

**THE CANADIAN EXPERIENCE: LEADING THE WAY**

## Introduction

In 1922, Lewis Selznik, the Hollywood producer, father of David O. Selznik, is reported to have said, "If Canadian stories are worthwhile making into movies, then companies will be sent into Canada to make them." Selznik's dismissive words encapsulate a not uncommon attitude among some Americans, that Canada is not a place where interesting things happen. But some of the most interesting stories in North American media education are Canadian stories.

To understand Canadian media education, we must first recognize some of our special collective character traits and our relationship to our neighbor to the south. Former Prime Minister Trudeau likened our living next to the United States to that of a mouse that sleeps next to an elephant: every time the elephant turns over, the mouse has to run for cover to avoid being crushed. Is it any wonder that we have such a nagging, ambivalent relationship with our American cousins? Canada is a country that has many contradictions. On the one hand we love American brashness, their sense of adventure and risk taking and, above all, their popular culture. On the other, we need publicly to denounce them for Yankee arrogance and imperialist policies. Canadians have been described as a relentlessly polite people; too often we are put in the position of apologizing for being somewhat dull.

As a country whose population of some 30 million [there are more people in the state of California than in all of Canada] is mostly contained in a narrow band that stretches for some 4,000 miles across a continent, we are painfully aware of the importance of communications. We have made some major contributions to communications technology (the creation of the Anik satellite and Telidon); media theory (the work of Harold Innis, Marshall McLuhan, and Dallas Smythe); and media production (The National Film Board, the Canadian Broadcasting

Corporation, and our film industry). One of the most multicultural countries in the world, our large cities such as Toronto and Vancouver will soon have more visible minorities than the erstwhile white mainstream population. Immigrants' on-going contribution to our cultural fabric should be seen in the context of our multiple and shifting identities. Cultural diversity is alive and well.

Canadians have tended to define themselves by what we are not. The result is an amorphous, low-key entity that resembles McLuhan's notion of a cool medium, poorly defined and encouraging us to fill in the gaps. Our semi-detached relationship with the United States has also encouraged an amazing comedy industry, however. There is intellectual substance here for a postmodern media and cultural theory, one that is playful, fluid and ambiguous. That Canadians read American popular culture ironically may be a collective character flaw but most of us see it as a gift. Seeing American stories on our television sets or up on the silver screen, a Canadian may be heard muttering, "That's not us, but it's damn close!"

A segue to Canadian media education is easy. All of our provinces have mandated media education in the curriculum. The launching of media education in Canada came about for two major reasons: 1) our critical concerns about the pervasiveness of American popular culture, and 2) our system of education across the country which fostered the necessary contexts for new educational paradigms. This chapter offers an historical overview of the development of media education in Canada, the theory informing Canadian practice, common classroom practices or approaches, resources, and conclusions and implications for future work.

### The History

In Canada in the late 1960s the first wave of media education began under the banner of "screen education." CASE (Canadian Association for Screen Education) sponsored the first large

gathering of media teachers in 1969 at Toronto's York University. As a result of budget cuts and the general back-to-the-basics philosophy, this first wave died out in the early seventies. But by 2000 there was new growth in elementary and secondary school media education as media education became a mandated part of the English Language Arts curriculum across the country. Canada's ten provinces and three northern territories are each responsible for their own education system. Following is a sampling of the histories of Canadian media education from Western Canada, Atlantic Canada, and Central Canada.

### *Western Canada*

In Western Canada (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, The Yukon, Nunavut, and the North West Territories), British Columbia has been a leader in media education. In 1991, a group met in Vancouver to form the Canadian Association for Media Education (CAME). This group has been active in teacher education and in curriculum development, creating a framework which was given to the Western Consortium—a group that has written a common Language Arts curriculum for the four western provinces and three territories. This curriculum—known as the Western Canada Protocol (WCP) Curriculum Framework includes a mandated segment on media education, which differs in content from province to province.

