



## Unit 1

### Living with Media

Eight selections discuss the impact of mass media on daily living and on society.

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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 <i>the impact of television</i> on the rhythms of its <i>daily routines</i> .	6
2. <b>Developmentally Appropriate Television: Putting Children First</b> , Diane E. Levin and Nancy Carlsson-Paige, <i>Young Children</i> , July 1994. Using a developmental framework, Diane Levin and Nancy Carlsson-Paige present seven areas of concern about <i>what children learn</i> from their hours of viewing television content that is, from the authors' perspective, underregulated by the <i>Federal Communications Commission (FCC)</i> .	12
3. <b>Battle for Your Brain</b> , John Leland, <i>Newsweek</i> , October 11, 1993. <i>Beavis and Butt-Head</i> represent a new kind of rude, loser-hero popular in the media that are produced to attract teenage and young adult audiences. John Leland explores the extent to which their portrayals shape versus reflect social realities and attitudes.	19
4. <b>Gendered Media: The Influence of Media on Views of Gender</b> , Julia T. Wood, from <i>Gendered Lives: Communication, Gender, and Culture</i> , Wadsworth, 1994. Julia Wood contends that media exert a powerful influence on how we view men and women, minorities, and the elderly. The <i>effects of media's images</i> on male/female roles and interactions, perceptions of our bodies, and abuse of and violence against women are explored.	23
5. <b>Cause and Violent Effect: Media and Our Youth</b> , Barbara Hattermer, <i>The World &amp; I</i> , July 1994. Barbara Hattermer presents a <i>cause-effect argument linking violent and sexually explicit media content to changes in social attitudes and behavior</i> . Following a review of supportive evidence from media effects research, she concludes with a call for increased media self-regulation reminiscent of the Motion Picture Production Code that served as an industry standard from 1930 to 1966.	33
6. <b>Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed: Chasing the Monster of TV Violence</b> , Brian Siano, <i>The Humanist</i> , January/February 1994. In this article, Brian Siano describes and critiques <i>research by Leonard Eron and Rowell Huesmann and by George Gerbner</i> , which was central to 1993 Senate hearings on legislating controls over television's violent content. Siano argues that we need to give children more credit for thinking and that legislating against violence will make us lose decent shows that use violence for good reason.	42



# Unit 2

## Information and Influence

Eight articles provide critical perspectives on mass media as a source of news and information.

7. **As the Dial Turns**, Douglas Gomery, *The Wilson Quarterly*, Autumn 1993. 48  
Tracing the *history of television* and of society's concerns with its effects and its future, Douglas Gomery concludes that *claims regarding television's cultural influence tend to be exaggerated*.
8. **The Age of Multimedia and Turbonews**, Jim Willis, *The Futurist*, September/October 1995. 52  
*Rapid technological change* in mass communication systems is altering the way information is gathered, presented, and processed. Jim Willis discusses potential positive and negative effects on media consumers' access to information, shared knowledge, personal identities, values, and relationships and argues for *electronic literacy* as a requirement of education in the electronic age.
- Overview 56
9. **Tuning Out the News**, Howard Kurtz, *Washington Post National Weekly Edition*, May 29–June 4, 1995. 58  
In recent years, more media outlets have been providing news and information than ever before; however, according to Howard Kurtz, little of it is getting through to a sizable segment of the population. Kurtz discusses reasons *why much of the American public has little interest in news media*.
10. **Political Correctness Has No Place in the Newsroom**, Robert Novak, *USA Today Magazine (Society for the Advancement of Education)*, March 1995. 62  
Robert Novak takes the position that mainstream media reporters have trouble relating to issues of concern to ordinary people and share a uniformly liberal ideology that is reflected in the *liberal bias* of their gatekeeping choices and advocacy positions.
11. **Resisting Pressures on a Free Press**, William H. Rentschler, *USA Today Magazine (Society for the Advancement of Education)*, July 1995. 64  
William Rentschler argues that most mainstream media are committed to giving a fair airing of countervailing points of view; however, lavishly financed *conservative media* are increasingly powerful sources of information that feel no obligation to provide balanced coverage of topical issues.
12. **VNRs: News or Advertising?** Robert B. Charles, *The World & I*, September 1994. 67  
A *video news release (VNR)* is a film clip, usually a minute or two in length, produced by a public relations firm and made available to television stations and networks by satellite feed. Robert Charles discusses how and why VNRs find their way into news broadcasts and the pros and cons of their being there.
13. **The Gospel of Public Journalism**, Alicia C. Shepard, *American Journalism Review*, September 1994. 73  
The goal of public journalism is to reconnect citizens with their newspapers, their communities, and the political process. Attentive to *public feedback*, public journalism also takes a *"feedforward"* stance in its advocacy for community change.



