

Media Literacy Northwest News

Issue 1 January 2005



NW Center for Excellence in Media Literacy

University of Washington

1-888-833-6638

Welcome!

Welcome to the first edition of **Media Literacy Northwest News**, a quarterly newsletter of the NW Center for Excellence in Media Literacy. We are launching this newsletter as a vehicle to increase sharing of ideas and resources across Washington State, as well as the entire Northwest Region.

We know that many of you are engaged in some very exciting media literacy education projects! However, too often those who are involved with this work are not aware of the many others throughout this region who share our interests. One of our hopes is that through this newsletter we will promote and facilitate communication among a strong media education network of groups, organizations and individuals across the Northwest.

We would like very much to use this newsletter to showcase some of your projects. Please feel free to send us pictures and any project detail that you would like to share. There are also media education events and activities taking place throughout the year that would be of particular interest to those in the media literacy community. Whenever possible within our quarterly format, we'll let you know about these events. If you have an event or activity that you would like to publicize, please contact us.

Some of you may have recently discovered a new resource material that you think others would also find helpful. A newsletter can provide a means for us to initiate this type of sharing and information exchange.

We hope this newsletter will become a vehicle for sharing project ideas, new resource materials as well as all the latest happenings in media literacy.

We welcome your ideas, comments and suggestions. Please feel free to contact me at macohen@u.washington.edu.

As we enter this New Year, media literacy has never seemed more important! We wish you success in all your endeavors to move media literacy forward in your own communities. Remember that you are not alone and that there are many of us all across this region that share your vision of a media literate America. Together we can make a difference!

All the best,

About Us

The **NW Center for Excellence in Media Literacy** is located in the University of Washington's College of Education. Founded four years ago with funding from the Washington State Department of Health, the Center is an outgrowth of the Teen Futures Media Network and other work that Director Marilyn Cohen, Ph.D. and her colleagues at the University have been doing since the early 1990s.

Continue next page...

In This Issue:

- *Who We Are & What We Do*
- *Higher Education Faculty Gathering*
- *Pilot Site News*
- *Free Media Literacy Curriculum Materials*
- *Fast Facts*
- *What We're Reading!*
- *Upcoming Events*
- *Future Contributions & Suggestions?*
- *Contact Us*



Marilyn Cohen, PHD
Director, NW Center For
Excellence in Media Literacy,
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"We hope this newsletter will become a vehicle for sharing project ideas, new resource materials as well as all the latest happenings in media literacy."

About Us ... Continued



Teen Health and the Media
www.teenhealthandthemedialiteracy.org

Much of the Center's work is focused on media literacy as it relates to health issues. Among the issues that the Center addresses are: teen pregnancy and STIs, tobacco, alcohol and use of other substances, youth violence, and obesity, body image and nutrition. For more information about the Center's work around issues of teen health, visit www.teenhealthandthemedialiteracy.org.

The Center was launched after a media literacy needs assessment was conducted across Washington State. The assessment proved very useful in offering guidance regarding the functions that a new Center for Media Literacy could be expected to provide in the state. The next step involved the selection of pilot sites from around Washington. These sites would be the first to receive technical assistance and resources from the newly established Center in its effort to promote and support media literacy based activities at the grassroots community level.

Four sites that had demonstrated strong previous interest in media literacy were selected. These sites were: Seattle, Spokane County, Kitsap County, and Southwest Washington. Advisory boards at each of these sites have been working with Center staff over the past three years to promote and support media literacy based activities in their respective communities.

Pilot Site News

Many exciting developments have taken place at each of the pilot sites. Among the most recent developments are:



The **Northwest Alliance for Responsible Media (NW-ARM)** now has an office in the Schoenberg Center on the Gonzaga University campus where their organization has been officially recognized as a collaboration between Gonzaga University and University of Washington. Among their many activities for 2005, NW-ARM will be offering opportunity grants for media literacy based community projects and student research projects. <http://depts.washington.edu/nwmedia/view.cgi?section=spokane>



The **Southwest Washington Media Literacy Partnership's** executive board is following up on the teen media production workshops it offered across the region in 2004 by now giving community members the chance to apply for opportunity funds and design their own media literacy-based projects. http://depts.washington.edu/nwmedia/view.cgi?section=sw_wash