In the province of Saskatchewan, a group of Saskatoon educators founded Media Literacy Saskatchewan (MLS) in January of 1988. MLS goals included: to establish and maintain communication among educators; to advocate for the development and integration of media education in educational curricula; to influence educational policy makers; to provide professional support and to maintain contact with Canadian and international media education organizations. MLS published a quarterly newsletter for its members called MEDIA VIEW until 1998. MLS is

now decertified by its parent association, Saskatoon Curriculum, because of member attrition. Its rightful heirs are members of the English specialist council, STELLA ( ).

Media education is a part of the common essential learnings and one of the supporting domains of the basic Language Arts structure. In core-content English courses, media studies are now required: video in Grade 10, radio in Grade 11 and print journalism in Grade 12. Saskatchewan Education has mandated three options for Grade 11 English besides the required credits in English: Media Studies, Journalism, and Creative Writing. At present, teacher training within the education system has been focused on "Cyberteams" mandated through Curriculum & Instruction whose approaches are towards production literacies. Here, in-house teachers are trained in authoring and production basics which they use in class across curricula. Analyses and reception literacy are still integrated K-12. Both the stand-alone Media Studies 20 and Journalism 20 courses in Grade 11 remain in place. There is enthusiasm and a realistic attitude about ongoing updating of media studies resources by teachers but there is a great need for formal teacher training.

### *Atlantic Canada*

In Atlantic Canada (Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, and Labrador) in 1995 an Atlantic provinces initiative—similar to the Language Arts Consortium in Western Canada—developed a common Language Arts curriculum in which media education figures prominently. The documents state that media education is a critical element of the Language Arts curriculum and mandate it as part of every English course. Since 1997 the four Atlantic provinces have offered a common curriculum in the core subjects. Media education is viewed as a topic where learning is most effective when it is integrated into a range of curricula,

most notably, English language arts. Media Studies is now an included part of the Language Arts or English courses, at all three levels, elementary, middle school, and high school.

Although Media Studies courses have been taught in some New Brunswick high schools since 1989, the attention given this subject has begun to heat up since 1999. Since then, professional development sessions have been offered on a regular basis at the New Brunswick Teacher's Association (NBTA) Subject Council Days ( ). The New Brunswick Department of Education has sponsored two and three-day long summer institutes that also promote media awareness.

Of the 35 high schools in New Brunswick about 20 have had a regular course in media studies. Of these 20, only 10 teachers would teach the course on a regular, on-going basis. Since 1999, a difficulty has been the change of personnel in the Department of Education. As a result of staff changes, there has been no consistent leadership in promoting the media studies curriculum.

Mike Gange, a teacher at Fredericton High School, where the media studies course was piloted and which has become the model for many others wishing to implement media studies, was elected the first president of the new Association for Media Literacy in New Brunswick (A4ML-NB) in 2001. The members come from the various regions of the small, eastern Canadian province. Although the province is small—the population is the size of Winnipeg but the area is the size of France—getting people together for an A4ML-NB meeting is always a problem. Gange acknowledges that it is difficult to reach any kind of consensus among members with distance working against them. Although there are several leaders, strong teachers who investigate ways to enrich the course within their own school, there is need for more direction from their curriculum specialists.

Central Canada (Quebec and Ontario) contains over half of Canada's population, so both provinces are included here.

The Quebec Ministry of Education embarked on a major, multi-year, curriculum reform project in the 1990s. The new curriculum, called the Quebec Education Program (QEP), is the blueprint for classroom practices and student learning content and is the same for the English, French and native communities in Quebec. It is student centered, requires the students to be active participants in their learning rather than passive receivers of knowledge, and is based on the development of competencies—both subject specific and cross-curricular. The cross-curricular competencies are intellectual, methodological, personal and social, and communication-related competencies. Through the development of these, and subject specific competencies coupled with the essential knowledge of subjects as the content for the development of the competencies, students should experience a connected curriculum that is also connected to the world outside of the classroom. The QEP aims to develop life long learning skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, and the ability to build on and transfer knowledge to new situations and discoveries. In other words, students learn how to learn.

The QEP (Quebec Education Program) is divided into the subject areas (Languages, Social Sciences, Science and Mathematics, etc.) and the Broad Areas of Learning. Media education is one of these Broad Areas of Learning and as such is studied across the curriculum and integrated into other subject areas. It is the responsibility of each teacher, regardless of subject or level taught, to integrate media education into his/her teaching. It is a compulsory component of the QEP.