## Unit 3

### Defining the Rules

Eight selections explore how presenting newsworthy information can be complicated by considerations of what is ethically right and wrong.

14. **The O.J. Media Circus**, Jeremy Bloom, *The World & I*, October 1994. 79  
Commentary on *media coverage of the O.J. Simpson trial* has generated as much copy as the trial itself. Jeremy Bloom argues that there are legitimate issues related to how this case has been handled by the media but that the story's news appeal has driven its coverage more than its coverage has driven interest in the story.
15. **Under Siege**, Linda Fibich, *American Journalism Review*, September 1995. 84  
Recently, the public has been having an ever-increasing level of *contempt for mainstream media*. Linda Fibich reviews some of the reasons for this hostility and offers a few responses from media people.
16. **Not All Tabloids Are Created Equal, but They're Sure to Sell**, Edna Boone Johnson, *National Forum*, Fall 1994. 90  
Edna Boone Johnson profiles the *National Enquirer*, contending that it and its sister tabloids are successful for a reason and undeserving of the carping attitude of the traditional press.
- Overview 94
17. **The Media and Truth: Is There a Moral Duty?** Paul Johnson, *Current*, December 1992. 96  
Based on 40 years of experience working with media organizations, Paul Johnson explains "seven deadly sins of the media": distortion, worshiping false images, theft of privacy, murder of character, exploitation of sex, poisoning the minds of children, and abuse of power. He then proposes "ten commandments" for *moral conduct* by all those who exercise media power and influence.
18. **"How Do You Feel?"** Fawn Germer, *American Journalism Review*, June 1995. 100  
When tragedies are covered, journalists must often make difficult decisions that *balance getting the story against sensitivity to its subjects*. Fawn Germer presents the techniques, and the ethical dilemmas, of chasing interviews.
19. **Gotcha!** Robert Lissit, *American Journalism Review*, March 1995. 105  
The *use of hidden cameras* by news reporters is not new; however, the recent development of relatively inexpensive cameras that are extremely small and silent has reopened the debate over when or if their use is ethical. Robert Lissit presents examples and repercussions of undercover photography.
20. **To "Out" or Not to "Out,"** William A. Henry III, *Time*, August 19, 1991. 110  
The question considered by this article is whether or *when it is appropriate to reveal the private lives* of public officials.
21. **Anonymous Sources**, Alicia C. Shepard, *American Journalism Review*, December 1994. 112  
Defenders of *confidential sources* argue that they bring to light important stories that would otherwise never surface; opponents contend that their use undermines journalism's credibility. Alicia Shepard describes past and present cases and attitudes toward reporting information from unnamed informants.



## Unit 4

### The Power of Images

Four articles explore the power of visual images and raise questions of their effects—from engendering emotional responses to reinventing reality.

