DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 364 214 IR 016 392

AUTHOR Hoffman, Lawrence M.
TITLE The Meanings of Channel One: Curriculum. Instruction, and Ethics; History, Control, and Rhetoric.
PUB DATE Apr 91
NOTE 43p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Chicago, IL, April 3-7, 1991).
PUB TYPE Information Analyses (070) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Broadcast Television; *Classroom Techniques; Communications Satellites; *Curriculum Evaluation; Economic Factors; Educational History; Educational Technology; *Educational Television; *Ethics; Ideology; Mass Media Role; News Reporting; Rhetoric; School Business Relationship; Secondary Education; *Teaching Methods; Television Commercials; Videotape Recordings
IDENTIFIERS *Channel One; Control (Social Behavior)

ABSTRACT

"Channel One" is a television news program produced by Whittle Communications Inc. and broadcast by satellite to American secondary schools that have entered into a contract for it. The contract requires no monetary payment by the school and provides it with a satellite dish, videocassette recorder, and essentially one television per classroom. In exchange for the program and equipment, students must be exposed to 10 minutes of news and 2 minutes of commercials every school day for 3 years. The curriculum, instructional approach, and ethics of use of Channel One are explored from several viewpoints. The history of corporate involvement in the schools is traced, and some historical analogues of Channel One in mass media are identified. Ethical considerations in such broadcasting, in particular the showing of commercials, and curriculum issues in producing the news program are considered. Further concerns are the issue of control over the exposure of students to program content, and the ideology presented to students through the programs. The phenomenon of Channel One must be regarded as an alert, bringing to public awareness issues and questions that are not easily resolved, but which will become more important as economic feasibility allows the public and private sectors to use electronic technologies for educational purposes. One figure illustrates the discussion. (Contains 47 references.) (SLD)

THE MEANINGS OF CHANNEL ONE:

CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ETHICS;

HISTORY, CONTROL, AND RHETORIC

Lawrence M. Hoffman
Ph.D candidate
Dept. of Educational Policy & Leadership
Ohio State University
29 West Woodruff
Columbus, Ohio 43210

Presented at the Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association
Chicago, Illinois
April 6, 1992

Please cite this paper and author when referring in writing to ideas presented herein

CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Analytical Approach	1
Whittle and His Operation	3
Whittle's Marketing and the Location of the Debate	4
Values and Ideologies Perspective	4
Historical Corporate Involvement in Schools	6
Historical Analogues of Channel One in Mass Media	8
Bases for Judging the Ethics of Channel One	11
Ethics of Rhetoric	12
Various Perspectives	13
Ethical Criteria Based on a Democratic Perspective	14
Ethical Criteria Based on Situational Uniqueness	17
The Propriety of Vagueness and Ambiguity	18
Conclusion	19
Instructional Arguments	19
Student Attention	19
Individualization	20
Effectiveness	20
Efficient Use of Time	21
Countering Instructional Claims With Curricular Questions	21
Rapid Pacing	21
Teenage Viewpoint	22
Curriculum Issues	22
Integration	22
Content Replaced	23
Commercials: The Significance of Their Presence	24
Commercials: The Significance of Their Content	25
Issues Relating to Self-Determination, Power, and Control	27
Inequality	27
State Versus Local Control	28
Autonomy of Educators	29
Control Over View of Reality	29
Public Versus Private Funding	31
Political Economic Ideology	31
Indoctrination With Dominant Ideas	33
Extrapolations and Possible Responses	33
Conclusion	36
References	38

THE MEANINGS OF CHANNEL ONE: CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, AND ETHICS: HISTORY, CONTROL, AND RHETORIC

Introduction

Channel One is a television news program, produced by Whittle Communications Inc. and broadcast by satellite to American secondary schools that have entered into a contract for it. The subscription contract requires no monetary payment by the schools and provides them with a satellite dish, VCR, and essentially one TV per classroom. In exchange for the program and the equipment, in addition to the ten minutes of news, students must be exposed to two minutes of commercials every school day for three years.

Although advertising is virtually everywhere, television advertising has never, until now, been a sanctioned component of the school day. Because the terms of the Channel One arrangement constitute a real and obvious change in the role accorded to advertising by schools and by business, the program has aroused a large controversy. The positions people have taken in this controversy have, as one might imagine, comprised not just a simple dichotomy but a rather wide variety of desires and reasons. When clothed in persuasive rhetoric and hyperbole, the similarities and differences among these desires and reasons become hard to distinguish. My research is an attempt to collect the various arguments people have made in regard to Channel One, pro and con, and place them in several perspectives, in order to critique them and learn how important they might be. This work proposes no final answers but is meant rather to clarify important issues that presently exist and to encourage anticipation of issues that may develop as various parties act. Hence, this in not an in-depth critique from a single viewpoint, but more of a survey from several viewpoints, so that in-depth critiques might more easily proceed.

Analytical Approach

The factual information and the arguments for and against Channel One discussed in this study were gathered primarily from mass print media articles. More information and arguments were obtained from verbal statements and written survey responses made by members of the State Board of Education in Ohio and testimony to that body. Formal and informal interviews were conducted with administrators from several Ohio school districts, teachers, officers of three professional education associations and the American Library Association, a director of a state instructional television service, officials in the cable television industry, and a representative of Whittle Communications.

For the purpose of analysis, it would seem useful to visualize a three-dimensional matrix--a cube (see Figure 1). Divide up one dimension among the tangible components of the Channel One scenario: the news broadcast, the commercials, the equipment, the supplementary channels and services, the contractual terms, Whittle's marketing process, the very palpable opposition to the program, and the decision-making processes of the schools.

