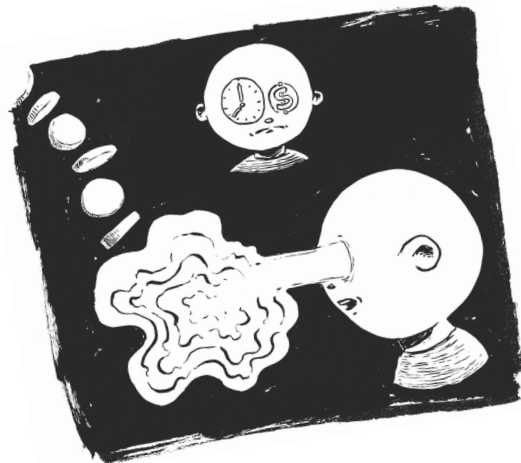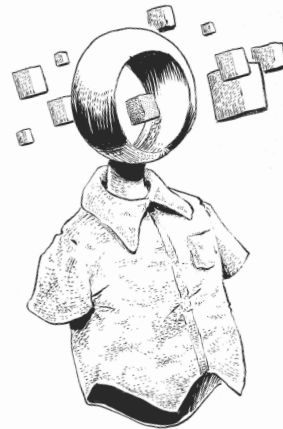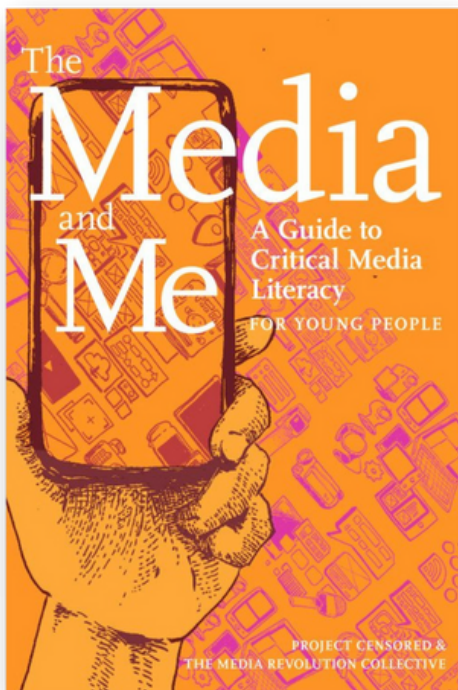# The Media and Me: A Guide to Critical Media Literacy for Young People

by Project Censored and the
Media Revolution Collective

Educator Resources

by Micah Card

The Media and Me
A Guide to Critical Media Literacy for Young People

By Project Censored and the Media Revolution Collective

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About the Media Revolution Collective

With decades of experience in critical media literacy, the authors of *The Media and Me* include **AVRAM ANDERSON**, electronic resources management specialist in the University Library at California State University, Northridge; **NICHOLAS BAHAM III**, professor and chair of Ethnic Studies at California State University East Bay; **BEN BOYINGTON**, high school English teacher and media educator; **ALLISON BUTLER**, director of the Media Literacy Certificate Program at the University of Massachusetts Amherst; **NOLAN HIGDON**, professor of history and media studies, and author of The Anatomy of Fake News; **KATE HORGAN**, an undergraduate studying Communication and Psychology in the Commonwealth Honors College at University of Massachusetts Amherst; **MICKEY HUFF**, director of Project Censored, a media watchdog that promotes independent journalism, critical media literacy, and freedom of expression; **REINA ROBINSON**, founder of the Center for Urban Excellence, a non-profit that fosters resilience in system-involved youth; **ANDY LEE ROTH**, a sociologist who coordinates Project Censored's national network of students researching important but underreported news stories; and **MARIA CECILIA SOTO**, an undergraduate studying Applied Linguistics and Teaching English as a Second Language at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

Contents

About *The Media and Me*

The Media and Me is a first-of-its-kind book about critical media literacy written directly to young people. The authors of the book are scholars, educators, and activists committed to empowering others to empower themselves in their relationship with media of all kinds. Critical media literacy encompasses a set of skills for not only navigating our vast media landscape but for understanding and intentionally engaging with the complexities of media as part of contemporary life. From a critical media literacy perspective, information is power—including that which is produced, disseminated, collected, and received through media. Media is presented as a construction, something that is produced by people, that can—and should—be questioned and challenged as much as it can be enjoyed or consumed. The authors argue that young people likewise have the power to move beyond being a consumer of media and become **critically media-literate citizens**. This book offers readers a practical and philosophical set of principles, resources, and activities for developing awareness and self-reflection around our quickly evolving relationships with media.

About this Guide

These companion resources are designed to support educators who may assign *The Media and Me* to students or otherwise draw upon the text themselves to support the media literacy of young people in their educational context. However you use *The Media and Me* in your teaching, this guide can serve as both a reference and a source of inspiration for how to apply the themes of the book practically and pedagogically. Each chapter is outlined here in terms of its themes, and key terms, and with suggestions for how teachers can infuse these ideas into the classrooms, including prompts for dialogue and activities designed to provoke critical thinking about media in line with the text themes.

The authors of the book look up to young people – they see them as competent and capable of dealing with complex ideas, engaging with sophisticated forms of mis- or dis-information, and establishing what values they hold when it comes to participating in our media-saturated society. This guide is written from the same perspective. Young people have valuable knowledge about media and insight into how it affects their lived experiences. The activities suggested here are largely Socratic or experiential, meant to serve as a jumping-off point for students to co-construct meaning through continued dialogue and exploration. Further, this guide was created with the understanding that every classroom, school, or education context is unique and situated differently in the social and political realities of our time. This guide is designed to offer flexible avenues into critical media literacy with something to adapt and apply across grades, content areas, and disciplines.