The educational aim of media education as a Broad Area of Learning within the QEP is, “To develop students’ critical and ethical judgment with respect to media and to give them opportunities to produce media documents that respect individual and collective rights” (p. **AU:CITE** ). The QEP acknowledges the omnipresence of media in daily life, including print and electronic based media, as well as the students’ use of media for a myriad of purposes, including entertainment, education, communication, creation, and work. The media also affects the conscious or unconscious development of ethics and/or values as well as an identity, be that individual, societal, and/or cultural. The teaching of media education must not destroy the students’ ability or opportunities to enjoy the media. In other words, the teaching of media education and its deconstruction and construction of media, should not imply, state or teach that media should not be consumed, used or enjoyed.

One of the Language Arts competencies is, “To represent his/her literacy in different media.” This is an example of how a subject specific competency compels teachers to include media as another modality for students to create, represent, and demonstrate their developing literacies.

Each year sees more and more professional development programs and sessions in media education offered at provincial conferences, school board professional day programs, through the RECIT ( ) network, and as part of in-school cooperative teaching team or team planning sessions. Three provincial groups offer professional development materials and programs for the support and teaching of media education in the QEP:

1) Association for Media Education in Quebec—English group—AMEQ

The primary purpose of AMEQ is to provide information, lesson plans and ideas, expertise, and professional development regarding media education. AMEQ contends that media literacy

should be included both in the kindergarten through grade eleven curriculum and in all teacher training programs. AMEQ actively promotes the idea that parents should also be media literacy educators for their children.

AMEQ has sponsored student media festivals, media education conferences, day long workshops for teachers and parents and parent information evenings. AMEQ members regularly lead workshops at provincial education and parent conferences, school board professional development programs, and guest lectures at McGill University's and Bishop's University's Faculties of Education. AMEQ executive members have also presented briefs to the Quebec Ministry of Education concerning proposed curricular changes and also to the Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) on violence and the media.

2) *Centre de ressources en éducation aux médias*—French group—CREM  
CREM—<http://www.reseau-crem.qc.ca/>—is chaired by Michel Pichette.

3) Réseau Éducation-Médias—<http://www.media-awareness.ca/francais/index.cfm>—French and English group

Courses that incorporate media education are offered in McGill University's Faculty of Education; professors incorporate media education into their education, media and educational technology courses. Media education in French is called *Éducation aux médias*, and is taught within education and educational technology courses in the faculties of education at *Université de Laval*, *Université de Montréal* and *Université du Québec à Montréal*.

In 1991, the Montreal-based Centre for Literacy, which maintains an open resources collection on every aspect of literacy, began to receive a large number of requests for resources on media education. The Centre has increased the media component of their collection.

Ontario, where over one third of Canada's population lives, was the first educational jurisdiction in North America to make media education a mandatory part of the curriculum. In 1989 Ontario's Ministry of Education released new guidelines that emphasized the importance of teaching media education as part of the regular English curriculum. In 1995, the Ontario Ministry of Education outlined what students are expected to know and when they are expected to know it. From Grades 1 through to 9 in Language Arts there are required strands—Listening and Speaking, Reading, Writing, Viewing, and Representation. Further revisions to Ontario's Language Arts curricula in 1998 ensured that media education is a required part of the curricula in both the elementary and secondary panel from Grades 1 through to 12.

At the secondary level, there is an optional stand-alone credit in grade 11. Normally taught by teachers keenly interested in media studies, this course allows for an in-depth approach to the subject. The new conservative government in 1996 had intended to eliminate this media studies credit but effective lobbying was responsible for reinstating the credit. The media sections in the new English documents are organized by “course expectations.” These are sufficiently broad that the teachers can insert any relevant examples to cover the expectations.

One group above all is responsible for the continuing successful development of media education in Ontario. There were seventy people at the Association for Media Literacy's (AML) founding meeting in Toronto in 1978. By the end of the 1980s, the AML had over 1,000 members and a track record of distinguished achievements. In 1986, the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Ontario Teachers' Federation invited ten AML members to prepare a Media Education Resource Guide for teachers. The 232-page guide is used in many English-speaking countries and has been translated into French, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish.