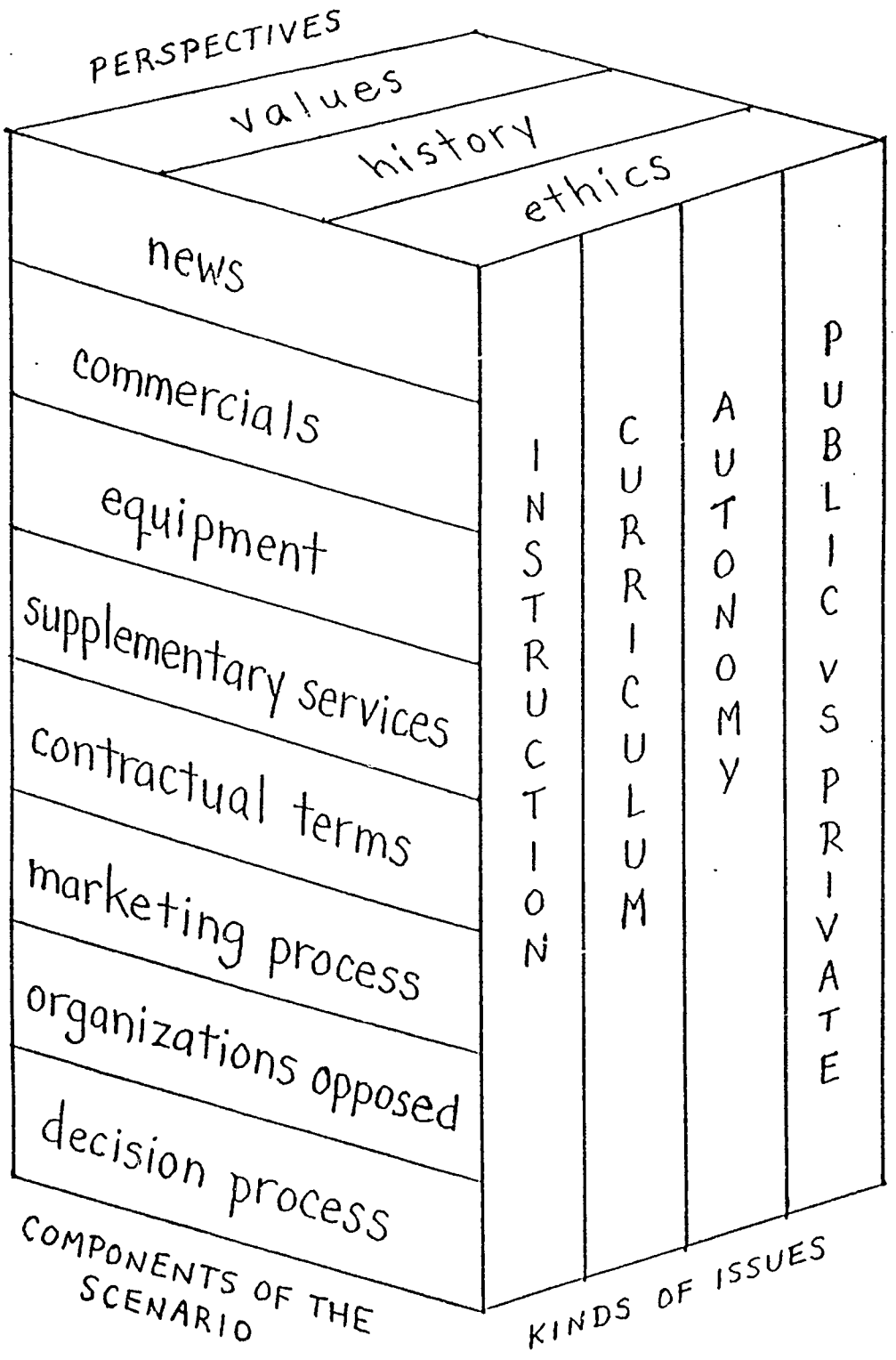

Figure 1. Analytical Approach to Channel One

Along the second axis, place a categorization of issues--the arguments and counter-arguments that have emerged in regard to those components: effectiveness of instruction; appropriateness of curriculum; empowerment or autonomy of one group or another; and private interest (mainly advertisers) versus public interest. When referring to curriculum, I mean whatever students have an opportunity to learn in school, whether overtly, implicitly, or because something has been left out (McCutcheon, 1982). By instruction, what I mean is how educators attempt to bring about learning. Because students can learn things from the way instruction is carried out, such as by a teacher or a public television program or a TV newscast with commercials, instruction plays a part in determining curriculum.

It would be difficult to create a coherent categorization of the issues without reference to some perspective or perspectives. Let the third axis represent perspectives through which the issues might profitably be viewed: values or ideologies; history; and ethics. Let the ethics perspective be subdivided into the ethics of education, of business and advertising, and of communication or rhetoric. This is not the only classification possible. Nor are the categories mutually exclusive: they overlap. But it is a starting point for description and analysis.

A framework proposed by Elliot Eisner and Elizabeth Vallance (1974; Eisner, 1985; Vallance, 1986) describes some of the likely results when school curricula are oriented toward certain common ideologies or sets of values. This framework of curriculum value orientations may help in articulating the similarities and differences among the various positions regarding Channel One. The writing of Joel Spring (1972; 1984; 1990; 1991) provides some historical insight into corporate involvement in education dating back to the beginning of this century and earlier. The work of Sheila Harty (1979), concentrates on the influence of business and industry on instructitonal materials over the last four decades. While it is possible to use ethical criteria from business or advertising or from the philosophy of education, the ethical grounding employed here is from the field of rhetoric, based on the writing of Richard L. Johannesen (1983).

As in most writing, the sources and examples cited in this paper imply certain viewpoints and concerns of the author. It is hoped that the treatment of the ideas in this paper will, nevertheless, broaden the discussion rather than narrowing it.

Whittle and His Operation

Whittle Communications is a company run by Christopher Whittle, a man skilled and well-known in the field of marketing. Some of his innovative ideas have developed into very profitable business ventures. He is an originator of the single-sponsor magazine and a major exponent in the publishing of books which, like magazines, contain advertisements among the pages of text. These innovations have been controversial in

the publishing industry, for their valuing of advertising above content (Mayer, 1989). Whittle has characterized his company as "guerilla media" (Rose, 1988). The company produces poster-size billboards that have for several years been displayed in the hallways and libraries of thousands of American schools--elemenary, secondary, and colleges. They present prosocial advice, trivia, and pictures of popular persons, accompanied by advertisements for products and services from companies such as Proctor and Gamble, Mars Candies, and Gillette. The company has become an affiliate of the media conglomerate, Time Warner.

Whittle's Marketing and the Location of the Debate

Approximately sixty representatives from Whittle Communications market Channel One nationwide to individual public and parochial school districts and to state education authorities. In the spring of 1989, Channel One was pilot tested in five schools around the country. Since then, numerous educational organizations have responded, the vast majority in opposition to the program. The program's visibility was greatly enhanced when Whittle debated its merits on the ABC television program, Nightline.

Channel One began broadcasting officially in March of 1990. By October, the company claimed to have reached agreements with the boards or administrations of some 4,500 high schools and middle schools. Constitutional and legal prohibitions have kept it out of or limited its adoption in several states, including New York, California, Rhode Island, North Carolina, and possibly others. People have tried to influence the adoption or rejection of Channel One in their localities, at the state level, and on a national scale.

In addition to Channel One, two other channels are included in the package called the Whittle Educational Network and received by schools through Whittle's system. One is called the Educators' Channel, broadcasting inservice ideas for teachers, perhaps along with commercials. The other is the Classroom Channel. It will carry educational videos distributed from the huge catalog of the Pacific Mountain Network. The service will have no commercials at first, but there is some thought to adding commercials for which sponsors would pay school districts directly.

Values and Ideologies Perspective

There is no universally accepted yardstick by which preferences can be evaluated in terms of better and worse (Broudy, 1954). People hold conceptions of what is good and desirable; those conceptions motivate their behavior and function as criteria for the choices and judgments they make. Those conceptions are, of course, the values people hold (Johannesen, 1983). Persons and groups also hold ideologies: sets of notions about human nature and society that they use to interpret problems and to act in their best interests and the best interests of society (Kaestle, 1982). The relationship of values and ideology is

beyond this discussion. They each seem, however, to have a role in determining the other. One's evaluation of anything depends upon one's values and, to some extent, one's ideology.