Introduction - Looking Beneath the Surface

Although young people spend as many as eleven hours a day using media, research shows that they are not particularly *media literate*. Critical media literacy (CML) is a way for all people to become thoughtful critics and creators of media. The development of CML is introduced here through the metaphor of a clock and its gears, which work together to make a readable, meaningful whole. Media literacy's inner workings are *meaning, access and representation,* and *validity*. The authors argue that examining these important themes through active questioning is foundational for understanding the how and why of media institutions. This process is how people move beyond being media consumers to become *critically media-literate citizens*. The introduction concludes with a section on the connections between freedom of opinion and freedom of expression as fundamental human rights and critical media literacy.

➡ **Keywords:** *critical media literacy, media multitasking, meaning, access, representation, validity, critically media-literate citizen/media citizen, socialization, encoding-decoding model of communication*

➡ **Discussion Prompts**
Describing our relationship with media
- What does *media* mean? What are media?
- How many hours do you spend engaging with media each day and how do you feel about that amount?
  - Describe what it feels like when you are really enjoying a form of media.
  - Describe what it feels like when you are sick of it.
  - Do you feel like you are in *control* of the amount of media you are exposed to? Why or why not?
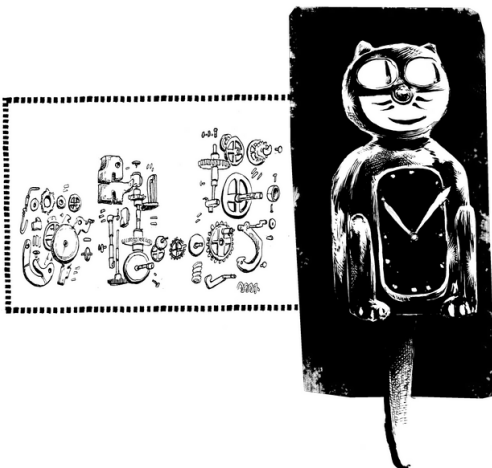
Activities/Explorations

- *Keep a log of your media consumption.* Note the amount of time you spend with different forms of media. How often did you choose what you were exposed to, as opposed to being directed by someone else (like a teacher, an attention-getting ad, or a loud commercial)?

- *Make critical observations.* Choose a website to look at together on any kind of device, like a movie promotional site or a YouTube video page. Take notes or share observations about the page. What does it look like? What grabs your attention? How does it look/act differently on different kinds of devices? Take your observations and use them to answer the following questions: *Who do you think made this? What did the creators want people to know or experience? Who is this content made for? Is the content on the site based in reality or imagination? How can you tell?*

Extensions

Compare and contrast two different forms of media with the same prompts. How does a book, for instance, perhaps hold different meanings and levels of access from, say, a blog post or a television series? How might varying levels of access affect people's lives?

Return to this exercise periodically over time, noting how your skills of analysis have developed since you first did it. What do you notice now that you might not have before learning about and practicing critical media literacy?

Chaper 1 - What Are Media?

The term "media," plural of,"medium," refers to channels of information. This chapter asks readers to consider how different forms of media lead to different kinds of stories – narratives through which we understand ourselves and the world. Like all our relationships, media helps frame, shape, and define who we are in comparison to the images and stories we've been exposed to. From headlines to telegrams, the changing forms of information-sharing have an effect on how we learn about the world in relation to ourselves. Digital devices facilitate ever closer relationships between self and media. This effect on identity development is an important reason to think critically about media, including who creates the stories we are exposed to, what motivates them, and how their messages may be understood or re-interpreted by different audiences.

Keywords: *socialization, medium, media, representation, inverted pyramid, conventions, encoding-decoding model, hypodermic needle theory, interpretive communities, in-group, out-group*

Discussion Prompts
Connecting media with our sense of self and the world
- Why is *identity* important when we think about the media?
  - What are some ways that people *intentionally* define themselves by the media they use?
  - What are some ways that people are *unintentionally* defined or shaped by the media they use?
- How does watching the news make you think about the world?
- How does watching TikTok or YouTube make you think about the world?
  - Are the differences between how these platforms make you feel important? Why or why not?

Activities/Explorations

- *Deconstruct an article.* Read a news article together, perhaps in printed form, and annotate the page. Note what information is relayed and where. What does the author suggest are the most important things to know about the story? How can you tell? Think about if this story structure is really the most helpful for readers. Can you imagine a reader who would disagree? How might the story be altered for their needs?

Extensions

Compare two articles on the same topic.

Rewrite or re-outline the story for a different audience.

