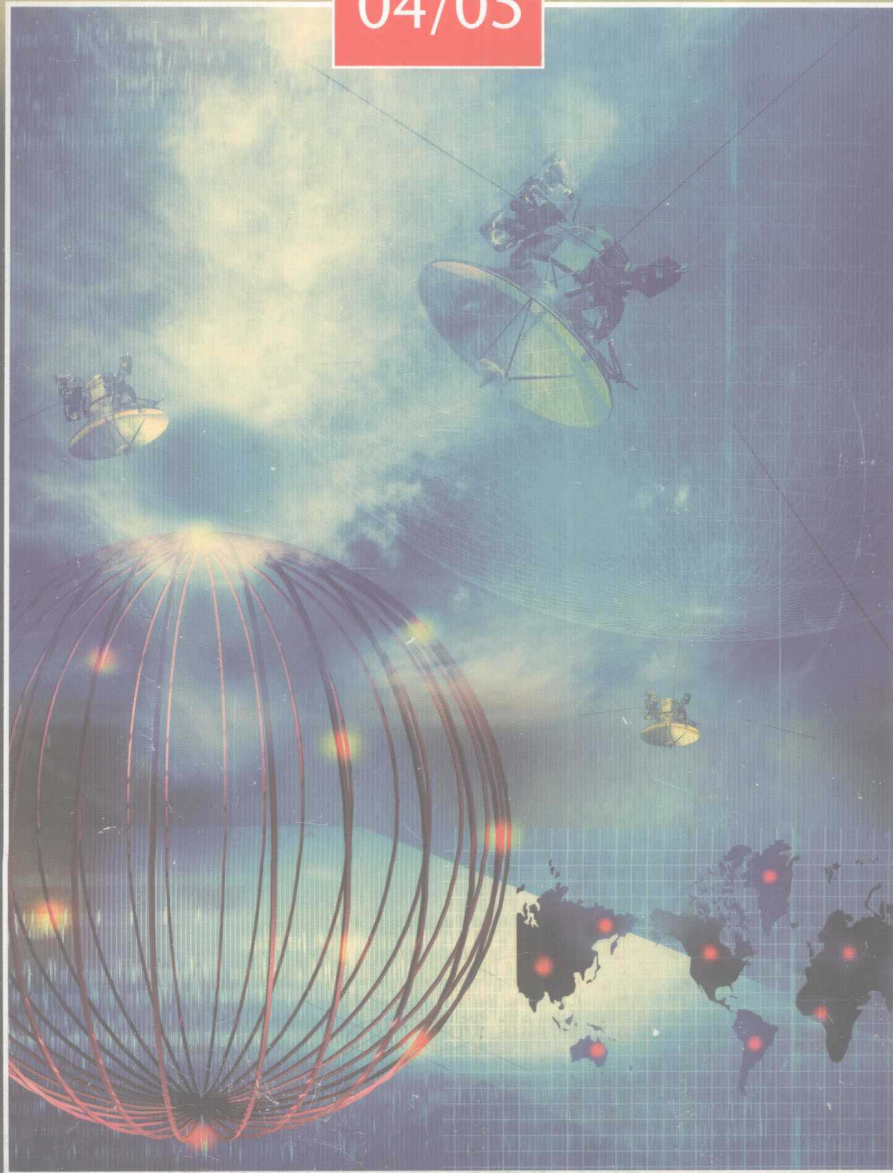


ANNUAL EDITIONS

Mass Media

04/05



A·N·N·U·A·L E·D·I·T·I·O·N·S

Mass Media

04/05

Eleventh 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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Members of the Advisory Board are instrumental in the final selection of articles for each edition of ANNUAL EDITIONS. Their review of articles for content, level, currentness, and appropriateness provides critical direction to the editor and staff. We think that you will find their careful consideration well reflected in this volume.

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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 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. Between 1996 and 2002, the average consumer added 45 minutes of media time per day, 274 more hours in 2002 than in 1996. 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. 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 summarize key points and new concepts, assess the authors' reasoning, and note the relationship of information and viewpoints in these articles to other course readings and class discussion.

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 "masses" 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 eleventh 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. The second is an ongoing debate over how news is selected and packaged, ethical practice, and coverage of war and terrorism. 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

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 04/05

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 career 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 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.utexas.edu/coc/journalism/SOURCE/j363/nctv.html>

This 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.