Two of the curriculum value orientations posited by Eisner and Vallance seem particularly relevant to the present discussion. These views are referred to by Eisner (1985) as social adaptation and social reconstruction. They stem from different conceptions people have about what the "needs" of our society are. Proponents of the social adaptation view hold an abiding belief that the structure of our society is fundamentally good and should be conserved. Society is improved primarily, they believe, through technological development and the nurturing of a common political identity among the people (Feinberg & Soltis, 1985). By contrast, in the social reconstruction view, our institutions as presently constituted hinder our ability to respond equitably to needs that stem from important social, economic, and political differences among people. If the needs of society are to be met, institutions will have to be substantially changed.

Social adaptation and social reconstruction do not circumscribe two distinct groups but rather a continuum along which there are people who have varying degrees of faith in and disenchantment with institutionalized social, economic, and political practices. It seems that most people find themselves nearer the adaptation end, in terms of the purpose of the curriculum. Although there are probably a goodly number of persons and groups who would go so far as to call themselves advocates or practitioners of social reform and want school to reflect that leaning, there would appear to be few who want the curriculum to promote social reconstruction or praxis. Because the main voices for social adaptation are those of well-organized and well-financed business alliances and of corporations that provide the goods for our prosperous lives, persons who otherwise lack strong convictions about education tend to be persuaded to accept the corporate ideology.

When Channel One is debated, it seems that arguments for its adoption tend to reflect a social adaptation orientation; arguments against it, however, do not tend to reflect a social reconstruction orientation but rather a sort of resigned acceptance of how our free enterprise system has been operating. Many parents and teachers, without hearing a balance of views on the issues, seem to want only to fine tune the program by keeping the commercials "clean" and to a reasonable length. Similarly, teachers and administrators suffering from inadequacy of instructional resources have long been willing to accept the biased materials produced by business and industry (Harty, 1979). While the governing bodies of professional education associations have objected to TV commercials in the classroom (Action for Children's Television, 1990) they, too, have had little to say about other forms of commercialization in school.

Historical Corporate Involvement in Schools

An understanding of the implications of Channel One can be aided by an awareness of the history of the involvement of business interests in American education. A few historical instances might suggest some directions for studying that involvement.

There are today and historically there have been numerous ways that brand-name advertising has occurred in the context of school programs: book covers, book clubs, fund-raising promotions, and sports scoreboards are just a few examples. With regard to these kinds of advertising, Scott D. Thomson, Executive Director of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) has said, "the Whittle proposal crosses a clear line previously honored by the private sector" (Thomson, 1989, p. 23). But that historical line may not be so clear. Individual companies and industry associations have for many years advertised in schools through materials, produced to their own specifications, which they have claimed to be instructional. Because these booklets, movies, filmstrips, games, kits, etc. fill in details that textbooks cannot possibly cover and are usually free of charge, schools have accepted them gratefully. Hucksters in the Classroom (Harty, 1979) published by Ralph Nader's Center for Study of Responsive Law, documents how these widely-distributed materials virtually always give biased and often blatantly misleading portrayals of a company, industry, or way of life. Such propaganda is meant to enhance the profits and political agendas of its sponsors.

As far back as 1924, journalist and social reformer Upton Sinclair wrote that the public schools of Los Angeles, strongly influenced by business interests, held a Chamber of Commerce Week during which all students were to write essays or letters to their fathers about the Chamber and its achievements (Spring, 1972). The National Education Association's Committee on Propaganda in the Schools reported in 1929, "We have hundreds of outside agencies each striving to exploit the school in the interest of its particular commodity or idea. Their resources are large and their method of penetration ingenious" (Harty, 1979, p. 99). Harty (1979) cites a study that followed the alteration in terminology of reference to such materials over the years, as it changed from "propaganda" in 1929 to "print advertising" to "industry aids" to "public service information" to the much more positive term "educational materials."

Persons with ideological agendas have at times had designs on schools in America. Some of these agendas, while still existent today, were strongest in earlier times. Note the harsh words of Philadelphia statesman Benjamin Rush in 1876, expressing a popular ideology in which schooling was a way of making children conform obediently to the laws of the state:

> By this mode of education we prepare our youth for the subordination of laws and thereby qualify them for becoming good

> citizens....I consider it as possible to convert men into republican machines....to perform their parts properly in the great machine of the state (Kaestle, 1983, p. 7).

Other ideologies are of more recent vintage. Compare the words of Rush to those published in a brochure of a company called Lifetime Learning Systems, founded in 1978, expressing an ideology in which schooling is a way of making children conform obediently to the will of marketers:

> [T]ake your message into the classroom, where the young people you want to reach are forming attitudes that will last a lifetime.....[S]chool is...the ideal time to influence attitudes, build long-term loyalties, introduce new products, test market, promote sampling and trial usage and--above all--to generate immediate sales (Consumers Union, 1990, p. 8).

In the past, free information came from heavy industry: nuclear power information from public utilities and environmental information from lumber and chemical companies. Their appeal was often subtle, through issues and institutions rather than directly through products, avoiding visual and verbal hyperbole in their claims. Now, it seems that more consumer products are marketed, along with materials thinly disguised as instructional. In a special publication entitled Selling America's Kids: Commercial Pressure on Kids of the 90's, Consumers Union (1990) says, "More than 20 million students a year use corporate-sponsored teaching materials in school," many of which "gave incomplete or inaccurate information, or encouraged purchasing via coupons, brand-specific recipes, or free samples" (p. 9). Is it any wonder that Whittle sensed the ripeness of the market for televised advertising in school?

Whittle's concept of a current events awareness in schools and his company's role are not altogether new. Publications such as Newsweek and major urban newspapers provide services to help schools utilize their product. Tyack and Hansot (1982) point out that newspapers promoted the growth of public schooling in the nineteenth century. Newspapers "had a vested interest in literacy, for it helped them sell their product..." (p. 52). Textbooks were frequently sold by newspaper publishers. "Newsmen published speeches...and argued for improved public schools. Frequently, to prick local pride, they described the advances made elsewhere" (p. 52). Newpapers provided people in isolated communities with vital links to the world. Today, in a similar vein, in one of Whittle's promotional brochures, the principal of a Channel One pilot school is quoted, "The equipment was really valuable. Now we videotape speakers so that the whole student body can see them."

The question of why the increasingly intense corporate marketing in schools has not drawn much fire in the past is a provocative one. The debate about Channel One may help to answer it. Whether one mode of selling to children at school is more heinous or benign than another is a complicated problem.