Re-tell the story of the article in a new medium, like a drawing, an email, or a tweet. Reflect on the process of deciding what to include and how to depict the information.
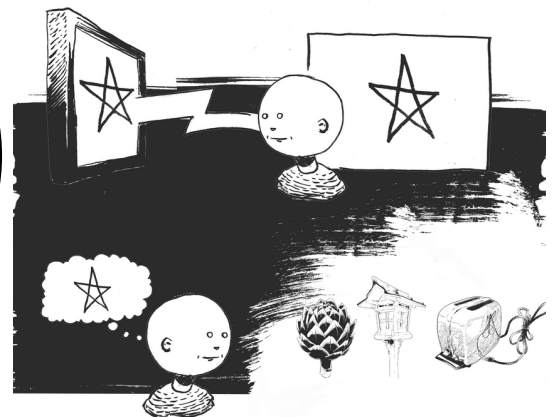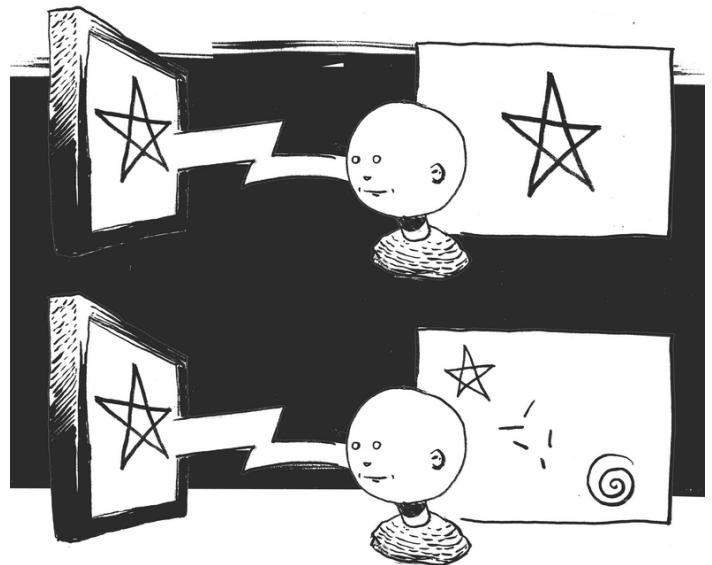
Chapter 2 - Critical Thinking

Critical thinking, as both an analytic and interpersonal skill, is the heart of critical media literacy. Asking questions, gaining knowledge, and using evidence to construct persuasive arguments are all important components of critical thinking. Yet becoming a critically media-literate citizen is not only about questioning the stories and representations in the media. Critically media-literate citizens learn to question *their own* biases and acknowledge the beliefs and ideas informing their perspectives. This chapter introduces important concepts for recognizing biases and moving through cognitive dissonance in order to think more objectively about media messaging. Through continued questioning and analyses of arguments and evidence, critical thinkers work toward objective thinking and learn to recognize the differences between *fallacies* and *inferences* in dialogue with others. Critical thinking and self-reflection are the keys to forming sound opinions and making an informed impact on the world around us.

Keywords: *critical thinking, argument, logic, knowledge, fact, opinion, belief, claim, evidence, sourcing and sources, fallacies, propaganda, inferences, objectivity, cognitive biases, cognitive dissonance, pseudoscience, post-truth*

Discussion Prompts
Conceptualizing critical thinking
- What does critical thinking mean? How is thinking critically different from any other form of thinking?
- The authors argue that there are four primary *values* that critical thinkers hold: autonomy, curiosity, humility, and respect. What do these mean to you?
  - Do any of these values surprise you? Why?
  - What other values do you hold? What's important to you and how might this impact the way you think about the world?
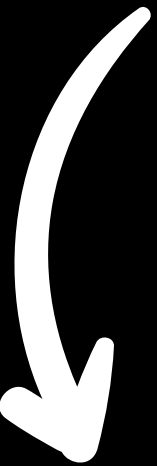
Recognizing biases
- In addition to the values we hold, the authors also argue that we all have biases that we bring into our thinking and communication. What do you think of when you hear the word *bias*?
  - Why might it be hard for some people to recognize their own biases?
  - Describe a time when one of your biases was challenged or a time when you realized your perspective needed to change. How did you feel and what did you do?

Constructing arguments
- The authors also argue that these values support critical thinkers to create more persuasive arguments. What does the concept of an argument make you think of?
  - What is the difference between making an argument and having a *fight*?
- How can autonomy, curiosity, humility, and respect make an argument better?
  - Unpack the idea of *better*. What might it mean for an argument to be better in terms of analytic skills and better in terms of interpersonal skills?
- Critical thinking helps to create sound arguments by examining evidence in order to distinguish facts and gain knowledge. What is evidence? How can you know if something is true or valid?
- Arguments made without evidence and with faulty logic are fallacies – think of a time when you've heard people use fallacies.
  - Why do you think people rely on fallacies at a time when there is so much information available to people through the media?
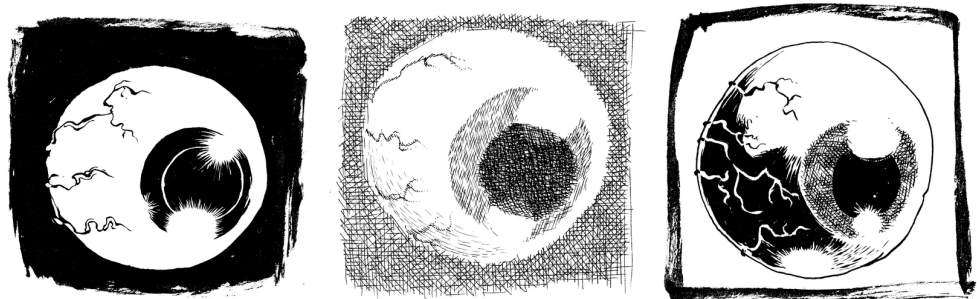
1. **Activities/Explorations**

- *Practice building arguments.* Think of a simple and mundane topic to debate (best tool for writing, most delicious soda, why counting sheep is or is not the best way to fall asleep, etc). Groups or teams of students can discuss and outline an argument on the topic. Groups can then present their arguments to one another and discuss the merits of each. Follow up with reflections on the entire process of considering, developing, and persuading others about their argument.