Prior to the release of the Resource Guide, the Ministry seconded the AML authors to give a series of in-service training days to teachers across Ontario. Since 1987, AML members have presented workshops across Canada, and in Australia, Japan, Europe, Latin America, and the United States. The pioneering work of AML paved the way for other provinces to lobby for media literacy in new curriculum.

On their web site, the AML publishes MEDIACY which updates AML members on what has been happening, lists new publications in the field, announces speakers and topics for quarterly events, and publishes articles on related topics. In 1989, the AML held an invitational think tank to discuss future developments of media education in Ontario. This led to two successful international media education conferences at the University of Guelph in 1990 and 1992. Each conference attracted over 500 participants from around the world. The AML was one of the organizers of the very successful Summit 2000: Children, Youth and The Media, an international conference held in Toronto in May, 2000. For the 1,500 delegates from 55 countries, Summit 2000 was a unique opportunity for those who use and teach about the media to meet and talk with those who produce and distribute it.

### The Theory

Canadian teachers are, like most informed media educators, participating in an eclectic circus. We are enthusiastic pragmatists, selecting from a rich menu of critical, cultural, and educational theories and filtering them for classroom use. Because of the small number of trained teachers, the majority use only snippets from a variety of sources: a few quotes from McLuhan, English studies, a diatribe from Neil Postman, a bit of Noam Chomsky, and the rest culled from resource guides, mass media text books, articles, television documentaries, and news programs.

As a generalization, there seems to be a consensus about contextualizing media education

within the frameworks of the British inspired cultural studies, an interdisciplinary approach to the construction of knowledge which problematizes texts and foregrounds representations of gender, race and class. The critical premises behind our resource guide (strongly influenced at the time by UK media educator Len Masterman) and our media textbooks—the majority written by the AML executive—are compatible with comparable material emanating from Australia and the UK. Of paramount importance is the influence of the discourses that are attached to the subjects that teachers are trained in, in most cases English.

Of primary concern to Canadian media educators are the common key concepts which are meant to underpin all media courses, the importance of audience, media and globalization, critical marketing, and media education and digital literacy. The key concepts are:

- 1) All media are constructions. Media are not simple reflections of external reality. They present productions which are carefully crafted.
- 2) The media construct versions of reality. Media messages come with observations, attitudes and interpretations already built in.
- 3) Audiences negotiate meaning in media. Each of us interacts in unique ways to media texts based on such factors as gender, age, and life experiences.
- 4) Media messages have commercial implications. Media education includes an awareness of the economic basis of mass media production. The issue of ownership and control is of vital importance.
- 5) Media messages contain ideological and value messages. Media education involves an awareness of the ideological implications and value systems of media texts.
- 6) Media messages have social and political implications. Media education involves an awareness of the broad range of social and political effects stemming from the media.

- 7) Form and content are closely related in media messages. Making the form/content connections relates to the thesis of Marshall McLuhan that "The medium is the message."
- 8) Each medium has an unique aesthetic form. This enables students not only to decode and understand media texts, but also to enjoy the unique aesthetic form of each.

Awareness of audience is especially important in understanding the dynamics of youth culture. Audience study has foregrounded the importance of the pleasures of the text. It has helped us conceive of viewers as social subjects with multiple subjectivities. Similarly, texts are now seen as being polysemic—they convey many meanings and hence elicit many different readings. Audience study can lead us to learn about interpretive communities —Electronic Bulletin Boards on North American television programs, web sites containing information and gossip on day time soaps, as well as prime time programs. Of special interest is the phenomenal success of teen chat rooms for sharing ideas on writing new endings, and adding new characters for films and novels such as the Harry Potter stories.

When teachers examine their students' cultural practices through knowledge of audience theory, they can not help but change the dynamics of their classrooms. The emphasis on finding out what the students already know about media and how they make sense of it should be the starting points for all media teachers. The work of UK media educator David Buckingham and his colleagues have contributed significantly.