Historical Analogues of Channel One in Mass Media

In the early part of the twentieth century, in a society that was increasingly urban and immigrant, leading educators--mainly administrators and the leadership of the NEA--believed along with business leaders that traditional instruments of social control, i.e., family, church, and community, had broken down. The leaders believed that the role of these institutions should be strongly supplemented by education and, increasingly, by the mass media--notably, movies and radio. But these media were as likely to present material of questionable social value as educationally worthwhile content. The subsequent debate over censorship of movies, which first became heated in the 1920's, centered on whether the industry could police the morality of its own products or would be required by the outrage of citizens to submit to censorship by the government. The result was an elaborate system of self-censorship, which audiences clearly accepted for many years. The radio networks in the 1930's experienced similar demands and made a similar response. The relationship between American educational interests and the movie and radio industries has been documented by Spring (1990).

There are some remarkable parallels between the introduction of commercial television into the classroom in the form of Channel One and the advent of earlier mass communication media portrayed by Spring (1990). This segment is not a discussion of whether intellectual freedom or moral rectitude have been served by past or present regulation of mass media. It is, rather, a comparison of events of the distant past and recent past, suggesting that there are historical precedents for arguments that have been made and actions taken in regard to Channel One.

1. Silent movies came into being in the 1890's and talkies in the 1920's. Although immensely popular, some had themes or scenes that were felt to be morally objectionable. In the 1930's, radio came into existence and, commercial stations produced some programs that were offensive to some people. Channel One has also aroused the sensibilities of people, some being morally offended by the sexuality or the graffiti in pilot versions of the commercials and others decrying the ethics of having commercials at all.

2. With movies and radio, there was controversy over how to protect the public, especially children, from being corrupted. Mainstream, moralistic views of various established and ad hoc civic organizations and coalitions were publicized, including those of leaders from business and labor. Channel One has aroused similar controversy, with many groups weighing in on the issue of requiring students to view commercials. While advertising and marketing interests favor it, acceptance by the business community at large seems for the present to be relatively tacit. The leaders of most educational organizations oppose it.

3. Film executives claimed that regulation of movies was more difficult than regulation of books, because movies were experienced by everyone while books were only experienced by the literate public. One of the issues today is the distinction between requiring children to read articles surrounded by print advertising and requiring them to view TV programs with commercials. Some opponents claim that TV commercials are more influential than ads in print.

4. To protect themselves from public outrage resulting in censorship by the government, be it through local police raids or federal requirements, the movie industry adopted and enforced voluntary criteria. The radio industry later did the same. With regard to advertising, the CBS radio code, for instance, did away with ads for laxatives and other items that were thought not in good taste. Channel One has experienced government censorship, having been banned in New York State, for example. But to keep from offending parents, the company maintains its own guidelines as to the things it will not advertise, such as alcoholic beverages and feminine hygiene products.

5. Movies and radio had been seen as competing against the schools. Having been amply chastised by public opinion for this alleged role, industry leaders took up the causes of morality, cultural advancement, and social stability, which gave these persons the mantel of moral leadership. Radio officials nevertheless found themselves hard pressed to support their claim that fifty percent of program content had educational value. In contrast, the rationale emphasized to the public for the introduction of Channel One has been educational. From its inception, the producers have been able to deflect criticism of its commercial purpose and flashy approach by standing behind its educational motive. Those who portray it as competing with moral values that schools should foster, such as social justice and environmental stewardship, find their argument challenged by the prominence of other rationales for education such as individual success, economic advancement, and national security.

6. Movie and radio executives publicly addressed the NEA to explain how the objectives of the two groups coincided. Whittle, his executive editor, William S. Rukeyser, and their marketing personnel have energetically striven to speak to many education-oriented groups around the country for the same reason.

7. To gain the support of concerned groups, the movie industry and later the radio industry attempted to co-opt their power by recruiting them into their public relations campaigns. Radio stations, for example, offered free air time to these groups. Whittle, too, has used this approach, forming an advisory council on policy matters that includes nationally recognized educational spokespersons and a council of teachers and administrators to assist in more detailed planning. In addition, the agreement includes access to a large collection of purely educational videos and a series of shows for staff development. The inclusion of video equipment in the exchange, and the encouragement of

schools to use the equipment for student productions is reminiscent of the motion picture executive who, in 1914, argued before the NEA that a school could cover the cost of a movie projector by showing movies in the evening to parents for a charge.

8. To guide students in their interpretations of movies they would view, schools began to teach courses in movie appreciation. The industry favored this approach, because it suggested that government restriction was unnecessary and it increased the market for film versions of classic stories. The National Council of Teachers of English, in cooperation with the movie producers association, began to provide schools with study guides for movies based on classic books. Educators and the movie industry agreed that better-educated consumers would raise the level of quality of movies by creating a demand for high quality. Study guides are a fixture of the Channel One package, as well. Guides to the interpretation of commercials have not appeared, but programs with segments dealing with the purposes and techniques of advertising may already have been broadcast.

Critical viewing skills for movies did not become a fixture of school curricula, and movie study guides have become a rarity. In recent years, courses have been designed to help young people evaluate commercial television programs, with the critique including social, political, and economic factors related to the content and techniques of the advertising. Presumably, such coursework exists in some of the schools that use Channel One. It is unknown whether critical viewing curricula will become prevalent, whether it will be used effectively, or whether it will be initiated then shelved.

9. Research studies examined the effects of movies that were expected to have negative influences on children and youth. Studies confirming the negative effects and the counteracting influences of appreciation courses were publicized. Studies also indicated that the reading of books relevant to movie subjects increased among students. A number of independent research studies of effects of Channel One have already been carried out or initiated, and the company has itself commissioned a multi-faceted study. It has been suggested that student viewers will be more likely to follow news from other sources, and this aspect is likely to be studied.

10. In the early twentieth century, respected civic leaders advocated and the general public accepted censorship of movies, whether from government or the industry. Eventually, though, formal self-policing by the mass media ceased, except for movie ratings systems. It became the responsibility of the members of the public to try to sway the industry through their viewing, listening, and purchasing choices and to influence both the industry and government policy through advocacy groups. In general, the public's tolerance of formerly unacceptable movie content increased greatly.

In the present day, there is consensus that some kinds of censorship should exist with regard to commercials in the classroom. There is a combination of government censorship (e.g., no cigarette ads), industry self-censorship (e.g., no ads for feminine hygiene products), and citizen pressure (e.g., no ads that are very sexually suggestive or are casual about disrespect for the law). The kinds of advocacy groups that have been responsible for some reform in commercial television (Montgomery, 1989) are likely to press Whittle and his future competitors on the content of their ads. Included are likely to be:

(1) organizations of minorities, women, seniors, and the disabled, wanting more positive images conveyed in media;
(2) conservative religious organizations concerned with moral content;
(3) groups advocating education on social issues such as substance abuse, environmental conservation, and AIDS; and
(4) professional education groups, parent organizations, and groups advocating the provision of better conditions of childhood, such as proper nutrition and no excessive violence.

Some of these groups oppose not simply the content but also the notion of advertising in the classroom. To these groups may be added critical theorists or democratic socialists, who are concerned with the just distribution of and access to wealth and power. Despite these groups, however, some of the constraints upon Whittle's commercial content are likely to fall as public standards of morals and taste become increasingly liberal.