Extension

A separate group can act as an "objective" audience to consider the arguments of the debating groups. This group can take notes throughout the activity and share reflections on their attempts to be objective (was that possible? Why or why not?) as well as how they evaluated the arguments of the other group.

2. Activities/Explorations

- *Practice identifying biases.* Keep a reflective journal for noting thoughts and feelings that come up when reading/watching informational media. What information do you accept right away and why? What information do you feel skeptical of and why?

Extension

Read articles, essays, or commentaries and discuss whose point of view the story is written from. Identify arguments being made and consider whose needs or interests are served by them. What kinds of biases or fallacies might be at play either in terms of the author or the readers of the piece?

3. Activities/Explorations

- Consider the implications of "post-truth." Make a list of some of the things you know or do because there is evidence, proof, or facts about it. For example, we keep food in the fridge because it stays fresh longer. We wash our hands before cooking because germs from things we touch make us sick. Now describe what the world might be like if there were no such thing as truth or facts.

Extension

Write a short story about a society that is actually "post-truth" – where anyone can say or do anything without proof or evidence.

Chapter 3 - Critical Media Literacy

This chapter invites readers to make empowered connections between representations and the political economy of the media. Critical media literacy is not about holding negative views—it's about taking a step back and asking bigger questions about the production of media, how power relations are embedded in media, and media's effects on our lives and world. Unlike protectionist and celebratory approaches to media literacy, CML moves beyond thinking about the inherent goodness or badness of particular media content and asks us to think about connections between production, ownership, and the political and economic interests that are served through media representations. CML is based on the idea that media, like people, are complex and multifaceted. Taking a critical perspective liberates us to engage with media in ways that feel right for us and help us participate in meaningful dialogue with the people around us.

Keywords: *protectionist, celebratory, liberatory, means of production, political economy, stereotypes, misinformation. disinformation, hegemonic*

Discussion Prompts
Thinking through media protectionism and celebrationism
- Do you think people need to be protected from the media? Why or why not?
  - Do *children* need to be protected from media?
  - Is it possible to really protect people from media? Why or why not?
- What are the best things about media and do you feel that everyone gets to experience these?
- How do you think people learn to make different kinds of media?
  - Who usually gets to learn these skills?

Making connections between media and motivations

- What do you know about the people who make your favorite media (such as a website, movie, or song)?
  - Is there more to the production of a song than we usually think about? Why do you think that might be?
  - Why do you think we might feel as if we know a popular singer or actor better than the CEO of a huge corporation?
- Think about media creators and producers. What motivates them?
  - Think of a visual artist, like Frida Kahlo or Pablo Picasso. Why do you think they made their art? Do you think money is important to artists? Why or why not?
  - Think about Walt Disney, who started his career as an artist and then created a corporation. Why do you think he started a media company? Do you think the same things that were important to Walt Disney are important to the current CEO of Disney? Why or why not?
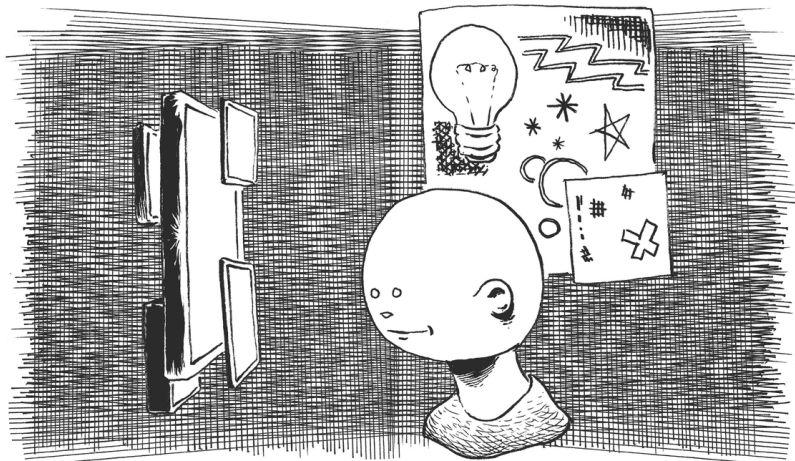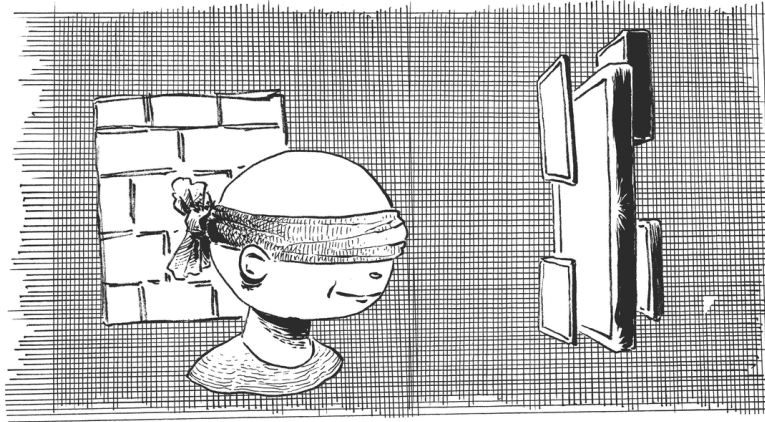
Activities/Explorations

- *Investigate ownership.* Individually or with others, think of a popular piece of media (like an album, a book, or a TV show). Do a web search to find the company that produced it. Who owns that company? Is the company owned by another parent company or corporation? Who is in charge of that larger entity? Keep notes of how many levels of ownership you might uncover, who the people in charge of these companies are, and if you are surprised by any of the information you find.