The increasing trend towards globalization of culture has been fueled in part by transnational media corporations and recent mergers. In the post-9/11 universe, our global village seems more intimate and at the same time more frightening. These texts suggest some important theoretical and practical challenges to our notions of cultural sovereignty and democratic citizenship.

Educationally, the right wing conservative governments in several Canadian provinces are fearful of critical thinking practices, cultural criticism and knowledge of the formation of values and ideology. Media educators need to have informed perspectives on our right to democratic access to information, especially that which is constructed by governments and corporations. In 1994, Len Masterman recommended a new paradigm for media education: teaching critical marketing. An expanded definition of media literacy looks at the phenomenon of teen and tween marketing, the dynamics of brand images and the success of organized resistance and culture jamming. Canadian Naomi Klein's 1990 ground breaking study *No Logo* offers a road map for evolving a new media education paradigm—the corporatizing of public space.

The new and converging communication technologies have left many media educators behind as the computer and technology departments in our schools have tended to dominate the discourses of technology. Educators and technocrats tend to resort to our old paradigms of thinking borrowed from traditional media thereby blinding them to new possibilities. The key concepts of media are certainly quite relevant to the digital technologies and the new literacies. Media educators need to examine critically the various discourses being played out. These include utopian notions of techno-education that will deliver us either to a paradisiacal world or to demonic forces beyond our control.

### The Practice

There are several approaches and roles for media education in Canadian classrooms. One of these is an ontological function in which students' relationship with fantasy, reality, one another and the world can be sorted out. Media education can also serve to enhance consumer awareness. Through an understanding of marketing concepts such as psychographics,

demographics, and market share, students can come to an understanding of the role that the mass media play in their lives and their roles in the socioeconomic system.

Another perspective served by media education deals with citizenship, particularly as it compares to consumerism. Students can consider the roles of citizenship and how understanding media messages can help them be more effective citizens. A cultural perspective to media messages can be especially powerful. Considering issues of Canadian identity and American identity can further students' understanding of who they are and how they fit into their local and global communities. Whichever approaches are taken, authenticity is the key to relevant learning. Authenticity means that the media texts studied have interest and relevance in the students' lives.

Overall, four main ways of approaching media education in the classroom emerge. In the *medium-based approach*, the characteristics, strengths and weaknesses of a particular medium are focused upon. This may begin with a naming of parts, in which the parts of a newspaper and a newspaper page are identified and labeled. A *theme-based study* involves several media. An issue—such as gender representation—can be identified and examined in terms of how it is communicated in a variety of media. For many teachers, a media studies unit is a *stand-alone unit* within an English course. This means that they will choose a genre or theme and study it exclusively for up to two weeks. Finally, *integrating media studies* into other classroom activities can be beneficial for creating some of the most authentic study, and also connecting the newer media, such as television or the World Wide Web, to older forms of communication, such as print or speech. As in all curricula and teaching, assessment is a key component for implementation and authentication. AML's Worsnop (**date**) has made media assessment an ongoing theme of his study and writing. His book, *Assessing Media Learning*

(worsnop@pathcom.com), is helping many teachers understand authentic media assessment, but the search for appropriate assessment is ongoing.

Ultimately, whatever the theory and practice adopted, at the classroom level the implementation of media education skills has been uneven from school to school and district to district. Some school boards have established media education as a priority and have supported it with ongoing in-service and the appointment of media consultants. Other school boards have left implementation to the individual teacher. The dedication of the individual teacher greatly influences the extent and quality of media education in the classroom. Associations, such as Ontario's AML, continue to be the strongest ongoing support for teachers pursuing additional expertise and ideas in media education.

#### Resources

In 1992, representatives from Canadian provincial media education groups met in Toronto to form the Canadian Association of Media Education Organizations (CAMEO). The purpose of the group is to promote media education across Canada and link together Canadian media education organizations. Over the years, CAMEO has been involved in questions of copyright, in working with the **CRTC ( ? )** and other organizations around the issues of violence in the media, and in organizing the country wide protest which led to the eventual collapse of the Youth News Network which would have brought commercials into the classroom in return for free AV equipment. One of the major accomplishments of CAMEO was reaching the goal of making media literacy a mandatory part of the Language Arts curriculum at all grade levels across Canada. This goal was attained in 2002.