Bases for Judging the Ethics of Channel One

Values refer to conceptions of what is good or desirable that motivate humans to act. They function as criteria for the choices and judgments we make. Ethics, in contrast, are conceptions of what is right and wrong in human action. The values that serve as criteria for ethical judgment include honesty, fairness, and humaneness (Johannesen, 1983). Thus, ethics are a subset of values: they are moral values.

Many of the arguments against Channel One have been appeals to ethics. What seems to be lacking is specific grounding for those ethical appeals. The commercials and the exchange for equipment have been called unethical on the basis of what seems to be some common sense understanding of what school is supposed to be. There seems to be a need to point out specific ethical canons that have been violated--statements by authoritative persons or bodies. Of course, any argument that appeals to a transcendental idea blessed by a community of scholars or officials is susceptible to deconstruction. That is, it can be seen as no more important than any other idea, if the powerful persons or the applications that once gave it credence have either been forgotten or discredited. Nevertheless, it seems indefensible to say that Whittle or Channel One or any similar venture has perpetrated something unethical if one cannot say why.

Ethics of Rhetoric

While the ethics of Channel One could be examined with reference to ethical criteria in the fields of business, advertising, or education, the lens used here will be the ethics of rhetoric, within the field of communication. Rhetoric is simply persuasive communication. Because nearly all communication has some persuasive purpose, a consideration of the ethics of persuasion has broad relevace. Channel One can be viewed through its lens--or, rather, through some of its many lenses. The work here is only a very beginning, but perhaps it will suggest routes that other researchers might pursue further. My main source for this approach is a compilation of ethical perspectives by Richard L. Johannesen (1983).

Ethos of participants. The influence of the various parties pro and con depends to some degree on their ethos--that is, how the public sees them in the context of this particular debate. As a complement to his successful marketing career, Whittle is a strong speaker for the nation-at-risk version of educational reform, appearing at conventions of large organizations such as the Association for Educational Communication and Technology (AECT) and the Ohio School Boards Association. On the other hand, Christopher Whittle's ethos is influenced negatively by his political aspirations. He has seriously considered running for governor of Tennessee, hiring Roger Ailes, who has been political consultant to Richard Nixon and George Bush (Mayer, 1989). Although Whittle built his corporate headquarters as part of an urban renewal project in a depressed section of Knoxville, he also owned (as of August, 1989) four luxurious homes, including a co-op in the Dakota in New York City.

A major spokesmen for Channel One has been William S. Rukeyser, its editor-in-chief. As a former managing editor of Money and Fortune magazines, both properties of Time Inc., his experience has been with organizations concerned with commerce and profit, not with students, teachers, school administrators, or educational researchers or philosophers. What qualifies him above anyone else to speak to the needs of education? If it be said that most legislators are no more qualified than he, it should be noted that unlike him, they are held accountable to the voters. Cynthia Samuels, Channel One's chief of news production, is a former producer of the NBC Today show, a program that seems to stress rigorous journalism less and entertainment values more than in the past.

A number of staff members of the schools where Channel One was piloted made public statements in favor of the program. Positive comments from these educators now appear, along with their pictures, in Whittle's promotional literature. They are portrayed as authorities in the use of the equipment Whittle provides to schools. They seem to be "instant authorities."

Albert Shanker, President of the American Federation of Teachers, who expressed early opposition to the program and whose union opposed it, agreed nonetheless to join Terrel Bell, Alex Haley, former Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander, and others on Whittle's Council of Advisers. Shanker has agreed, also, to host a series of programs to be shown on Whittle's Educators' Channel (Walsh, 1990, October, 31). An appearance of an alliance in which the AFT could receive publicity while withdrawing its objections to Channel One would draw Shanker's integrity into question. Shanker has since resigned from the council, fearing that his membership was implying his endorsement of the program (Walsh, 1990, November 21). Alexander would step down if confirmed as U.S. Secretary of Education (Pitsch, 1991).

Opponents of the program include many university educators and professional associations. These people have been portrayed by the company as being distant from the situation and therefore having an ivory tower mentality. The point has also been made that if the schools in which they practice were perceived as more successful, the criticism of these professionals would be more credible.

Various Perspectives

To make judgments about the ethics of rhetoric it is necessary: (1) to be quite specific about one's criteria, standards, and perspective; (2) to justify the reasonableness of those criteria and standards and their relevance to the case; and (3) to show in what ways the communication does and does not meet the standards and criteria (Johannesen, 1983). My own analysis is at this point quite limited. I will suggest several criteria and try to show how some of the rhetoric of the commercials and the marketing stands up to those criteria. As for supporting the reasonableness of the criteria, I can only refer to some theory from the field of rhetorical analysis.

Johannesen (1983) has described a number of theoretical bases upon which criteria for ethical communication have been developed. One is the human nature perspective, which is concerned with the unique qualities of humans that set them apart from other animals. In this perspective, ethical criteria are based on the extent to which "a communicator's appeals and techniques either foster or undermine the development" (p. 29) of those qualities. Thus, the various human nature focuses are concerned with how well a message contributes to the human capacity to be rational, or the capacity to use symbols, or even how it reflects the capacity to be persuasive.

In a legalistic perspective, what is legal is ethical. In order to have a firm and clear ethical foundation it is useful to place legal boundaries on otherwise questionable kinds of communications. It seems that this is the approach adopted by the states of New York and California in banning Channel One. There are, however, disadvantages in this perspective in that: complex situations may get treated in superficial, oversimplified ways; audiences may be deprived of the

responsibility to exercise their judgment; there may be less opportunity to learn how to respond to ethically questionable messages; and there may be a chilling effect on innovation. Attorneys General in at least two states, Kentucky and Ohio, have held that the program, including its commercials, is not illegal but that its educational adequacy is subject to the judgment of state and local boards of education.

A dialogical perspective bases ethics on how well communication expresses authenticity, warmth, empathy, and psychological support. There are also religious perspectives and utilitarian perspectives on what is ethical in communication.

Ethical Criteria Based on a Democratic Perspective

Another basis for ethical criteria of communication is provided by our political system--that is, the ideals we pursue in a democracy. It may be worthwhile to consider Channel One in light of some of these criteria. One democratic criterion requires that a message "should reflect knowledge of [the] subject, sensitivity to relevant issues and implications, awareness of essential and trustworthy opinions and facts, and awareness that most public issues are complex rather than one-sided" (Johanessen, 1983, p. 12). Channel One's commercials portray complex issues--social, economic, and nutritional, among others--as simple choices. They do not meet this criterion. In marketing the program, Whittle has written off opponents whose values differ from his as "naysayers." He has shown apparent insensitivity to some relevant issues by placing an ad in the New York Times charging that unconvinced educators were simply committed to the status quo.

A democratic guideline suggested for ethical public debate is that no party or argument should be immune from criticism (Johannesen, 1983). When Whittle calls his opponents naysayers he implies that there is no substance to their arguments. The only circumstance in which his epithet might be considered ethical would be if he directed it specifically at certain persons or groups whom he truly believed to be opposed to change simply out of self-interest. As a blanket statement, however, it denies that any but the issues he himself has raised are valid.