Extensions

Make a map of media ownership starting with your favorite song, TV show, or movie.

Consider the implications of what you find. Do the people who own or make money from these products have anything in common with the people who consume the product? Why might that matter? Write a reflection or share these findings with others.
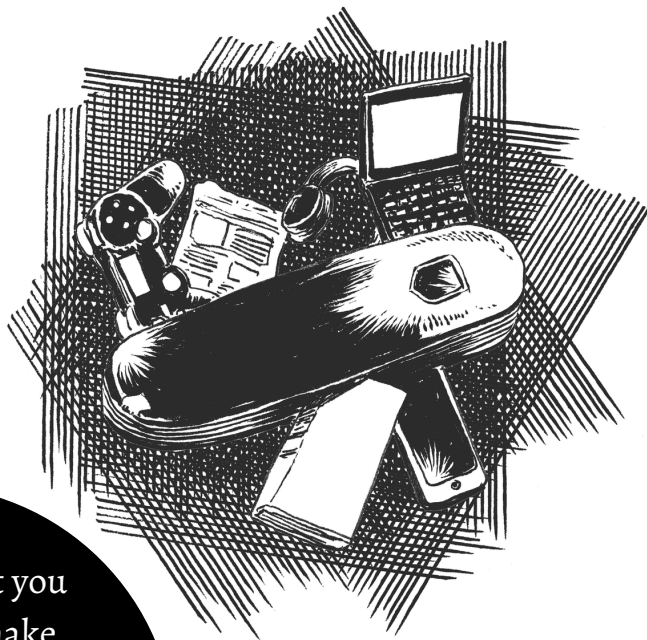
Chapter 4 - Representation

Representation is an important gear in the "clock" of media, constructed from longstanding cultural understandings and political histories and made to achieve some end—telling certain stories for certain reasons. The authors argue that we have a powerful cyclical relationship with media representations. Representations tell stories about people that are often based on tropes or stereotypes. These messages then reinforce real-life cultural understandings of those groups we see represented. CML involves looking at the ownership, production, and distribution of these representations in order to understand how power relations operate within them. Markers of social difference such as race, gender, class, and ability are represented in the media in ways that map onto historical power relations with intersectional effects. By critically examining representations—from formulaic story structures to linguistic profiling—we can both call out and transform our ongoing understandings of ourselves and others.

Keywords: *social constructs, intersectionality, framing, stereotypes, linguistic representation, linguistic stereotyping, linguistic profiling*

Discussion Prompts

Reflecting on representations

- How do you feel when you see people who are like you represented in the media?
    - Have you ever thought about this before? Why or why not?
- Think of your favorite childhood movies. Who were the main characters and how were their identities incorporated into the story?
- How have you seen media representations of certain groups affect people in real life?
- What responsibility do media creators have in regard to representing different people and groups?
    - How do you think the media can or should change in regard to representation?

Activities/Explorations

- *Identify tropes and stereotypes.* Look through the toy section of a store's website. Make observations about what you see—perhaps including lists of how characters, stories, and ideas are presented in terms of gender, race, ability, or class. How are characterizations of these identities being sold?
- *Make connections between representations.* Conduct a search for films that won Best Picture at the Academy Awards over the last ten years. Make some notes: What were the movies about? What genre was the film? Who were the lead actors? Who were the writer and director? What patterns do you notice and how do these connect to historical relationships of power?

Extensions

Rewrite a story to add depth to mis- or under-represented characters.

Write a letter to the producers critiquing or praising the representations in a film.
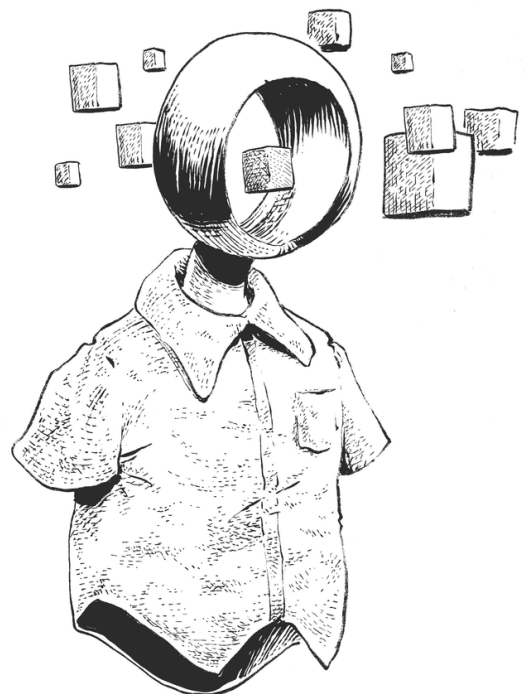
Chapter 5 - Multiple Literacies

Media citizens are multi-literate. Research has shown that the medium through which communication takes place has an impact on how that information is interpreted beyond the basic words or images used. An email carries different meanings than a subtweet, for example. This chapter asks readers to think critically and ask important questions about how visual, aural, and digital information is produced, curated, and disseminated for different audiences. Media corporations have a vested interest in keeping users engaged with their content and platforms and inciting them to act—to click, post, or purchase—in order to collect and sell data and advertisements. Algorithms are computer-based but human designed, meaning they carry human biases. Critically media-literate citizens not only think about the meanings and connections being forged through content but are aware of these behind-the-screens strategies for inciting emotions and provoking action. Being multi-literate will only become more important as media moves toward the ever more immersive "metaverse." CML offers us an empowering lens through which to think through the many ways media are intentionally designed to make us feel a certain way in order to thoughtfully respond rather than impulsively react.