In 2003, CAMEO's President, John J. Pungente, SJ served on the advisory committee chaired by the Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF) —[www.ctf-fce.ca](http://www.ctf-fce.ca)—for a project to conduct a national survey on Canadian children and the media. Close to 6,000 Canadian children, ages 8-15, from every province took part. The material gathered is invaluable in helping parents, teachers and children look at the media from a media literacy point of view. The survey, *Kids' Take on the Media*, showed that as children get older, they increasingly see the value of studying media in school. Although media literacy is mandated in all provinces and territories, there is little professional development for teachers or resources attached to this discipline. CAMEO is working with the CTF and other groups to change this.

Canadians have written a number of excellent media education texts since 1987. The more recent ones include the second edition of *Mass Media and Popular Culture* (Duncan, **list other authors**, 1996) and *Media Sense* in three parts, one for each of Grades 4, 5, and 6 (Booth, **list other authors**, 1998).

An ongoing concern about media violence and its effect on children gave rise to a Metro Toronto School Board publication, *Responding to Media Violence* (**AUTHORS, DATE**), designed to support Kindergarten to grade 6 teachers' efforts to help their students make sense of influences of violent behaviors they may witness in the media.

*More Than Meets the Eye: Watching Television, Watching You* (Pungente & O'Malley, 1999) was meant as a guide to media literacy. The book looks at issues of television violence, TV news and prime time shows, advertising, talk TV, and values. It also stresses there is nothing wrong with television itself, as the authors see it; it's all part of our common culture.

*Scanning Television* consists of forty video excerpts copyright cleared for classroom use, selected from Citytv's Media Television, Warner Brothers, The National Film Board, and others

(Pungente & Marcuse, 1997). This kit includes a detailed study guide (Andersen, 1997). The success of *Scanning Television* created a demand for another edition using all new video excerpts. The revised edition of *Scanning Television* is a media literacy kit including 51 short videos (Pungente & Marcuse, 2003) and a teacher's guide (Andersen & Tyner, 2003). The subjects of the videos range from the evolution of communications technology and the Internet, to youth advertising, pop culture, culture jamming, international news media, 9/11, and the history of film and television.

In 1994 the Canadian media education scene got a boost from the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) and the National Film Board of Canada (NFB). At a two-day CRTC session for education and parent groups around the issue of children and television violence, representatives, led by John Pungente, S.J., suggested that the NFB set up a clearinghouse of resources for media education. The result was the establishment of the Media Awareness Network (MNet), which operated for two years under the aegis of the NFB and incorporated as an independent not-for-profit organization in 1996. The vision was clear: the Media Awareness Network would be the first Canadian online media education organization. From the beginning, MNet was a bilingual organization, with "sister" websites in English and French. It would support and promote media education through online resources for adults—teachers, parents, librarians, community workers—so that they in turn could help young people develop critical thinking skills to "read" and better appreciate the media messages in their lives.

In 2002 -2003, Media Awareness Network redesigned its website to improve access to its bank of over 4,000 resources. The site attracted over three million unique visits in its first year, with approximately 85 percent of visitors making repeat visits in a given week. About a quarter

of users come from Canada, the rest from the U.S. and around the world. The *For Teachers* section, produced by Jane Tallim, MNet's Director of Education, includes a searchable *Lesson Library* of nearly 300 teaching units linked to, and designed to fulfill, Canadian provincial media education outcomes K-12. The lessons are supported by the *Media Issues* section which provides essays and current reference material on media-related topics such as stereotyping, violence, privacy, marketing to children, the portrayal of diversity in the media, and online hate. The section also features *Barry's Bulletin*, a popular culture digest for media educators.

In 2000 and 2001, MNet's research initiative, *Young Canadians in a Wired World (Phase I)*, surveyed, for the first time in Canada, parents (n=1,100) and then students (n=6,000), on how young people are using the Internet and what they think about it. In 2003, MNet conducted focus groups in Montreal, Edmonton, and Toronto in order to track the fast transformation of the Internet from a new technology to an accepted and central part of young people's lives. This research continues to inform MNet's education programs. MNet staff members have addressed over 15,000 educators, librarians, parents and government officials on media-related topics and have been invited to speak at events in Japan, Singapore, Germany, France, Argentina, Mexico, and the U.S.

