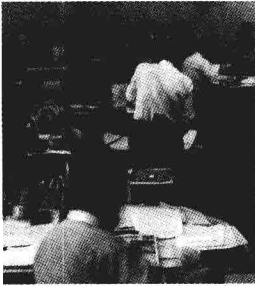
Beginning with a case study of television's role in the **designated driver campaign**, Jane Rosenzweig contends that television content can indeed result in **positive feedforward effects**. Media have power to educate and influence, and **advocacy groups** are most effective when they are working with television rather than protesting against it.

53

9. **Class Clowns**, Joshua Gamson, *The American Prospect*, April 23, 2001

Joshua Gamson provides a brief analysis of *The Oblongs* as comic **social commentary aimed at children** via **cartoons**. The article raises implicit questions regarding **feedforward, feedback, satire, and taste**. ✓

58



## UNIT 2

### Covering News

The twelve articles in this unit provide critical perspectives on news gathering and how it is delivered to the public.

#### Unit Overview

60

10. **Meeting the Challenge**, Marc Fisher, *American Journalism Review*, October 2001

When the New York World Trade Center and the Pentagon were attacked on **September 11, 2001**, the world was caught totally by surprise. The **American news media** was able to respond in an impressive and effective way, and covered the horrific events on a real-time basis.

62

11. **"We Have a Breaking Story . . ."**, Lori Robertson, *American Journalism Review*, October 2001 ✓

Many Americans found out about the airplane attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on **September 11, 2001**, on the network morning shows, which handled news of the tragedy very effectively. This article examines how **the television media** covered the unfolding of this horrifying event.

65

12. **Explaining the Rage**, Alina Tugend, *American Journalism Review*, December 2001

In this article, Alina Tugend explores how well the media in the United States have done in analyzing the **reasons why much of the Muslim world hates us**. She finds a plus in the events of September 11, 2001, in the fact that more attention is being paid to events in the rest of the world by both American journalists and readers.

68

13. **Nightly News Blues**, Paul Farhi, *American Journalism Review*, June 2001

Paul Farhi argues that in the face of fragmentation of viewership across media outlets, nightly **network news** retains a remarkably valuable position of **media reach**. The article summarizes history, pressures, and **trends in news coverage**.

71

14. **You Can't Report What You Don't Pursue**, Trudy Lieberman, *Columbia Journalism Review*, May/June 2000

Trudy Lieberman focuses on **self-censorship** among news writers. She examines potential effects of concentrated **ownership**, **agenda-setting** priorities, avoidance of "dull or complicated" topics, and **access to and protection of sources**.

75

15. **Where TV Has Teeth**, Neil Hickey, *Columbia Journalism Review*, May/June 2001

Neil Hickey looks at **investigative journalism** and its yield of outstanding, expensive, time-consuming efforts that have the potential of triggering significant **social change**.

80



16. **The Media and Politics: It's More Than the News**, Steve Bell, *USA Today Magazine (Society for the Advancement of Education)*, March 2001  
This article looks at changes in **how media covers politics** and how candidates increasingly use the media, including how they **bypass traditional news media** to gain attention and massage their images. 86
17. **Playing Favorites?**, Sharyn Wizda, *American Journalism Review*, January/February 2001  
Sharyn Wizda examines criticisms of **liberal bias** in **political campaign coverage**, from selection of **photos** to crafting headlines to distinguishing between news and editorial copy. 90
18. **Blackout on the Dial**, Marc Fisher, *American Journalism Review*, June 1998  
**Radio** stations are increasingly going news-free, **outsourcing news**, or defining "news" as Howard Stern interviews. Marc Fisher describes outsourcing logistics, causes, and effects. 94
19. **Details, Details**, Brad Reagan, *American Journalism Review*, January/February 2000  
Brad Reagan explains the meticulous effort devoted to **research** by writers whose techniques produce imaginative, technically accurate, and thoroughly documented stories that fall into the broad category of **literary journalism**. 101
20. **A Tale of Two Massacres**, Judith Sheppard, *American Journalism Review*, October 1999  
Judith Sheppard looks at **gatekeeping** from the perspective of analyzing coverage of two murders in Atlanta. One story was picked up nationally; the other was not. Sheppard questions whether **race** and **resonance** factors affected coverage decisions. 107
21. **The Real Computer Virus**, Carl M. Cannon, *American Journalism Review*, April 2001  
The **Internet** provides access to an immense cache of information that anyone, including reporters, can acquire--and that anyone can post. Journalists have not been immune to picking up and passing on **misinformation**. This article examines the case for and state of **fact checking**. 112