22. **Buying News**, Bruce Selcraig, *Columbia Journalism Review*, July/August 1994. 119  
Bruce Selcraig summarizes attitudes toward *checkbook journalism* and the dilemma it presents to traditional news media as they compete with the tabloid press.
23. **When Checkbook Journalism Does God's Work**, Louise Mengelkoch, *Columbia Journalism Review*, November/December 1994. 121  
Louise Mengelkoch describes a case that has convinced her that *sensationalism, checkbook journalism, and the tabloid press have virtue* in their willingness to empower the powerless.
24. **Are Quotes Sacred?** Fawn Germer, *American Journalism Review*, September 1995. 124  
Fawn Germer discusses perspectives on the degree to which it is and is not ethical to *clean up, condense, or otherwise alter quotations*.
- Overview 128
25. **CBS, 60 Minutes, and the Unseen Interview**, Lawrence K. Grossman, *Columbia Journalism Review*, January/February 1996. 130  
In late 1995 the CBS show *60 Minutes* elected to kill an interview with the highest-ranking executive ever to blow the whistle on the tobacco industry. How this impacts on *the power of the media* is examined by Lawrence Grossman.
26. **What the Jury Saw: Does the Videotape Lie?** Michael B. Rosen, *Bostonia*, Winter 1992–1993. 142  
This analysis of the Rodney King and Marion Barry trials, in which videotaped records were important components, includes a brief history of photography and commentary on *the value of film as propaganda*.
27. **Photographs That Lie: The Ethical Dilemma of Digital Retouching**, J. D. Lasica, *Washington Journalism Review*, June 1989. 148  
*Digital technology* has made it possible to retouch photographs in almost any manner without any evidence of tampering. Retouching photographs is not new, but the sophistication and ease of digital technology make it ever more prevalent. Where do you draw the line?
28. **New Morphing Software Shapes the Future of Video Graphics**, Mike Snider, *USA Today*, June 20, 1995. 151  
Mike Snider reviews *special effects computer software* available to anyone with a personal computer and a few extra dollars.



# Unit 5

## A Word from Our Sponsor

Six selections explore relationships among advertising, media content, and popular culture.

- Overview** 152
- 29. Ads R Us**, Bob Garfield, *The Washington Post*, February 26, 1995. 154  
 Bob Garfield argues that advertising, for all its faults, has underwritten the finest moments of media history. **Television commercials** may infuriate us, but they also move us, entertain us, and ultimately define who we are.
- 30. Sex, Lies, and Advertising**, Gloria Steinem, *Ms.*, July/August 1990. 157  
 Writing in the first advertisement-free issue of *Ms.*, Gloria Steinem discusses experiences with advertisers that led to the magazine's decision to increase subscription rates and sever its **dependence on advertiser revenue**. **Dictated conditions** by various manufacturers on the placement of company advertisements within articles are described.
- 31. Hollywood the Ad**, Mark Crispin Miller, from *Seeing through Movies*, Pantheon Books, 1990. 166  
 While movies have not traditionally incorporated advertisements or depended on advertisers as a source of revenue, there is a current trend to cut deals for financial backing in exchange for **placing product plugs within films**. Mark Miller gives several examples of this trend and concludes that the art of film is becoming indistinguishable from the techniques of advertising.
- 32. Come On, Calvin, Light My Fire: Pyro-Marketing Burns Us All**, Bob Garfield, *The Washington Post*, September 10, 1995. 175  
 Reviewing recent advertising campaigns for such companies as Calvin Klein and Benetton, Bob Garfield traces a trend from advertisers' going to extreme lengths not to offend to their creating **advertisements designed to provoke controversy**.
- 33. Why Won't Television Grow Up?** Vicki Thomas and David B. Wolfe, *American Demographics*, May 1995. 177  
 Vicki Thomas and David Wolfe explain how the absence of television programming that appeals to older consumers is influenced by **advertisers' interest in reaching a youthful target audience**. The authors contend that few media or advertising executives understand demographic trends or consumer habits and that dividing a market by age is a dated and narrow perspective.
- 34. Selling to School Kids**, *Consumer Reports*, May 1995. 182  
 In an effort to reach children with commercial messages, advertising has reached into the nation's schools with posters, teaching kits, videos, and **Channel One**. While **commercially sponsored teaching aids** are a boon for financially strapped school districts, *Consumer Reports* argues that they often bring with them highly biased and manipulative messages.



## Unit 6

### The State of the Nation

Five articles examine how mass media have influenced the way American political leaders are elected and how they govern.



## Unit 7

### The Shape of Things to Come

Six selections explore new media technologies and the changing landscape of mass media forms, consumption, and regulation.