In collaboration with Canada's leading media educators, MNet is embarking on a new program, *Literacies for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Media Lit 21)*. The aim is to take a cross-cultural, cross-curricular approach to media education, involving media educators, cultural institutions, and media industries, to address the digital media environment and culture. *Media Lit 21* is predicated on the elements required to give media education a "jump start," including a buy-in from Canada's media and cultural industries and governments and a professional development program for teachers (online and on CD). MNet has been fortunate in being financially supported

by the public and private sectors, while maintaining complete control over its content.

Financial supporters include: Bell Canada, Rogers Cable Communications, AOL Canada, Microsoft Canada, CHUM Television, CTV, TELUS, Craig Media, Canadian Recording Industry Association, National Film Board of Canada, Alliance Atlantis, **BCE.**, CanWest Global, and the Government of Canada (**cite source**).

Since its founding in 1990, the Concerned Children's Advertisers (CCA) —[www.cca-kids.ca](http://www.cca-kids.ca)—has developed over 35 child-directed television commercials on topics ranging from substance abuse prevention and active living to bullying and self-esteem. They have developed study guides for all of these and also do workshops on them across Canada. In 1997, the CCA , working with the Jesuit Communication Project, produced its first media literacy public service announcement, "Smart as You." And in 2001, the CCA released its second media literacy public service announcement, "The House Hippo."

Canada's *Cable in the Classroom*—[www.cablededucation.ca](http://www.cablededucation.ca)—provides a very useful resource for teachers from its 35 cable network participants. Each *Cable in the Classroom* program has been copyright-cleared for classroom use for at least one year from the date of original broadcast. Teachers are welcome to tape the commercial-free shows, usually in the early morning, and screen them for their students on an as-needed basis. Many of the broadcasts are accompanied by teachers' guides, often posted on the Internet.

**CHUM** Television is a division of CHUM Limited, one of Canada's leading media companies and content providers, which owns and operates eight local television stations and 18 cable channels in Canada. CHUM Television's pioneering commitment to support and promote media education, undertaken since the mid 1980s, is unique among Canadian media companies. What began as an effort to make viewers more literate about what they watch by producing

programs that explore the nature of screen-based content, has grown into a wider support of Canada's media education community and related international conferences, campaigns and activities. CHUM Television provides commercial-free, copyright-cleared original programming (and related Study Guides) free of charge for use in the classroom— [www.chumlimited.com/mediaed](http://www.chumlimited.com/mediaed)—funds media education initiatives, and donates airtime and Web space to the issue, in an effort to provide tools and resources to everyone and encourage a heightened awareness about the nature and role of the media.

Several of CHUM Television's conventional and cable channels produce media literacy and social issues programs: Bravo!, Canada's national arts channel, produces *Scanning the Movies*, an analysis of contemporary film hosted by media education scholar Father John Pungente, SJ. Now in its seventh year, the show has produced over 50 half hour prime time episodes. The award winning series is both a critical and popular success (CITE).

MuchMusic, Canada's only 24-hour music channel geared specifically to teens and young adults, creates programming that addresses media and social issues from a pop-culture, youth-oriented perspective. Programming examples include *Womaging*, a show about female body image and the media, and *Hip Hop Consciousness*, in which hip hop artists discuss their efforts to effect positive change in their community and combat the materialism of mainstream hip hop. Citytv Toronto, Canada's largest independent television station serving the Toronto area, produces *MediaTelevision*, a show providing in depth analysis and critique of the media process.

CHUM programs have been requested by prestigious organizations as research material. For example, *A MuchMusic Special: Zambia* was requested by the Coping Centre for People Living with AIDS (COCEPWA) and the Africa-Canada Youth Symposium for Leadership in

Development, organized by the internationally-renowned Coady Institute. CHUM Television's support of media education is a key area of the company's corporate philanthropy. They operate on the belief that the ability to better understand media should be a primary skill of all Canadians, and that broadcasters can and should play a role in encouraging this literacy as part of good corporate citizenship.