Organization of News Ombudsmen (ONO)

<http://www.newsombudsmen.org>

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.indexonline.org>

This British 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 ethics topics, explanation of such issues as "fair use," and debate over the impact of the Internet.

Internet Law Library

<http://www.phillylawyer.com>

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>

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.

The Cable Center

<http://www.cablecenter.org/history/index.cfm>

This site will provide information as to how and why cable television was started. To view milestones in the cable industry, click on a decade in the Timeline menu.

USA DATA

<http://www.usadata.com>

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.

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

Living With Media

Unit Selections

1. **A Defense of Reading**, Marie Winn
2. **Parents or Pop Culture? Children's Heroes and Role Models**, Kristin J. Anderson and Donna Cavallaro
3. **Media Violence and the American Public: Scientific Facts Versus Media Misinformation**, Brad J. Bushman and Craig A. Anderson
4. **The Whipping Boy**, Jib Fowles
5. **Black Angels**, Krin Gabbard
6. **Reading Between the Lines**, Alina Tugend
7. **The Remote Controllers**, Marshall Sella
8. **Why Reality TV Is Good for Us**, James Poniewozik

Key Points to Consider

- Kristin Anderson and Donna Cavallaro examine the influence of media on children's choice of heroes and role models. Who have been your role models? Do your choices align with Anderson and Cavallaro's findings?
- In your opinion, has society become more violent because media have become more violent, or have media become more violent because society has become more violent?
- Do you agree with criticisms of media portrayals of women, men, and minorities? What positive examples of each can you think of?
- Does media content primarily reflect social reality, or does it significantly shape social reality? Should it do otherwise? Why or why not?
- Why is it so difficult for research to definitively resolve the media effects questions?



Links: 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.utexas.edu/coc/journalism/SOURCE/363/nctv.html>

Contents

<i>To the Reader</i>	iv
<i>Topic Guide</i>	x
<i>Selected World Wide Web Sites</i>	xii



UNIT 1 Living With Media

In this unit, eight articles discuss the concerns raised about the impact of mass media on daily living and on society.

Unit Overview	xiv
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- 1. A Defense of Reading**, Marie Winn, from *The Plug-In Drug: Television, Computers, and Family Life*, Penguin Books, 2002
In this chapter from the 25th anniversary edition of *The Plug-In Drug*, Marie Winn compares *mental processes* associated with *reading and listening to the radio to those used when viewing television*.

2
- 2. Parents or Pop Culture? Children's Heroes and Role Models**, Kristin J. Anderson and Donna Cavallaro, *Childhood Education*, Spring 2002
The authors report on a survey of 179 *children*, ages 8 to 13, investigating the influence of media on choice of *heroes and role models*.

8
- 3. Media Violence and the American Public: Scientific Facts Versus Media Misinformation**, Brad J. Bushman and Craig A. Anderson, *American Psychologist*, June/July 2001
Over the past 50 years, news reports of the link between *media violence and aggression* 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 *statistical findings of scientific studies*, and they conclude that the link, which has strengthened over time, is clearly a positive one.

17
- 4. The Whipping Boy**, Jib Fowles, *Reason*, March 2001
Jib Fowles argues that the belief that *television violence* causes hostile behavior is "a whipping boy, a stand-in for other clashes, real or imagined." He sums up *social conflicts* that add to *misdirected antitelevision violence crusades*.

30
- 5. Black Angels**, Krin Gabbard, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 6, 2003
Krin Gabbard, a professor of comparative literature and English, provides his interpretation of conflicted *social values* reflected in casting *black actors* in angelic roles, from *The Matrix* to *The Simpsons*.

36
- 6. Reading Between the Lines**, Alina Tugend, *American Journalism Review*, March 2003
In 1998 only four states specified *media literacy* objectives for public schools. In 2002 all 50 states referred to media literacy in their curriculum recommendations. This article summarizes the movement and its *alternate subtexts*.

39
- 7. The Remote Controllers**, Marshall Sella, *New York Times Magazine*, October 20, 2002
Mass media are often criticized as being one-way communication, responding at best to delayed receiver *feedback*. This article describes the influence of *consumer message boards* on the shaping of content in *entertainment television*.

43

8. **Why Reality TV Is Good for Us**, James Poniewozik, *Time*, February 17, 2003

While *reality TV's* recent ratings hits *The Bachelor*, *Fear Factor*, and their dozen cousins are rarely praised as "good television," James Poniewozik takes a counter spin on social criticism of the genre and finds **prosocial lessons** beneath the humiliation.