Keywords: *literacy, subtweeting, metamessaging, paralinguistic communication, visual literacy, deep fakes, aural literacy, algorithm, action economy, predictive analytic products, whistleblower, filter bubble, digital redlining, redlining, metaverse*
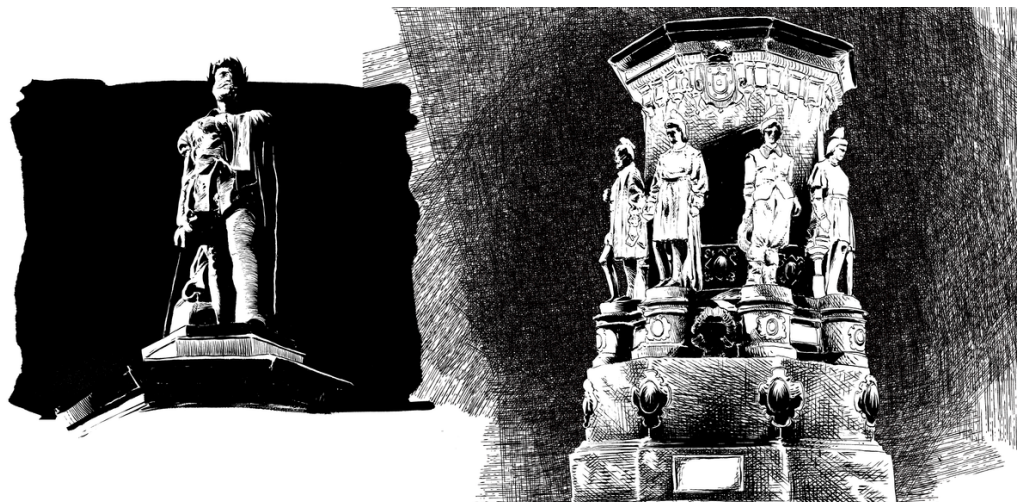
Discussion Prompts

Identifying signs and signals in media

- Think about the different apps or websites you use. Which ones are the most interesting to you and why?
  - How can you tell if a platform is for entertainment? Beyond the content, how does the design of a platform indicate that it's "for fun?"
  - Which ones feel the most trustworthy or most likely to give you factual information you can use? What about the platform's design makes you feel that way?
- Imagine that you are teaching a five-year-old to use the internet —what do you think would be the most helpful things to teach them?
  - What would they need to look for/keep in mind to be safe *and* to find things that are interesting and meaningful to them?

Analyzing our relationship with algorithms

- Have you ever felt like a website or app *knew* or listened to you? Why or why not? And how does that make you feel?
- Have you ever bought something online that you didn't end up liking or need? What happened? What did you do after?
  - What makes you most likely to sign up for something, subscribe to something, or buy something?
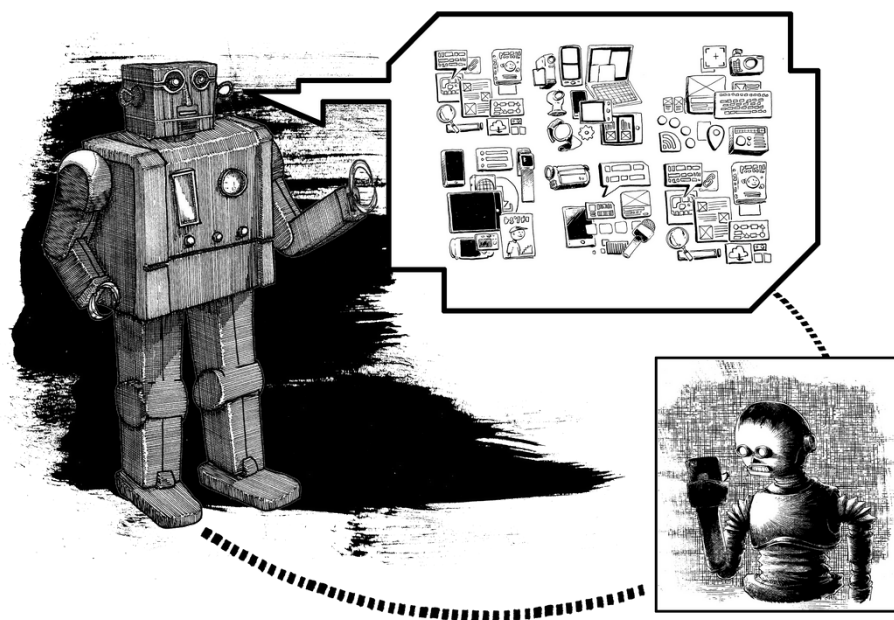
1. **Activities/Explorations**

- *Identify emotions embedded in content.* Listen to a piece of music. Write or draw a representation of how the music makes you feel. Listen a second time. Make notes (or discuss) exactly what is happening in the music when those emotions are evoked. Is there a string instrument playing? Is someone yelling? Try to make a list of the evocative strategies or tools used in the music.

Extension

Continue this process with other mediums such as YouTube videos, podcast clips, movie trailers, paintings, etc. Practice noticing and articulating what you feel and how that feeling was provoked.

2. **Activities/Explorations**

- *Connect feelings with actions.* Once this more basic sense of action and reaction is established, try the exercise with more subtle media and platforms. Read a string of tweets and describe the emotional experience that comes with it. Read the homepage of a news website and notice where it provokes any kind of feeling and when you feel compelled to click through a link or story. Try reading through a government website to read a law—what is the experience of navigating and understanding that information like? What does it make you want to do (Quit? Keep searching? Look somewhere else?)?