## UNIT 3

### Players and Guides

Eight selections explore how media ownership, regulatory policy, legal rulings, and ethical guidelines shape the media landscape.

- |   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| <p><b>Unit Overview</b></p>   | <p><b>118</b></p> |
| <p>22. <b>Unshackling Big Media</b>, Neil Hickey, <i>Columbia Journalism Review</i>, July/August 2001<br/>Michael Powell, the new chairman of the <b>Federal Communications Commission</b>, is looking hard at rules limiting <b>media ownership</b>. Neil Hickey examines arguments for and against ownership <b>deregulation</b>.</p>   | <p><b>120</b></p> |
| <p>23. <b>Taming the TV Giants</b>, Steven Brill, <i>Brill's Content</i>, July/August 2000<br/>Steven Brill discusses ownership and business practices in <b>cable television</b>, including the effects of natural monopolies, "<b>must carry</b>" rules, and the relationship between <b>cable networks and cable operators</b>.</p>  | <p><b>125</b></p> |
| <p>24. <b>Media Money: How Corporate Spending Blocked Political Ad Reform &amp; Other Stories of Influence</b>, Charles Lewis, <i>Columbia Journalism Review</i>, September/October 2000<br/>Charles Lewis examines the increasing <b>influence of the media industry</b> on <b>FCC policy</b> and the progress of <b>legislation</b> dealing with issues such as intellectual property, violence, "must carry" provisions, media ownership, and political advertising.</p> | <p><b>131</b></p> |

The concepts in bold italics are developed in the article. For further expansion, please refer to the Topic Guide and the Index.

25. **The Reinvention of PBS**, Gay Jerve, *Brill's Content*, April 2001  
The **Public Broadcasting Service** is not a network; it is a private nonprofit corporation owned and operated by 347 local affiliate stations, with a "bottom up" rather than a "top down" management model. This article provides insight into how PBS works and how it fits into the current broadcasting landscape. 138
26. **Washington to Hollywood: Oh, Behave**, Richard Lacayo, *Time*, September 25, 2000  
In the fall of 2000, the **Federal Trade Commission** took on Hollywood for its **marketing of violent products** to children. Richard Lacayo discusses the effectiveness of **content labeling and rating practices**, as well as the reach of **First Amendment protection** of free speech. 145
27. **The Children's Television Act in Its Second Year**, *InfoActive Kids*, Spring 1999  
The **Children's Television Act** is intended to improve the quality of children's educational programming. This article describes the provisions of the act and analyzes its effects on **program scheduling and content**. 148
28. **Ethically Challenged**, Lori Robertson, *American Journalism Review*, March 2001  
Lori Robertson looks at recent cases of **plagiarism and fabrication** in news reporting, exploring why reporters cross the line, describing **fact-checking policies**, and reporting on the potential consequences of cut-and-paste journalism. 157
29. **The Reporter and the Hit Man**, Alicia C. Shepard, *American Journalism Review*, April 2001  
Alicia Shepard traces a reporter's struggle with an **off-the-record** confession, balancing the press's obligation to inform the public against its responsibility to protect the **confidentiality of sources**. 165

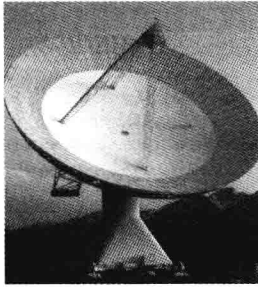


## UNIT 4

### A Word From Our Sponsor

In this section, four selections explore relationships among financial backers, advertising, and media content.