49



UNIT 2

Covering News

Eleven unit articles provide critical perspectives on news gathering and how it is delivered to the public, along with the public's changing attitude toward news coverage.

Unit Overview

52

9. **The Pentagon Is Fighting—and Winning—the Public Relations War**, Robert S. Pritchard, *USA Today Magazine (Society for the Advancement of Education)*, July 2003

This article provides an analysis of news coverage of military conflict in *Iraq*, including historical context, perspectives on **censorship** in reporting from **war** zones, and **embedded journalists**.

54

10. **TV: A Missed Opportunity**, Paul Friedman, *Columbia Journalism Review*, May/June 2003

Paul Friedman contends that the **embedding** of more than 600 journalists in dozens of armed forces units in *Iraq* yielded mixed quality and fragmented understanding.

59

11. **Baghdad Urban Legends**, Lori Robertson, *American Journalism Review*, October/November 2003

Is the **news media** to **blame** for the **mistaken perceptions** of people when considering their opinions on the *Iraq war* and its aftermath?

62

12. **The View From Abroad**, George A. Krinsky, *American Journalism Review*, January/February 2002

George Krinsky describes differences in **spin and emphasis** between U.S. and **foreign media coverage** of the *war on terrorism*.

68

13. **High Anxiety**, Lori Robertson, *American Journalism Review*, April 2003

Focusing on news coverage of the **terror alert of February 2003**, Lori Robertson analyzes decisions, actions, and hindsight lessons of the **panic**-fueled run on duct tape and plastic sheeting.

72

14. **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 could trigger significant **social change**.

80

15. **Myth of the Liberal Media**, Eric Alterman, *Utne Reader*, July/August 2003

Analyses of **journalists' personal politics** have for decades identified left-leaning ideology among many who investigate and report news. Not surprisingly, the content they bring to media has been frequently criticized as reflecting **liberal bias**. Eric Alterman refutes that assumption.

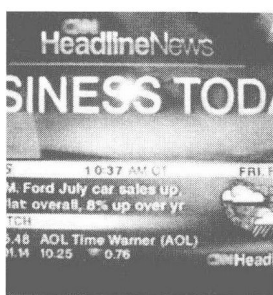
86

16. **"Live" With TAE: Bernard Goldberg**, John Meroney, *The American Enterprise*, March 2002

The American Enterprise associate editor John Meroney interviews longtime CBS news correspondent Bernard Goldberg about his book ***Bias: A CBS Insider Exposes How the Media Distort the News***.

89

17. **Up Close and Personal**, John Temple, *American Journalism Review*, December 2002
Most analyses of newspaper reporting and news businesses focus on the “big press.” This article acknowledges the role, and unique challenges, of **small newspapers** that reflect close-to-home decisions in serving **community markets**. 93
18. **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 access—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**. 98
19. **Imagine**, Liz Cox, *Columbia Journalism Review*, January/February 2003
Based on discussions with 13 groups of young journalists recruited from 18 newspapers, Liz Cox reports their perceptions of the kind of newspaper they would like to work for and the kind of news that would attract **people under 30** to **reading newspapers**. 104



UNIT 3

Players and Guides

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

Unit Overview 110

20. **Behind the Mergers: Q&A**, Neil Hickey, *Columbia Journalism Review*, May/June 2002
Michael Powell began his term as chairman of the **Federal Communications Commission** with a hard look at rules limiting **media ownership** and a proposal for relaxation of those limits. Neil Hickey provides his perspective on implications of changing rules on **cross media ownership** and **market research**. 112
21. **Media Consolidation: What Now?**, Michael M. Epstein, *Television Quarterly*, Winter 2002
Michael Epstein, a media lawyer, interviews Andrew Jay Schwartzman of the Media Access Project, a Washington-based advocacy group, about **deregulation**. Topics for discussion include economic and political forces, **vertically integrated media companies**, **antitrust laws**, and **public interest obligations**. 115
22. **Media Rules Rollback Unlikely: Markey: Efforts Being Blocked**, Jay Fitzgerald, *Boston Herald.com*, September 23, 2003
This article updates changes in **FCC ownership rules**, as this collection of readings was being compiled. The FCC, the House, the president, the 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, and the Senate have all weighed in on this debate. Who will have the last word? 121
23. **Media Money: How Corporate Spending Blocked Political Ad Reform & Other Stories of Influence**, Charles Lewis, *Columbia Journalism Review*, September/October 2000
Charles Lewis examines the **influence of the media industry** on **FCC policy** and the progress of **legislation** dealing with issues such as intellectual property, violence, “must carry” provisions, media ownership, and political advertising. 122
24. **Children, Entertainment, and Marketing**, Rhoda Rabkin, *Consumers' Research*, June 2002
In April 2001, Senator Joseph Lieberman introduced a bill to prohibit the marketing of “adult rated media” to young people under the age of 17. Rhoda Rabkin summarizes the history of **voluntary regulation of media**, from the Hollywood **Hays Code** to self-regulation of **comic books** and **music**, then raises concerns about current attempts to identify the **entertainment industry as a health threat to young people**. 129