Responsible communication informs the audience of its sources of information and opinion and assists them in evaluating any inherent bias or self-centered motivation (Johannesen, 1983). Whittle's approach is intended to win advocates for his bias. In his marketing effort, he recites the established warnings about the allegedly sorry state of American education. He cites extreme, grotesque examples of incorrect facts that students have stated. The commercials do not themselves reveal details that would enable student viewers or any viewers to evaluate their claims, and it is doubtful that reference to their profit motive is ever included. Proponents claim that this weakness can be counteracted by including the study of advertising and its techniques in the curriculum. That sort of study would have to be lengthy and deep in

order to teach the skills and attitudes necessary to be critical consumers.

Another democratic ethical criterion is the principle that conflict with a communicated idea not be sacrificed to compromise. This means that defeating or obtaining a compromise from one's opponents is not fully ethical if the communicator can admit that the points they made have merit (Johannesen, 1983). Thus, when persons successfully prevent the adoption of Channel One in a district, they are nevertheless obliged to address the deficiencies the program was purported to remedy. By this same criterion, teachers who convince pupils to accept a concept as valid must encourage them to continue to evaluate opposing positions. It is doubtful that teachers commonly cultivate the habit of respect for dissent.

Another ethical criterion is based on the human capacity for logical reason fundamental to democracy. This criterion is called "degree of rationality" (Johannesen, 1983). It is the principle that communication is ethical if it does not confuse rational appeals with emotional ones; that is, it does not "short-circuit" rational thought with messages that encourage non-reflective behavior. This criterion is an acknowledgement that decisions people make tend to reflect their emotions, needs, values, and desires. While rationality cannot replace these things, it should be utilized to help people consciously focus on them, to show people clearly and rationally how they might be fulfilled.

It could be argued that the rhetoric of commercials devalues and undermines the concern for reason and analysis that school is meant to foster. With respect to the criterion of "degree of rationality," commercials would not automatically be unethical simply because they carry some emotional appeal. What is important is how that appeal affects the viewer's ability or willingness to reason. It would seem that children and youth are particularly susceptible to letting emotional appeals interfere with their rational judgment. The regular, sanctioned presence of materials with primarily emotional appeal in school may confuse students about the appropriateness of such appeal, thus undermining their ability to be reasoned and analytical in other contexts, such as electing representatives and evaluating the claims of demagogues.

Also based on the maintenance of democracy and therefore related to degree of rationality is the criterion of "significant choice," (Johannesen, 1983). By this criterion, the communication must contribute to the receiver's ability to make a free, informed, critical choice through: awareness of a variety of viewpoints, use of the best information available at decision time, understanding of short- and long-term consequences, knowledge of the values and aims of the communicator, and familiarity with one's own habits and preferences (Johannesen, 1983).

When the communication is a Channel One commercial, to meet the ethical demands of significant choice, the student viewer must be prompted to seek and discuss other ways of meeting the needs that the advertised thing or idea is said to meet. It is, in addition, crucial that students understand that commercials often attempt to create a perceived need, so that a product one can do without seems a necessity. Unless students have first been helped to understand the subtle means by which commercials work, most ads cannot be considered as offering significant choice. It would seem that one could learn about these techniques from real-life experience using advertised products and that the exploration of options could occur outside of school, as well. However, it could be reasoned that the criterion of significant choice puts a special burden on commercials shown in the classroom. Because they are separated from the multitude of commercials seen on home TV and because their presence in the classroom accords their content implicit sanction by the school, these commercials command a particularly influential position. They would, therefore, invoke a special obligation to show and discuss alternatives while in the classroom.

"'Democracy is a commitment to means, not ends'" (Johannesen, 1983, p. 20), and an essential component of democracy is debate. When a decision is to be made, refusal to discuss any relevant issue is unethical (Johannesen, 1983). There must be "'full confrontation of opposing opinions, arguments, and information relevant to a decision'" (Johannesen, 1983, p. 20). Thus, even a debate that lacks reason is more democratic than an appeal to reason without debate. The degree of debate on the various issues has differed in each of the venues where adoption of Channel One has been proposed. Although what constitutes a full or sufficient confrontation is unclear, it would seem reasonable to evaluate the openness of a district or state's adoption debate by comparing it to the openness of that debate in other states and districts.

In some districts the process is certainly more open than in others. An NEA state official in Ohio claimed that district superintendents in one rural region had adopted Channel One without the participation of teachers or parents. In contrast, two districts contacted for this study had provided multiple informational and input meetings for teachers and parents. It appears that insofar as the only professionally produced materials provided there came from Whittle and there were no organized presentations from knowledgeable opponents, the meetings would tend to have been skewed toward adoption. Nevertheless, the president of the local NEA affiliate in one of those districts expressed satisfaction that the teachers had been given ample information and opportunity to object. The teachers' reception of the proposal was characterized by both the union leader and an administrator as being very positive.

Another suggested guideline is that the parties in a controversy are responsible for becoming informed of available facts (Johannesen, 1983). This obligation would presumably include, as well, relevant

values and constructions of reality that are significantly different from one's own. School officials must study empirical data that Whittle has gathered and publicized, such as the effectiveness of Channel One at helping pupils remember newsworthy incidents. The officials are also obliged to study facts that have been marshalled by persons with value positions different from Whittle's. Such facts include the changing techniques of TV advertising and the subtle indoctrination that has for years characterized the materials businesses have produced for classrooms (Harty, 1979).

Ethical Criteria Based on Situational Uniqueness

The essential quality of a situational perspective on ethics is that right actions are determined by "the elements of the specific communication situation at hand....Criteria from [other] perspectives are minimized; absolute and universal standards are avoided" (Johannesen, 1983, p. 67). The main determinant of the rightness of a persuasive communication is its context. Although the use of situational ethics could become a way of rationalizing any rhetorical behavior by saying that a situation is unique and thus demands its own set of ethical standards, principles have been put forward that are purported to keep this form of ethics from becoming ideosynchratic. There are some potent arguments for this approach (Johannesen, 1983).

In the situational perspective, the end may under severe circumstances justify otherwise unethical means (Johannesen, 1983). Thus, persons who consider their schools extremely deprived could claim that allowing commercials in exchange for sorely needed equipment is justified. However, to consider a school extremely deprived because of a lack of video resources may be to accept on faith and without adequate evidence the ideology that such resources are essential to high-quality education.

In the case of Channel One's commercials, situational factors affecting an ethical determination would include such things as the financial situation of the district, the expectations local people usually have of advertisements, the community's expectations of classroom actities, the kinds of products advertised, the age of the students, and what their parents will tolerate. Situational judgment of the ethics of Whittle's marketing of the program would include factors such as the size of Whittle's investment, the time constraints upon his profitability, his past record of honesty, the needs of the school, and the state of the economy.