### Conclusions

Canada has been quite active on the world stage in the support and creation of media education. Still, challenges face all who are committed to this work. Our study of media education, especially given the Canadian experience, shows nine factors which appear to us crucial to the successful development of media education:

- 1) Media education, like other innovative programs, must be a grassroots movement and teachers need to take a major initiative in lobbying for this.
- 2) Educational authorities must give clear support to such programs by mandating the teaching of media education within the curriculum, establishing guidelines and resource books, and by ensuring curricula are developed and materials are available.
- 3) Faculties of Education must hire staff capable of training future teachers in this area. There should also be academic support from tertiary institutions in the writing of curricula and in sustained consultation.
- 4) In-service training at the school district level must be an integral part of program implementation.
- 5) School districts need consultants who have expertise in media education and who will establish communication networks.

- 6) Suitable textbooks and audio-visual material which are relevant to the country/area must be available.
- 7) A support organization must be established for the purposes of workshops, conferences, dissemination of newsletters and the development of curriculum units. Such a professional organization must cut across school boards and districts to involve a cross section of people interested in media education.
- 8) There must be appropriate evaluation instruments.
- 9) Because media education involves such a diversity of skills and expertise, there must be collaboration between teachers, parents, researchers, and media professionals.

Traditionally Australia and Britain have led the world in media education. Although Canada has not had the many years of experience that these countries have, Canada now possesses most of the factors critical to the successful development of media education. American educators can look to Canada for needed experience and collaboration in media literacy.

Table 1

## Websites in Canadian Media Literacy

Web Address	Site Description
<a href="http://interact.uoregon.edu/MediaLit/CAMEO/index.html">http://interact.uoregon.edu/MediaLit/CAMEO/index.html</a>	Canadian Association of Media Education Organizations (CAMEO)
<a href="http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/CommunitySupport/AMLNS/media_literacy.html">http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/CommunitySupport/AMLNS/media_literacy.html</a>	Association for Media Literacy-Nova Scotia (AMNS)
<a href="http://www.cca-canada.com/">http://www.cca-canada.com/</a>	Concerned Children's Advertisers (CCA)
<a href="http://interact.uoregon.edu/MediaLit.it/JCP/">http://interact.uoregon.edu/MediaLit.it/JCP/</a>	The Jesuit Communication Project
<a href="http://www.media-awareness.ca/">http://www.media-awareness.ca/</a>	Media Awareness Network (MNet)—both French and English links; includes links to Alberta Association for Media Awareness (AAMA), Manitoba Association for Media Literacy (MAML)
<a href="http://www.quadrant.net/Media-Literacy/">http://www.quadrant.net/Media-Literacy/</a>	Media Literacy Saskatchewan (MLS)
<a href="http://www.stf.sk.ca/prof_growth/ssc/stela/stela.html">http://www.stf.sk.ca/prof_growth/ssc/stela/stela.html</a>	Saskatchewan Teachers of English Language Arts (STELA)
<a href="http://www.aml.ca/">http://www.aml.ca/</a>	Association for Media Literacy (AML)
<a href="http://www.chumlimited.com/mediaed/studyguides.asp">http://www.chumlimited.com/mediaed/studyguides.asp</a>	CHUM Television study guides in media literacy including MuchMediaLit and Bravo!s <i>Scanning the Movies</i> study guides
<a href="http://www.crtc.gc.ca/">http://www.crtc.gc.ca/</a>	Canadian Radio-television Telecommunications Commission (CRTC)
<a href="http://www.amtec.ca/">http://www.amtec.ca/</a>	Association for Media and Technology in Education in Canada (AMTEC)



For further information on Canadian Media Literacy, consult the CAMEO web site - <http://interact.uoregon.edu/MediaLit/CAMEO/index.html> . You may also contact one of the CAMEO members listed below – many of whom contributed to their own section of this article. Our thanks to them.

British Columbia Association of Media Education (BCAME)

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Media Literacy Saskatchewan (MLS)

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