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

25. **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, **fact-checking policies**, and potential consequences of cut-and-paste journalism. 134
26. **The Information Squeeze**, Charles Layton, *American Journalism Review*, September 2002
Charles Layton explores current tensions in distinguishing **government secrecy** from **protection of privacy**, as they influence access to information available through the **Freedom of Information Act**. 142
27. **All About the Retrospect**, Jill Rosen, *American Journalism Review*, June/July 2003
In April 2003, **Jayson Blair's** ambitious career at the **New York Times** came to a halt amid revelations of the pervasive use of fabricated quotes, details, and contacts. In this article, Jill Rosen considers why and how this high-profile lapse of personal **ethics** and **media oversight** occurred. 151
28. **Important if True**, Jill Rosen, *American Journalism Review*, August/September 2003
Jill Rosen discusses fallout from the **Jayson Blair** case, including a review of policy regarding ethical use of **anonymous sources**. 156



UNIT 4

A Word From Our Sponsor

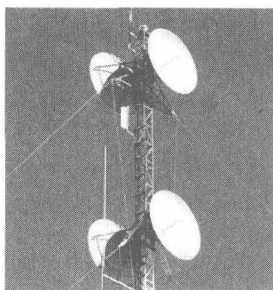
In this section, seven selections explore relationships among financial backers, advertising, and media content.

Unit Overview 162

29. **The Myth of '18 to 34'**, Jonathan Dee, *New York Times Magazine*, October 13, 2002
Jonathan Dee discusses the cause and effect of conventional **advertising** wisdom that places a premium on companies' attracting **consumers ages 18–34** to their commercials by supporting media that attract that demographic. 164
30. **The Thinking Inside the Box**, Lynn Hirschberg, *New York Times Magazine*, November 3, 2002
A discussion among Chris Albrecht, chairman of HBO, Leslie Moonves, president and CEO of CBS, and Jeff Zucker, president of NBC, provides an inside look at how **business decisions** influence **television content**. 168
31. **The Big Money Guys**, G. Jeffrey MacDonald, *The Christian Science Monitor*, April 8, 2003
This article debates pros and cons of supporting **public broadcasting's children's programming** through **merchandising revenue**. 174
32. **Virtual Product Placement**, Damian Ward Hey, *Television Quarterly*, Winter 2002
Virtual product placement is digitally inserting a product or product logo into a live or prerecorded program where that product or logo does not in physical actuality exist. It has been around since the early days of television but is attracting new attention in light of **technological advances** in both ease of editing and ease of consumers' **bypassing traditional commercial messages**. 177
33. **Going Long, Going Deep**, Scott Sherman, *Columbia Journalism Review*, November/December 2002
Scott Sherman's profile of *The Atlantic Monthly* provides insight into how this **magazine** approaches editorial decisions that maintain its **high-quality reputation**, but at the expense of **profitability**. 181

34. **Pay for Play**, Eric Boehlert, *Salon.com*, March 14, 2001
Eric Boehlert describes the influence of **payola**, independent **record promoters**, and **deregulation of radio station ownership** on what songs are played and **how hits are made**. 189

35. **Cents and Sensibility**, Adelle Waldman, *Slate*, <http://www.slate.msn.com>, April 2, 2003
In 2001, **Nielsen BookScan**, an outgrowth of the TV ratings firm, began electronically tracking book sales. Adelle Waldman describes how the Nielsen numbers are compiled and why they do not capture the steady sale of **classic books**. 193