- Unit Overview** 174
30. **Inventing the Commercial**, Harry Matthei, *American Heritage*, May/June 1997  
Advertising veteran Harry Matthei traces the **history of television advertising** from "illegal" commercials of the 1930s, the first "legal" ads of the 1940s, the Keds Cheerleaders, and the challenges of producing ads for live television to the emergence of hard-sell advertising and contemporary advertising strategies. 176
  31. **Nice TV**, Jim Edwards, *Brill's Content*, March 2001  
Unhappy with the themes in primetime television, a group of powerful advertisers has begun to fund script development of **family-friendly programs**. This article provides insight into the **Family Forum's** effects on **product placement** as well as on program content. 185
  32. **Primetime Pushers**, Lisa Belkin, *Mother Jones*, March/April 2001  
Lisa Belkin analyzes the outcome of a decade of lobbying by advertising agencies, pharmaceutical companies, and television networks that resulted in the lifting of **Federal Drug Administration** restrictions on **"direct-to-consumer" advertising** of prescription medications. 192
  33. **A Tough Sell**, Paul Farhi, *American Journalism Review*, June 2000  
Paul Farhi examines **online advertising** in terms of advertisers' desire for reliable data on how many and what kind of consumers are reached by such ads, and he looks at how such advertiser concerns have the potential of **shaping Web content**. 197



## UNIT 5

### The Shape of Things to Come

Five selections explore new media technologies and the changing landscape of mass media form, consumption, and regulation.

#### Unit Overview

201

34. **The Disc That Saved Hollywood**, Johnnie L. Roberts, *Newsweek*, August 30, 2001

*DVD players* are populating U.S. homes faster than any other piece of home-electronics gear in history, altering the way *movies* are made and marketed. This article includes insight into *business deals* that set the stage for DVDs' growth.

203

35. **Resurgent Radio**, Marc Fisher, *American Journalism Review*, December 2000

Marc Fisher looks at the *future of radio*, which is "morphing into a mobile computer that delivers news, music, and other information from satellites, over *broadband* lines, and through old-fashioned broadcasting."

206

36. **Broadband's Coming Attractions**, Claire Tristram, *Technology Review*, June 2001

Claire Tristram explores the future of *broadband* Internet entertainment, including the impact of *Napster*, bandwidth constraints, *streaming*, and cost.

210

37. **Ethical Challenges in Online News**, Missy Kelly, *The World & I*, October 2000

This article examines translation of ethical rules that govern traditional news media to Internet news, including ownership and *copyright*, separating news from *advertising*, handling *graphic material*, and correcting errors.

214

38. **Exposure to Other Viewpoints Is Vital to Democracy**, Cass Sunstein, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 16, 2001

Cass Sunstein discusses "*personalized media*" in terms of its implications for democracy: a need for increased understanding of the meaning of *free speech*, a need for encounters with topics and points consumers may not choose for themselves, and a need for citizens to share a *common range of experiences*.

218

#### Index

221

#### Test Your Knowledge Form

224

#### Article Rating Form

225

The media have been blamed for just about everything from a decrease in attention span to an increase in street crime to undoing our capacity to think. In *Amusing Ourselves to Death* (Penguin, 1986), social critic Neil Postman suggests that the cocktail party, the quiz show, and popular trivia games are reflections of society's trying to find a use for the abundance of superficial information given us by the media. Peggy Noonan, a former network writer and White House speechwriter, has observed that experiences are no longer "real" unless they are ratified by television (which is why, she says, half the people in a stadium watch the game on monitors rather than the field). Marie Winn's memorable description of a child transfixed by television, slack-jawed, tongue resting on the front teeth, eyes glazed and vacant (*The Plug-In Drug*, Penguin, 1985) has become an oft-quoted symbol of the passivity encouraged by television viewing. We, as a nation, have a distinct love-hate relationship with mass media.