Curiously, some of the statements and practices of Whittle and his proponents seem to be consistent with the situational approach that was set down in the Rules for Radicals by Saul Alinsky (1971), a community organizer of the 1960's. For example:

1) Those who are far from the conflict have the luxury of paying close attention to its ethics. Whittle feels that persons and groups not directly involved have an ivory tower mentality.

2) Judgments must be made in the context of the times, not former times. Proponents assert that there is an urgent need for radical changes in the schools.

3) Moral considerations are less important when there are few choices. Also, people in desparate circumstances are less responsible for their ethics. Thus, poorer school districts can find justification in adopting the program.

4) It can be effective to clothe self-interest in the garments of morality. Thus, a company can preach a gospel of its own plan for school reform while at the same time profiting from it.

5) The threat can be more powerful than the thing itself. By constantly telling the public how many schools are and will be covered by his program, Whittle may convince some opponents that their efforts are fruitless.

The Propriety of Vagueness and Ambiguity

Not clearly situated in a particular theoretical focus are the notions of vagueness and ambiguity. Vagueness is a quality of rhetoric that is ethically controversial. To argue that a communicator is responsible for supplying all the meaning to an audience would be to deny that the receiver comes to meaning by constructing it from experience. Different receivers must be expected to apply different interpretations to a message. To some, a statement may seem quite clear, while to others it might be vague. The important distinction for ethical purposes would seem to be neither the degree of vagueness nor whether it is intentional but rather whether the vagueness is meant to mislead (Johannesen, 1983). Thus, even if the content of a commercial is very vague, it would not be considered unethical unless it was intended to confuse or fool the audience.

Vagueness has legitimate purposes in advertising. To be meaningful for as many members of the audience as possible, an advertisement could employ a degree of vagueness to accommodate interpretations from a variety of viewpoints. Vagueness has legitimate purposes in education, as well. For example, in both contexts, explanations of less important concepts are left vague to allow time for concepts that the communicator considers more important. In both contexts, the vagueness of an introduction to an idea is used to create puzzlement and heighten the audience's attention. So, just as vagueness is considered a proper technique for attracting students toward a new idea in social studies, it would seem to be acceptable for interesting them in a new kind of sneaker.

Ambiguous language is that which is open to two or more contrasting interpretations. "Most people would agree that intentional ambiguity is unethical in situations where...precise information is the acknowledged purpose. Even in so-called persuasive communication situations, intentional ambiguity would be ethically suspect" (Johannesen, 1983, p. 106). Thus, Whittle's ad in the New York Times on March 2, 1989, presenting a blank list of "everyone willing to donate $250,000 to schools" is suspect. Nowhere in the ad did he come out and state that his company was not donating that money either. It was necessary to read the fine print to understand that the transaction would be an exchange, not a donation. However, in some viewpoints such intentional ambiguity is justified so that it might make the audience more attentive by causing them puzzlement or allow them to create their own meanings (Johannesen, 1983).

Conclusion

To make adequate ethical judgments about Channel One it may be necessary to consult ethical theory and historical practice in education and business as well as in rhetoric. How are the differences in ethics between two institutions (i.e., business and education) reconciled when one enters the realm of another? How can standards of ethical communication be applied to a new instructional medium when traditional communications from educators to students do not always satisfy those same standards? The sheer variety and number of ethical viewpoints in the field of communication makes such an investigation a daunting prospect.

Instructional Arguments

Channel One has been criticized by Patricia A. Graham, who was at that time Dean of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, as an inadequate substitute for "serious study of geography, history, politics, and government (Walsh, 1989), but Channel One is claimed to be only a starter: "...not a teacher--it is a resource" (Rukeyser, 1989). It is intended to accomplish what the regular studies of those subjects often do not--i.e., help students begin to understand and become newly interested in parts of those studies. The program is meant to be a motivational resource that shows teenagers the relevance of current events to their lives. Its techniques are generally attractive to the teenage viewer. Its pace is rapid. Concepts are concisely explained. It utilizes visual techniques meant to clearly point out geographic locations in their surrounding context. The reporters are youthful. It features the viewpoints of teenagers on whom events have had impact.

Student Attention

Can students be expected to pay voluntary attention to the news broadcast? One student pointed out that because the program is shown during homeroom period, his peers often talk or sleep through it rather than watching (Walsh, 1989). Officers of the National Education

Association and its Ohio affiliate have heard from some teachers that after several months the attention of some students has begun to flag. Conceivably, that will be the pattern for many children, on their way to watching the same format 162 times a year or more. In the Ohio middle school visited, the program was being shown during class periods and study halls. Where that is the case, it can be expected that students will be directed to pay attention and not to talk. A student claimed that the program added something interesting to a school day that was otherwise mostly boring (Chase, 1990). It is not known, though, whether that interest was a function of the entertaining quality of the program or of ideas it helped the student to generate. One very articulate student argued at a conference about Channel One (Petry, 1990) that the program's superficial approach to news is demeaning to the intellegence of students. Opposition from groups of pupils in several high schools (e.g., in Fargo, North Dakota) has been documented (Gerboth, 1990).

Individualization

Whittle's contract requires that ninety percent of the pupils at a school be watching, ninety percent of the time. Scott D. Thomson (1989) of the NASSP noted that showing the same program to all students from grades six through twelve ignores the value of individualization. It could be claimed, in reply, that teachers can give differentiated assignments to students of various grade levels and abilities. Nevertheless, making everyone watch does not consider the possibility that some students have gotten their news from other sources or could benefit more from a more complex presentation. The question of sufficient individualization of content and of the level of that content is not, however, unique to Channel One. It could apply to any television news program as well as to newspapers that are used for instructional purposes across grade levels. A research study comparing the cognitive requirements of tasks (Blumenfeld, Mergendoller, & Swartout, 1987) assigned in conjunction with the print and televised news might shed light on how and how well individualization is implemented.

Effectiveness

The effectiveness of Channel One in meeting instructional aims through its various techniques, such as rapid pacing and enhancement of maps, is largely a matter for empirical research. First, though, it must be decided what are appropriate criteria for defining effectiveness. The testing done at the pilot high school in Cincinnati resulted in dropping the program because it did not have a significant positive effect on attendance. One might well ask, though, how this kind of change in the school day could realistically be expected to impact attendance, either over the short or long term. Thomson (1989) of the principals' organization has suggested that using the program every day may detract from retention. Student testing initiated by Whittle during the pilot phase and a small-scale independent test (Tate, 1989) showed some moderate success at near-term retention of facts and

concepts. But these results are superficial compared to qualities that have not been measured, such as interest and continued concern about issues raised. The director of one district's Paideia program suggested that if Channel One were used in a Paideia school, evaluation of student progress would address cognitive skills of a higher order than retention. He felt, too, that a daily dose of the news broadcast was more than would be necessary for pupils to adequately analyze the major ideas.