UNIT 5

The Shape of Things to Come

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

Unit Overview 194

36. **Interactive Television: Is It Coming or Not?**, John Kelly, *Television Quarterly*, Winter 2002
In this article, John Kelly helps readers interpret how **"interactive TV"** will ultimately be defined and what it will mean to consumers as TV's one-way, analog infrastructure is replaced with **two-way digital delivery**. 196

37. **Separate and Not Quite Equal**, E. J. Heresniak, *Across the Board*, May/June 2003
E. J. Heresniak discusses the **convergence** of television with computer and digital technology, arguing that the notion of **interactive participation** is unrealistic because of incompatible expectations for the **separate technologies**. 199

38. **It Adds Up (and Up, and Up)**, Rob Fixmer, *New York Times*, April 10, 2003
This article looks at the increasing **proportion of disposable income** being spent on **media/communication services**, "network creep," and the potential implications of a slower economy on the continued use and growth of new technologies. 201

39. **HDTV's Acceptance Picks Up Pace as Prices Drop and Networks Sign On**, Eric A. Taub, *New York Times*, March 31, 2003
As the United States comes within years of its formal transition to a **high-definition television** (HDTV) standard, shopping and installation remain confusing. In the past year, receiver prices have come down, a plug-and-play standard has been accepted by manufacturers, and availability of programming is expanding. 205

40. **Searching for Online Gold**, Doug Brown, *American Journalism Review*, June/July 2003
Online publishing is still an experiment, searching for avenues for profitability. This article examines the potential of **subscription and registration models** as means of attracting **advertiser revenue**. 209

41. **Low Power, High Intensity**, Laurie Kelliher, *Columbia Journalism Review*, September/October 2003
Low power FM radio licenses were introduced by the FCC in 2000. Despite legislative challenges that have stalled expansion, 220 stations are on the air, run largely by volunteers dedicated to serving **niche audiences**. 215

42. **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 a consumer may not choose him- or herself, a need for citizens to share a **common range of experiences**. 218

Index	221
Test Your Knowledge Form	224
Article Rating Form	225

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.

Advertising

- 25. Ethically Challenged
- 29. The Myth of '18 to 34'
- 31. The Big Money Guys
- 32. Virtual Product Placement
- 40. Searching for Online Gold

Agenda setting

- 7. The Remote Controllers
- 12. The View From Abroad
- 13. High Anxiety
- 14. Where TV Has Teeth
- 15. Myth of the Liberal Media

Books

- 1. A Defense of Reading
- 35. Cents and Sensibility

Catharsis theory

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

Children and media

- 2. Parents or Pop Culture? Children's Heroes and Role Models
- 6. Reading Between the Lines
- 24. Children, Entertainment, and Marketing
- 31. The Big Money Guys

Content decisions

- 7. The Remote Controllers
- 13. High Anxiety
- 17. Up Close and Personal
- 19. Imagine
- 29. The Myth of '18 to 34'
- 30. The Thinking Inside the Box
- 33. Going Long, Going Deep

Credibility

- 16. "Live" With TAE: Bernard Goldberg
- 18. The Real Computer Virus
- 25. Ethically Challenged
- 27. All About the Retrospect
- 28. Important if True

Cultivation theory

- 1. A Defense of Reading
- 2. Parents or Pop Culture? Children's Heroes and Role Models
- 3. Media Violence and the American Public: Scientific Facts Versus Media Misinformation
- 5. Black Angels
- 13. High Anxiety

Ethics

- 25. Ethically Challenged
- 27. All About the Retrospect
- 28. Important if True
- 32. Virtual Product Placement

Fact checking

- 18. The Real Computer Virus
- 25. Ethically Challenged
- 27. All About the Retrospect
- 28. Important if True

Federal Communications Commission (FCC)

- 3. Media Violence and the American Public: Scientific Facts Versus Media Misinformation
- 20. Behind the Mergers: Q&A
- 21. Media Consolidation: What Now?
- 22. Media Rules Rollback Unlikely: Markey: Efforts Being Blocked
- 23. Media Money: How Corporate Spending Blocked Political Ad Reform & Other Stories of Influence
- 41. Low Power, High Intensity

Feedback

- 7. The Remote Controllers
- 17. Up Close and Personal
- 19. Imagine

Freedom of Information Act

- 26. The Information Squeeze

Gatekeeping

- 9. The Pentagon Is Fighting—and Winning—the Public Relations War
- 10. TV: A Missed Opportunity
- 16. "Live" With TAE: Bernard Goldberg