Questions of whether or not and to what extent media influence our behaviors, values, expectations, and ways of thinking are difficult to answer. While one bibliographer has compiled a list of some 4,000 citations of English-language articles focusing just on children and television (and all written within the last 50 years), the conclusions drawn in these articles vary. Isolating media as a causal agent in examining human behavior is a difficult task.

Media messages serve a variety of purposes: they inform, they influence public opinion, they sell, and they entertain—sometimes below the level of consumers' conscious awareness. Children watch *Sesame Street* to be entertained, but they also learn to count, to share, to accept physical differences among individuals, and (perhaps) to desire a *Sesame Street* lunch box. Adults watch crime dramas to be entertained, but they also learn that they have the right to remain silent when arrested, how (accurately or inaccurately) the criminal justice system works, and that the world is an unsafe place.

Nicholas Johnson, a former chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, has noted, "Every moment of television programming—commercials, entertainment, news—teaches us something." How such incidental learning occurs is most often explained by two theories. Social learning (or modeling) theory suggests that the behavior of media consumers, particularly children, is affected by their imitating role models presented via media. The degree to which modeling occurs depends upon the presence of *inhibitors*, lessons learned in real life that discourage imitation, and *disinhibitors*, experiences in real life that reinforce imitation.

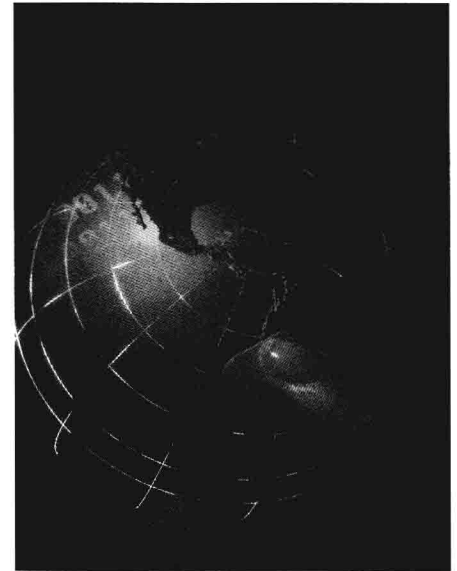
Cultivation theory holds that media shape behavior by influencing attitudes. Media provide a "window to the world," exposing consumers to images of reality that may or may not jibe with personal experience. *Mainstreaming* effects occur when media introduce images of things with which the consumer has no personal experience. *Resonance* effects occur when media images echo personal experience. Thus, television viewers who have never been in a hospital will be more likely to believe that doctors are like those on *ER* than viewers who have logged hours in real-world emergency rooms, and television viewers who have had real-world experiences similar to those seen on *ER* may find that

watching the show reinforces their belief that all doctors and hospitals are like those on *ER*. However, television viewers who have had personal experiences in hospitals that differ from the images portrayed on *ER* are not likely to believe what is on television over what has been observed in real life. Heavy media consumers are more likely to be affected than light consumers, since they spend more time absorbing information from media.

The readings in this unit examine media use, media content, and media effects. The first essay, "TV Without Guilt: Group Portrait With Television," provides a candid look at how television has become ingrained in the rituals of one family's daily life. The Delmars are unquestionably heavy media consumers. They also consider themselves very normal people—and perhaps they are. The average television household tunes in to over 7 hours of television per day, compared with 4.4 hours in the 1950s, although Nielsen ratings indicate that television watching among children ages 2–11 has declined 25 percent since 1981.