Chapter 6 - Advertising and Consumerism

This chapter takes a broader view of the "attention economy" of platforms and businesses vying for consumers to view advertisements. Advertisers employ a host of strategies designed to foster desires and behaviors that turn viewers into buyers. While previous generations of media consumers were also subject to advertising on TV or in print media, the rapid expansion of portable, ever-available online media means that our attention is drawn to ads more than ever before. Our attention is often directed toward ads without our consent and even, in the case of sponsored content, without our knowledge. Media citizens work to be aware of the consumer culture surrounding them in order to better recognize the manipulative tactics of advertisers and make choices that reflect their real interests and desires.

Keywords: *production of discontent, emotional transfer, persuasive advertising strategies, consumer culture, sponsored content, branding, brand loyalty, attention economy, substitution effect, culture jamming, subvertising, brandalism*

Discussion Prompts
Thinking through the effects of advertising
- Do you think there is a difference between ads you see on TV or in magazines and ads you see online? Why or why not?
- What do you think about advertising in general? Do you like, dislike, or feel indifferent about ads? Why?
- The authors argue that the advertising industry produces discontent by making people feel like they need to buy certain things to be happy or to solve their problems. Do you agree? Why or why not?
  - Describe a time that you might have felt discontent because of ads or marketing.

*Thinking about the influence of time spent on social media*
- What is the platform you spend the most time on? Why? How do you feel about the amount of time you spend there?
- What are some ways you moderate how much time and energy you spend online? What does or doesn't work for you?
- Have you ever been "influenced" to do or buy something because of social media (no shame!)? What was the experience like?
  - Describe a time when you learned or bought something online that was helpful or meaningful to you.
  - Describe a time when you learned or bought something online that had a negative effect on you.
- What advice would you give to someone who wants to avoid the feelings of discontent or stress that comes from advertising, especially online?

Activities/Explorations

- *Create an advertisement.* Perhaps in groups or pairs, create an advertisement for a mundane product—such as a trashcan, a pencil, or an eraser. Choose your own medium for the ad, such as a video, a poster, or a comic, but make your ad as persuasive as possible. How can you make this object desirable, cool, and necessary for everyone to buy? Share these projects with the larger group and discuss what strategies were most effective and how they are reflected in the real ads we see.

Extension

Drawing from this experience, think about how controversial or dangerous things and ideas can be normalized or proliferated through advertising. Consider, for example, how vaping has been advertised specifically to children or how wars are advertised to citizens through propaganda campaigns. Deconstruct an ad together.
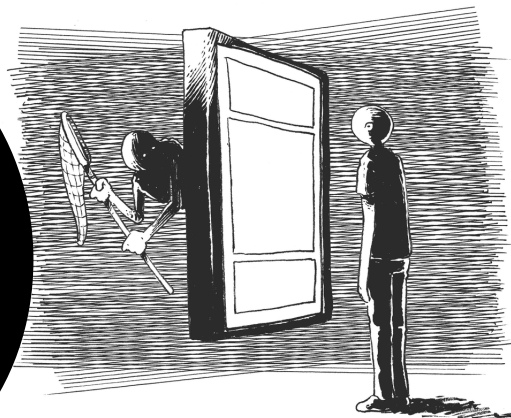
Chapter 7 - News and Journalism

The free flow of information is a vital part of life in a democracy. Although news journalism in the United States has a long history and is highly visible across different modes of communication, not all news is trustworthy. Despite journalists' codes of ethics, political and economic interests are still at play in their work. This chapter outlines how organizational and individual biases often intersect with audiences' own tendencies toward confirmation bias, resulting in increasingly partisan and interest-group specific slant in news coverage. This targeted manipulation of news coverage can be understood as propaganda, fake news, and even a form of censorship as certain elite perspectives are foregrounded at the expense of others. Media citizens can fight against these manipulations by asking critical questions about news outlets, authors, their sources, and the validity of what is (and isn't) reported.

Keywords: *press, five democratic functions, marketplace of ideas, agenda setter, watchdog, information disseminator, public mobilization, objectivity, journalistic ethics, conglomeration, propaganda, confirmation bias, spin, slant, censorship, known producers of fake media, legacy media*

Discussion Prompts
Thinking critically about politics and information online
- Where do you learn about events in the world? What forms of news media do you prefer to others and why?
- A common thing that people say online is "do your own research" about controversial topics. What does this mean? In what context do people use this phrase?
  - How do you think doing "your own research" might turn out differently for someone who is *not* critically media literate compared to someone who is?
- If everyone can post anything online, how can you know if a news source is trustworthy?
  - What counts as journalism?

Thinking critically about legacy news media

- When you think about journalism or "the news," who or what comes to mind (a news anchor at a desk? A war correspondent in the field?)?
    - Where did you first make those associations? How do those images/ideas make you feel?
- Where do you think legacy news organizations typically get their information from? Why does this matter?
- What are "legacy" news organizations? Where do they get their money from? Why does this matter?
- Why is it important for people to have factual information about current issues and events?
- What would you suggest people do in order to learn more about the news in a critical way?

1. **Activities/Explorations**

- *Examine news sites.* Take a look at a legacy news site and note what you see. Is there a paywall/pop-up? What are the stories or headlines that grab your attention – and how? What images, layouts, color schemes and fonts are used? What kinds of articles are featured (e.g., news reports by staff authors or opinion pieces by guest authors)? How can you tell which is which? Can you tell by looking at the website how the company makes money or who owns it?