Gender issues

- 2. Parents or Pop Culture? Children's Heroes and Role Models

Government influence

- 9. The Pentagon Is Fighting—and Winning—the Public Relations War
- 10. TV: A Missed Opportunity
- 12. The View From Abroad
- 26. The Information Squeeze

International news

- 12. The View From Abroad
- 19. Imagine

Internet

- 7. The Remote Controllers
- 18. The Real Computer Virus
- 37. Separate and Not Quite Equal
- 40. Searching for Online Gold
- 42. Exposure to Other Viewpoints Is Vital to Democracy

Investigative journalism

- 14. Where TV Has Teeth

Magazines

- 33. Going Long, Going Deep

Media effects research

1. A Defense of Reading
2. Parents or Pop Culture? Children's Heroes and Role Models
3. Media Violence and the American Public: Scientific Facts Versus Media Misinformation

Media history

2. Parents or Pop Culture? Children's Heroes and Role Models
9. The Pentagon Is Fighting—and Winning—the Public Relations War
34. Pay for Play

Media ownership

17. Up Close and Personal
20. Behind the Mergers: Q&A
21. Media Consolidation: What Now?
22. Media Rules Rollback Unlikely: Markey: Efforts Being Blocked
23. Media Money: How Corporate Spending Blocked Political Ad Reform & Other Stories of Influence
41. Low Power, High Intensity

Media use

1. A Defense of Reading
2. Parents or Pop Culture? Children's Heroes and Role Models
19. Imagine
38. It Adds Up (and Up, and Up)

Media violence

1. A Defense of Reading
3. Media Violence and the American Public: Scientific Facts Versus Media Misinformation
4. The Whipping Boy
23. Media Money: How Corporate Spending Blocked Political Ad Reform & Other Stories of Influence
24. Children, Entertainment, and Marketing

Narrowcasting

17. Up Close and Personal
41. Low Power, High Intensity
42. Exposure to Other Viewpoints Is Vital to Democracy

News reporting

9. The Pentagon Is Fighting—and Winning—the Public Relations War
10. TV: A Missed Opportunity
11. Baghdad Urban Legends
12. The View From Abroad
13. High Anxiety
14. Where TV Has Teeth
15. Myth of the Liberal Media
16. "Live" With TAE: Bernard Goldberg
17. Up Close and Personal
18. The Real Computer Virus
25. Ethically Challenged

New technologies

7. The Remote Controllers
18. The Real Computer Virus
32. Virtual Product Placement
36. Interactive Television: Is It Coming or Not?
37. Separate and Not Quite Equal
38. It Adds Up (and Up, and Up)
39. HDTV's Acceptance Picks Up Pace as Prices Drop and Networks Sign On
42. Exposure to Other Viewpoints Is Vital to Democracy

Political coverage

23. Media Money: How Corporate Spending Blocked Political Ad Reform & Other Stories of Influence

Prosocial effects

8. Why Reality TV Is Good for Us
14. Where TV Has Teeth
31. The Big Money Guys

Radio

1. A Defense of Reading
34. Pay for Play
41. Low Power, High Intensity

Ratings

7. The Remote Controllers
29. The Myth of '18 to 34'
30. The Thinking Inside the Box
35. Cents and Sensibility

Reality TV

8. Why Reality TV Is Good for Us

Social learning theory

2. Parents or Pop Culture? Children's Heroes and Role Models

Target marketing

19. Imagine
25. Ethically Challenged
29. The Myth of '18 to 34'
40. Searching for Online Gold

Television

1. A Defense of Reading
2. Parents or Pop Culture? Children's Heroes and Role Models
4. The Whipping Boy
7. The Remote Controllers
8. Why Reality TV Is Good for Us
9. The Pentagon Is Fighting—and Winning—the Public Relations War
10. TV: A Missed Opportunity
14. Where TV Has Teeth
29. The Myth of '18 to 34'
30. The Thinking Inside the Box
31. The Big Money Guys
32. Virtual Product Placement
36. Interactive Television: Is It Coming or Not?
37. Separate and Not Quite Equal
39. HDTV's Acceptance Picks Up Pace as Prices Drop and Networks Sign On