Kitsap County's group plans to continue the work it began last year on a video-based media literacy/childhood obesity prevention project. Thanks to the development and production efforts of Kitsap County Health Department, Kitsap County Housing Authority and independent film maker Craig Leslie, the group has now produced the video *Eat, Think and Be Healthy*. This year it plans to develop supplementary curriculum material for its new video and then offer training for community members using this new video based package. <http://depts.washington.edu/nwmedia/view.cgi?section=kitsap>



The **Seattle Alliance for Media Education (SAME)**, a young adult group, continues to meet regularly. This group engages in a wide range of activities. They have media nights for other young adults to discuss media literacy topics; they table at media-related conferences and have served on panels and offered presentations regarding media literacy. <http://depts.washington.edu/nwmedia/view.cgi?section=seattle>

Higher Education Faculty Gathering

The NW Center has been working over the past 3 years to identify higher education faculty who share a commitment to the area of media literacy education. The Center held its first videoconference to link interested faculty in September of 2002. At that time, 7 faculty participated representing University of Washington, Washington State University and Gonzaga University, and Pacific Lutheran University.

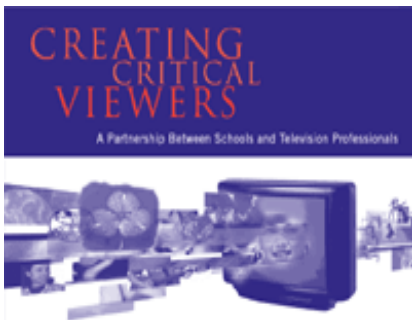
For our most recent videoconference held December, 2004, 25 faculty from across Washington were identified who expressed a strong interest in participating in a media literacy group. Those 12 individuals who were able to attend the conference represented Antioch University Seattle, Evergreen State College, Tacoma, Gonzaga University, Pacific Lutheran University, Seattle University, University of Washington, Washington State University Pullman and Tricities campuses, and Western Washington University. If you would like to learn more about this group or would like to participate, please contact Marilyn Cohen, Center Director at macohen@u.washington.edu or call (206) 543-9414.

Free Media Literacy Curriculum Materials

The NW Center for Excellence is very happy to announce that it is able to make two complete media literacy curricula available on its website:

Creating Critical Viewers

http://depts.washington.edu/nwmedia/view.cgi?section=nw_center&page=curriculum#ccv



The complete Creating Critical Viewers curriculum has been made available on our website courtesy of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences (NATAS), the organization representing television professionals across the United States. NATAS commissioned Drs. Jerome and Dorothy Singer of Yale University to write this curriculum in an effort to encourage young people to become more media literate consumers of television. This curriculum was first piloted under the leadership of Marilyn Cohen, NW Center Director, in the Seattle School District in 1997 and found to offer an excellent introduction to media literacy. Since that time many teachers have used it across Seattle schools. KC Lynch, Northwest Center for Excellence in Media Literacy has updated and adapted this online version of CCV for the web.

Media Literacy through Critical Thinking

http://depts.washington.edu/nwmedia/view.cgi?section=nw_center&page=curriculum#worsnop



Canadian media educator and internationally known media consultant, Chris Worsnop (left) has updated his curriculum, *Media Literacy through Critical Thinking*. Those working with middle and high school age teens will be pleased to find a student workbook guiding young people through a series of activities introducing skills that will enable them to think critically about media. A teacher's manual accompanying the student workbook is also available online, providing instructions, notes and recommendations for each section. Tools to measure student understanding are provided throughout the curriculum.

The Center is pleased to present its newest web site:

Teen Aware Resources

www.teenawareresources.org



The Center is pleased to present its newest web site which was made possible with sponsorship from Washington State Office of the Superintendent and funding from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This site contains a wealth of lesson plans and activities for those interested in media literacy basics, sexuality and the media, pregnancy prevention through abstinence education, risk reduction around issues of sexuality, media assessment, and media production. The site was designed not only to serve as a resource to those with specific interests in sexuality and the media, in particular abstinence education, but also for those seeking new materials for their media literacy work with middle and high school age youth. For example, check out media literacy basics and media production for new ideas.