Extensions

Compare web pages of different outlets. What differences might you find between corporate versus independent or local versus national outlets? What signs and signifiers do they use and why do you think that is?

Compare articles on the same topic from an independent and legacy/corporate outlet. Take notes on who the sources are for each. If they differ, consider why that might be.

2. Activities/Explorations

- *Analyze the ethics of journalism.* Examine the Society of Professional Journalists' (SPJ) <u>code of ethics</u>. Assess a news story of your choice in terms of the SPJ's four basic guidelines: seek truth and report it, minimize harm, act independently, be accountable and transparent.

3. Activities/Explorations

- *Consider sources and audiences.* Compare two articles on the same subject from different news organizations. Who are the sources or experts the journalists refer to? How do these differ or not between the articles and why do you think the authors chose to highlight them? Further, consider who the readers of each piece might be. Does it seem like the authors have a certain group of people in mind as their audience? How can you tell and why does this matter?

Extensions

Follow a story over several weeks or months to see how coverage changes.

Identify examples of *slant*, *spin*, and *framing* in the stories. Whose interests do these serve?
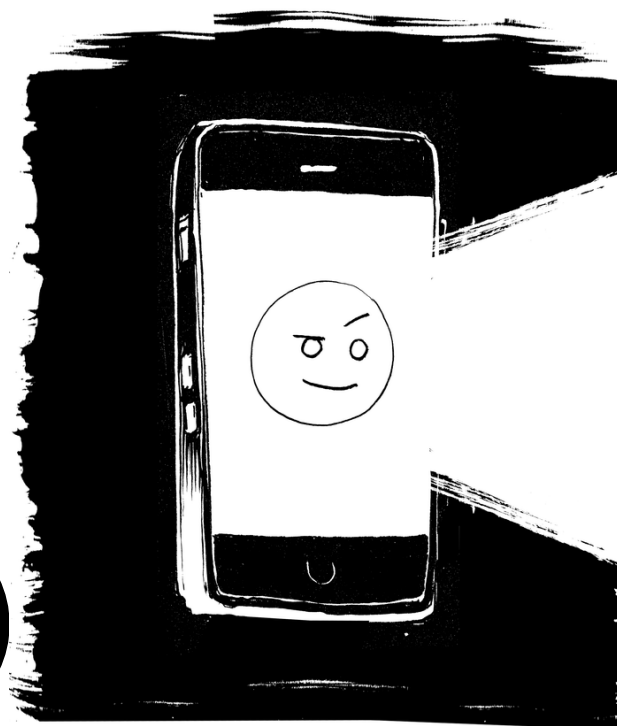
Chapter 8 - What Do You Want to Do?

This chapter offers readers a resource guide for acting on the new insights and critical understandings they've developed throughout *The Media and Me*. The overarching goal of critical media literacy is to empower people as media citizens rather than as mere consumers or products of media. Through the acronym of MEDIA AND ME, the authors outline a set of ten active ways young people can intentionally enjoy, engage with, and counteract adverse effects of our contemporary media landscape. Each strategy includes resources you and the young people in your context can use to deepen your knowledge, engagement, and activism in this media-saturated world and then carry these into constructive dialogue with others.

1. **M**aneuver Like A Media Citizen
2. **E**ngage with Media at a Slower Pace
   a. Ten Arguments for Deleting Your Social Media Accounts Right Now by Jaron Lanier
   b. Netflix documentary "The Social Dilemma"
   c. Digital Minimalism
3. **D**efend Freedom of Expression as a Human Right
   a. Article 19
   b. The Algorithmic Justice League
   c. Kids' Right to Read Action Kit
4. **I**ncrease the Amount of Valuable Content
   a. Project Censored the Movie: Ending the Reign of Junk Food News
   b. 24/6: The Power of Unplugging One Day a Week by Tiffany Shlain
5. **A**cknowledge the Content
   a. The Propwatch Project
   b. The Propaganda Critic
6. **A**nalyze Representation
   a. The Critical Media Project
   b. ColorLines
   c. The Media Education Foundation
7. **N**ever Forget the Means of Production
   a. Columbia Journalism Review
   b. The DeSmogBlog
   c. PR Watch: Center for Media and Democracy
   d. UnKoch My Campus
8. **D**raw on Independent Media Sources
   a. List of Independent News Sources - Project Censored
9. **M**ake Solutions-Based Journalism a Priority
   a. YES! Magazine
   b. The Solutions Journalism Network's Solutions Story Tracker
10. **E**ngage in Activism, not Slacktivism
    a. The Purpose of Power by Alicia Garza
    b. Mari Copeny (Little Miss Flint)'s suggestions for young activists

Conclusion to the Teaching Guide

Across classrooms, curricula, and communities, media is a rapidly expanding, complex influence on the experience of students and educators. The authors of The Media and Me offer young people critical tools for making meaningful choices about their habits and lives in a media-saturated world. This guide offers educators the same – critical, yet flexible tools for making pedagogical decisions around critical media literacy. There is no aspect of media that is not constructed by people working together to create certain meanings. Likewise, there is no aspect of media that cannot be better understood, or challenged, by people working together to decode and rethink those meanings. More than just media literacy, this social process is at the heart of teaching and learning. What's critical are the connections we make between ideas and each other in service to the world we want to live in.

This teaching guide was created by Micah Card and designed by Shealeigh Voitl. Illustrations by Peter Glanting.