War coverage

9. The Pentagon Is Fighting—and Winning—the Public Relations War
10. TV: A Missed Opportunity
11. Baghdad Urban Legends

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 suggested 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, 2002) 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, a television viewer who has never been in a hospital will be more likely to believe that doctors



are like those on *ER* than a viewer who has logged hours in real-world emergency rooms, and a television viewer who has 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, a television viewer who has had personal experiences in hospitals that differ from the images portrayed on *ER* is 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. "A Defense of Reading" focuses on how the brain processes different types of media messages. "Parents or Pop Culture? Children's Heroes and Role Models" examines social learning and cultivation effects of media role models, acknowledging also the significant role parents play in modeling behavior and values. The next three articles examine two contemporary concerns with media content, posing viewpoints on both media effects and appropriateness of content regulation. Violent media ("Media Violence and the American Public: Scientific Facts Versus Media Misinformation" and "The Whipping Boy") and minority images ("Black Angels") are subject to analysis and criticism. The last three articles present a prosocial view of media's ability to shape social reality and consumers' influence in shaping media. "Reading Between the Lines" focuses on progress and products of broad acceptance of media literacy objectives in public school curricula over the past 5 years. "The Remote Controllers" describes media writers' response to message board feedback on entertainment programming content. Finally, "Why Reality TV Is Good for Us" takes on critics of reality TV formats, finding reasons for their appeal and socially redeeming values beneath their tawdry exteriors.

The writers whose views are included in this section acknowledge increasingly complex interactions among media producers, owners and distributors, consumers, and regulatory agencies. They share concerns with media influence on daily living and on society but differ in conclusions regarding direction and degree of responsibility for mitigating undesirable effects. 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.

A Defense of Reading

MARIE WINN

Television's impact is undoubtedly greater on preschoolers and pre-readers than on any other group. Until television, never in human history had very young children been able to enter and spend sizable portions of their waking time in a secondary world of incorporeal people and intangible things, unaccompanied by an adult guide or comforter. School-age children fall into a different category. Because they can read, they have other opportunities to leave reality behind. For these children television is merely *another* imaginary world.

But are these imaginary worlds equivalent? Since reading, once the school child's major imaginative experience, has not been seriously eclipsed by television, the television experience must be compared with the reading experience in order to discover whether they are, indeed, similar activities fulfilling similar needs in a child's life.

What Happens When You Read

It is not enough to compare television watching and reading from the viewpoint of quality. Although the quality of the material available in each medium varies enormously, from junky books and shoddy programs to literary masterpieces and fine, thoughtful television shows, the nature of each experience is different, and that difference significantly affects the impact of the material taken in.

Few people besides linguistics students and teachers of reading are aware of the complex mental manipulations involved in the reading process. Shortly after learning to read, a person assimilates the process so completely that the words in books seem to acquire an existence almost equal to the objects or acts they represent. It requires a fresh look at a printed page to recognize that those symbols we call letters of the alphabet

are completely abstract shapes bearing no inherent "meaning" of their own.

Look at an "o," for instance, or a "k." The "o" is a curved figure; the "k" is an intersection of three straight lines. Yet it is hard to divorce their familiar figures from their sounds, though there is nothing "o-ish" about an "o" or "k-ish" about a "k." Even when trying to consider "k" as an abstract symbol, we cannot see it without the feeling of a "k" sound somewhere between the throat and the ears, a silent pronunciation of "k" that occurs the instant we see the letter. A reader unfamiliar with the Russian alphabet will find it easy to look at the symbol "III" and see it as an abstract shape; a Russian reader will find it harder to detach that symbol from its sound, *shch*.

That is the beginning of reading: as the mind transforms the abstract symbols into sounds and the sounds into words, it "hears" the words, as it were, and thereby invests them with meanings previously learned in the spoken language. Invariably, as the skill of reading develops, the meaning of each word begins to seem to dwell within those symbols that make up the word. The word "dog," for instance, comes to bear some relationship with the real animal. Indeed, the word "dog" seems to actually possess some of the qualities of a dog. But it is only as a result of a swift and complex series of mental activities that the word "dog" is transformed from a series of meaningless squiggles into an idea of something real. This process goes on smoothly and continuously as we read, and yet it becomes no less complex. The brain must carry out all the steps of decoding and investing with meaning each time we read. But it becomes more adept at it as the skill develops, so that we lose the sense of struggling with symbols and meanings that children have when they first learn to read.

But the mind does not merely *hear* words in the process of reading; it also creates images. For when the reader sees the word "dog" and understands the idea of "dog," an image repre-