What We're Reading



There are so many great resources out there about media literacy! Here is one that we highly recommend:

American Behavioral Scientist

The September/October 2004 journal issues of American Behavioral Scientist are dedicated to a comprehensive examination of media literacy. These two special issues contain many diverse articles written by experts in media literacy from across the United States. Both journals can be accessed online at

<http://abs.sagepub.com/cgi/search?aqe=spabs;48/1/30&journalcode=spabs&minscore=5000>

Fast Facts

- Kaiser Family Foundation reported in 2003 that children aged six and under spend an average of two hours a day watching television and videos, using computers, and playing video games.

The study reported that this is roughly the same amount of time that children spend playing outside (1 hour and 58 minutes) and much more than the amount of time they spend being read to or reading (39 minutes).
Zero to Six: Electronic Media in the Lives of Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers

- 43% of children aged two and under watch television every day and 26% have a television in their bedrooms.
- 68% of children under age two spend slightly more than two hours a day using screen media.
- 60-90% of the most popular video games have violent themes.
- Teens' online and offline spending totaled \$175 billion in 2003.
- Advertisers spent about \$15 billion in 2002 marketing to kids.
- A 30-second ad during the 2004 Super Bowl cost \$2.25 million.
- Nearly three out of four teens say that the portrayal of sex on TV influences the sexual behavior of kids their age. One in four admits that it influences his/her own behavior.

*** Sources: National Institute on Media and the Family (www.mediafamily.org), Teen Research Unlimited, Ad Age Magazine, Kaiser Family Foundation

Upcoming Events

Teens, Tobacco & Media and Beyond: Media Literacy Institute



The NW Center will be offering three free media literacy institutes across the state to introduce the new updated version of its teen-driven Teens, Tobacco & Media program. These institutes are sponsored by the Washington State Department of Health.

This institute is for health professionals, teachers, prevention specialists and other adults who work with teens. Institute highlights include a demonstration training for teen presenters ongoing throughout the day, media literacy 201 for those familiar with media literacy basics, and separate program tracks for experienced Teens, Tobacco & Media coaches and for those new to the program.

The one-day institutes will be conducted at three different sites:

Spokane, February 24, 2005, Gonzaga University
Seattle, March 18, 2005, University Heights Center
Yakima, March 24, 2005, ESD 105

For more information and/or to register, visit our website at www.teenhealthandthemedialiteracy.org or call us toll-free @ 1-888-833-6638.

National Media Education Conference 2005



Mark your calendar and tell your friends! Alliance for a Media Literate America (AMLA) will be holding its national media education conference this summer!

The conference, *Giving Voice to a Diverse Nation*, will take place June 25-28, 2005 in San Francisco.

Sign up for the conference by going to www.amlainfo.org
We hope to see you in San Francisco!

Future Contributions & Suggestions?

Do you have something that you would like us to add in our next newsletter? If so, send us an email at macohen@u.washington.edu. We would love to hear from you.

Contact Us

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Check our websites for regular updates, news, and information!

www.nwmedialiteracy.org
www.teenhealthandthemedialiteracy.org

Meet the Board

NW Center for Excellence is very fortunate in having an excellent advisory board. Board members are the following:

Erica Weintraub Austin
Professor
Edward R. Murrow School of Communication
Washington State University

Jackie Berganio
Program Analyst
DPH/PD – Alcohol & Other Drugs Program
Public Health Seattle & King County

Jane Broom
Partners in Learning Program Manager
Microsoft Corporation

Rev. Sandy Brown
Executive Director
The Church Council of Greater Seattle

Teresa Cooper
Nursing Consultant, Public Health
Child and Adolescent Health
Washington State Department of Health

Fred Garcia
Chief of Prevention and Treatment Services
DSHS/Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse

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Kitsap County Health District

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Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

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“People today need to understand the messages between the lines of ad-copy, beyond the engaging sounds on the radio and behind the fast paced visuals on televisions and web pages. Media Literacy teaches young people to think critically, to communicate creatively and to act constructively.”

Quote from Renee Hobbs, Temple University
In Johnson, L. (2001). *Media, Education and Change*. NY: Peter Lang. p. 8.

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