The articles that follow examine contemporary concerns with media content, posing viewpoints on both media effects and appropriateness of content regulation. Scary movies ("The Suddenly Crowded Queen-Size Bed"), teen-oriented music ("I Want Your Sex"), violent media ("Media Violence and the American Public: Scientific Facts Versus Media Misinformation" and "The Whipping Boy"), minority images ("The Color of Ratings" and "Gimme a Break!"), and social commentary cartoons ("Class Clowns") are subject to analysis and criticism. The essay "Can TV Improve Us?" focuses on positive effects of media's power to educate and influence.

The writers whose views are included in this section agree that media have the potential of influencing behavior and values. They acknowledge increasingly complex interactions among producers, owners, distributors, consumers, and regulatory agencies. They differ in the degree to which they embrace freedom of speech and free enterprise perspectives, and the degree to which they believe that government action is needed to reform current practice. Some take a feedforward perspective, holding media accountable for shaping changes in public attitude and behavior. Others argue a feedback viewpoint, in which controversial media content simply reflects changes in social reality and what media consumers choose to make popular.





# TV Without Guilt

## Group Portrait With Television

*One family's love affair with the tube*

David Finkel

The first TV to come on is the one in the master bedroom, a 13-inch Hitachi. The time is 8:20 a.m. The alarm clock goes off, and Bonnie Delmar opens her eyes and immediately reaches over to the night stand for the remote. Her husband, Steve, has already left for work. The children are still asleep. The house is quiet. On comes CBS because Bonnie was watching the David Letterman show when she drifted off the night before. She watches "This Morning" for a few minutes, catching up on what has happened in the last seven hours in the world beyond her Gaithersburg home, and then she switches to NBC in time for the weather and Willard Scott. Later in the day, she will tell about a dream she once had. "I dreamt I was married to Willard Scott," she will say "I was going to my 10th high school reunion, and I was excited that everyone was going to see that I was married to a celebrity, but then I wasn't excited because it was Willard Scott. You know?"

The second TV to come on is the 19-inch Zenith in the bedroom of Bonnie's daughter, Ashley, age 7 years and 10 months. The time is now 8:45, 40 minutes before school begins, and Ashley and her younger brother, Steven, get dressed while watching "The Bozo Show." The Zenith is the newest TV in the house, purchased a few weeks before to replace the 26-inch Sony console that had been in Ashley's room until the color picture tube went bad. "She threw a fit when the console broke," Bonnie says of Ashley's initial reaction. "She was, like, 'I won't watch TV in my room anymore,' so Steve and Steven went out and got her a new TV, and she wasn't at all happy about it. I mean, she went in her room and cried about it. She actually cried. She wanted a big screen. I actually laughed at her. I said, 'You've got to be kidding,' and that made her more furious. She

was saying, 'How can you give me such a small TV?' But, anyway, that's over. She's fine now." On the screen this morning, Bozo is standing next to a child who is attempting to throw a ping-pong ball into a succession of six buckets. She does this and wins several prizes, and Ashley and Steven jump around the bedroom cheering while Bonnie, who has been watching with them, claps her hands. "Wow!" she says. "What a great day."

The third TV to come on is the 27-inch Hitachi by the kitchen table. It's now a few minutes after 9, time for "Live—Regis & Kathie Lee." This Hitachi has an especially complex remote, but Steven has mastered it, despite being only 6. He picks it up and changes the channel to "Barney and Friends." "I love you, you love me," the Barney theme song begins, but Steven sings his own variation, learned from Ashley, who learned it at school. "I hate you, you hate me," he sings, "let's kill Barney one two three, with a great big knife, stab him in his head, pull it out and then he's dead." "Steven!" Bonnie says, laughing. "How's it really go?" "I don't know," Steven says. He picks up the remote again and switches to cartoons, while Bonnie, who wants to watch "Regis & Kathie Lee," goes over to the counter by the sink and turns on the five-inch, black-and-white, battery powered Panasonic.

It is now 9:10 a.m. in the Delmar house. Fifty minutes have gone by since the alarm. Four TVs have been turned on. It will be another 16 hours before all the TVs are off and the house is once again quiet.

By the sink, Bonnie continues to watch "Regis & Kathie Lee."