#### Overview 186

35. **Reshaping the World of Politics**, Lee Edwards, *The World & I*, November 1994. 188

Lee Edwards discusses *the impact of both traditional media and newer information technologies* on political parties, campaign strategies, political rhetoric, and the way that public officials communicate.

36. **The Press in Campaignland**, Howard Kurtz, *The Washington Post Magazine*, July 16, 1995. 193

In this article, Howard Kurtz provides a voter's guide to the conventions of writing, shaping, and *spinning candidate profiles*. Reporters, he notes, are "part of a codependent relationship" with the candidates about whom they write. "They need a certain amount of drama, manufactured or otherwise, to make their stories come alive."

37. **There They Go Again: Presidential Ad Companies Get Early Jump**, Dottie Enrico, *USA Today*, September 5, 1995. 200

For 1996, presidential candidates and consumer product companies face the same marketing challenge: How to reach the greatest audience in one shot when the number of media options has exploded. Dottie Enrico discusses historically memorable *political advertisements* and the special challenges of selling a candidate.

38. **The Power of Talk**, Howard Fineman, *Newsweek*, February 8, 1993. 202

The 1992 presidential campaign brought with it a new twist: *talk-show politics*. Larry King, Rush Limbaugh, and call-in show hosts around the country are finding an increasing market for political commentary. Howard Fineman notes the power of such programs in initiating grassroots activism, and he wonders whether they misdirect government priorities by forcing responses to the angry minority who use this forum.

39. **The Art of Leaks**, Lou Prato, *The World & I*, December 1994. 205

Lou Prato notes that *leaking information to the press* is an accepted strategy at all levels of politics. Leaks might be designed to create controversy, further a program or policy, boost a career, or weaken a rival's career. Prato discusses leaker strategies and journalists' perspectives on using leaked information.

#### Overview 210

40. **The Age of Convergence**, Philip Moeller, *American Journalism Review*, January/February 1994. 212

The convergence of *computers, fiber optics, and cable* has led to high-profile research and development efforts to determine what consumers want and how they will use new media technology. Philip Moeller examines the future of *news media* organizations in an interactive media environment.

41. **Change Leaders and the New Media**, Bruce MacEvoy, *American Demographics*, January 1994. 218

*Change leaders* are consumer explorers who embrace and popularize innovative new products. By tracking their reactions, businesses explore how to use new media to reach a more general audience. Bruce MacEvoy profiles this group, their preferences, and their *influence on shaping new media*.

<p><b>42. The Amazing Video Game Boom</b>, Philip Elmer-Dewitt, <i>Time</i>, September 27, 1993.          For 20 years leaders in the entertainment industry have dismissed <i>video gaming</i> as removed from the mainstream of American media. Recently, however, telemedia giants have spent millions of dollars developing partnerships that are aimed at redefining <i>the future of television and movie entertainment media</i> through video game technology.</p>	221
<p><b>43. Rock Goes Interactive</b>, Richard Corliss, <i>Time</i>, January 17, 1994.          Richard Corliss journeys into the world of interactive rock, where listening to music is no longer a passive activity. The <i>marriage of musicians and computers</i> allows listeners to create their own blends, change the tempo, the mix, and the mood of the music, choose desired video images, go backstage, or play Elvis Presley's hits on his personal virtual phonograph.</p>	225
<p><b>44. Interactive TV's Unclear Picture</b>, Philip Chalk, <i>Insight</i>, December 20, 1993.          Philip Chalk takes <i>a more tentative perspective regarding the future of interactive media</i>. In this article, he summarizes the scope of the vision and the status of mergers and buyouts that are setting the stage for its realization. But he questions whether, in the end, popular interest will support radical change.</p>	228
<p><b>45. Revolution in Cyberia</b>, Neil Hickey, <i>Columbia Journalism Review</i>, July/August 1995.          As new media are proposed and tested, the <i>Federal Communications Commission (FCC)</i> grapples with issues of regulating cost, access, and ownership. Neil Hickey explains the controversial climate surrounding current regulatory debates: How will these new technologies be used? By whom? Under what conditions? With how much government input? How will the public's interest best be served—if at all?</p>	233
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