Efficient Use of Time

Because efficient use of school time is desirable, the program is often scheduled during homeroom period, making a time of day that is often inefficiently used more valuable. One middle school, however, slotted the program into a 25-minute, half-period study hall. At the end of the period only a brief time remained, which was difficult to use for instruction or study. Thus, in some time slots the program may be more costly in time than it is claimed to be. A broader view of efficient timing might well include what is known about the cognitive development of children. The program's animated maps have been touted as a very effective way of teaching geographic locations so they are remembered. However, much geographic information can be learned in the primary grades through the use of jigsaw puzzle maps, especially if in conjunction with Montessori techniques. An investment in equipment and staff development at that level might be more effective and efficient than a reliance on Channel One to make introductory geography palatable to teenagers.

Countering Instructional Claims With Curricular Questions

William S. Rukeyser (1989) claimed, "Our pilot test will challenge every aspect of the program. We will rigorously measure how well students retain information conveyed in the program...." The company's reliance upon scientifically accurate evaluation, accompanied by an assumption that the curricular goals have an agreed-upon, common-sense validity, characterize what Eisner (1985) calls a "technological" orientation in a curriculum. While instructional effectiveness may be measurable, the appropriateness of curriculum is not. Many of the instructional claims made for Channel One are moot when the value of the curriculum's goals is in question. On this basis, two of the program's common-sense assumptions are questioned below.

Rapid Pacing

Pacing is considered to be a matter of instructional--particularly, motivational--effectiveness. The rapid pace of the program is seen as a way of sustaining viewer attention. Students experience this pace on programs such as MTV news and may be accustomed to it. Is school meant to be a place where children always have experiences that are familiar? The curricular value of rapid pacing must be determined before it makes sense to deal with its instructional effectiveness. Thomson of the

NASSP has characterized the program as "'a very superficial hodgepodge of facts and news'" (Walsh, 1989, p. 31). What is meant by this statement? Probably several things: (1) The show moves from one item to the next too rapidly for students to gain much. (2) The treatment of each news topic is too brief and superficial. (3) Adjacent topics are insufficiently related to one another.

Some very important aspects of a newsworthy occurrance may be historically, geographically, socially, or politically complex and are therefore not brought up in a meaningful way or at all. Thus, like network news, Channel One is seen as "emphasizing image above content" (Thomson, 1989, p. 25). Postman (1985) criticizes this rapidity, superficiality, and disconnectedness that seem inherent in television, saying that these qualities hinder the viewer's ability to ponder a story or feel its emotional impact and empathize. It reinforces the notion that important issues can be dealt with quickly. Channel One can be seen as contributing to or at least doing nothing to remedy the difficulty students have in attending to a topic long enough to gain something important from it.

Teenage Viewpoint

Students are thought to be attracted to stories that include people their own age, whether as reporters or participants (Walsh, 1989). One regular segment of Channel One presents a "teenage perspective" on the news, focusing, for instance, on how some teenagers involved in or close to a situation say they are affected or how they feel about it. From a curricular viewpoint, it would seem to help students see connections between adult-driven events and the lives of their peers. On the negative side, teenagers who are actually involved in news events are not likely to be well-versed in the history of these events. It would, in addition, seem unlikely that they would be asked by interviewers to consider that history. Thus, from a curriculum standpoint, a program that emphasizes the views of teenagers will tend to de-emphasize the historical background that may be essential to understanding the situations reported. The youthful reporters serve as positive role models, demonstrating what can be achieved by a young person. On the other hand, by bowing to the entertainment-oriented concern for attractiveness and youthfulness the broadcasts may teach young viewers to associate a person's credibility with those attributes rather than with the incisiveness of the questions he or she poses (Postman, 1985).

Curriculum Issues

Integration

The program is said to be a response to urgent pleas from teachers for materials to teach world events in a way that would integrate them with their subject matter (Rukeyser, 1989). It may be that the complaints the company heard and responded to were the ones it was most eager to hear. Nevertheless, the focuses of the broadcast lend

themselves to various school subjects, and the teachers guide that is provided suggests exercises to assign and threads to follow in conjunction with them. Rukeyser (1989) has suggested that the news items will "resonate" throughout the day. A teacher in a pilot school felt the program would stimulate discussion of important topics all day long (Walsh, 1989). But meaningful integration of the day's news and features into the existing curriculum is not automatic. A concept from the morning's news broadcast might conceivably have lost some of its salience when incorporated into a lesson later in the day. Frank Windsor, Maryland's Assistant State Superintendent in Instructional Technology, has noted (Windsor, 1990) that despite the program teachers have difficulty integrating current events. After discussing the show, they say, "Now let's get back to what we were doing." It remains to be seen, perhaps through empirical studies, whether given the limited time available in the curriculum, the presence of Channel One and its daily teaching suggestions will result in meaningful integration of current events and subject matter.

It appears that a new emphasis on current events may not be driven so much by an increasingly urgent need felt by teachers as by a technological innovation that puts some new excitement into an old subject. It would seem important to understand why teachers have not done more to utilize newspapers, weekly news magazines, and accompanying resource materials that some news publishers provide to integrate current events into the curriculum. Whether Channel One supplementary materials are more useful to teachers in integrating current events into the curriculum than those from Newsweek or the New York Times might also be a matter for empirical investigation.The events are the same, whether seen on TV or in the newspaper, and the print media carry a greater variety of them. Perhaps the program will result in pupils wanting to keep up with stories in the newspaper.

Content Replaced

"Channel One will be the principal source of news for a large part of the audience" (Rukeyser, 1989, p. 25). It seems right that school should provide an important part of children's experience that they do not get at home. However, one way to look at the curricular appropriateness of Channel One is to compare the content covered during its broadcast to content that would ordinarily be covered in the regular curriculum. To compare curriculum content with and without Channel One on a minute-by-minute basis is to disregard the spillover and integration of subjects and topics that can occur when students and teachers find them interesting. New content and new media may affect not just the ten or twelve minutes of instruction but the entire classroom and school context, including what gets posted on the walls, unity or diversity on controversial issues, and the instructional tasks assigned. Does the curriculum so rigorously developed and delineated by school authorities call for such a large percentage of school time to be spent on current events? Is there a well-reasoned justification for the

major increase in time spent on current events, or is the increase just rationalized in order to get Whittle's services?

Like most TV programs, Channel One's broadcasts include little about how the program was created and how content decisions were made. Much is left for the viewers to assume or ignore on the basis of information they already hold or of which they are unaware. Often, what does not get taught is, unfortunately, crucial to obtaining an in-depth and balanced view of what does get taught. Facts about mass media's interests and controlling imperatives that are not emphasized to students become part of this "null curriculum" (Eisner, 1985)--content that is omitted because it is considered relatively unimportant or somehow harmful.

Commercials: The Significance of Their Presence

Many statements about whether TV commercials should be permitted in the classroom have been covered in the press. Some are logically weak; some are red herrings, distracting attention from other issues; some have merit. Several of the reasons for and against the presence of commercials are discussed here. The matter of a relationship between commercials and social inequality will be discussed later in the section dealing with autonomy.

The commercials have been portrayed by some as a simple price: two minutes a day in exchange for Whittle's services and equipment. By this reasoning, the commercials are not part of the curriculum. They should be considered as separate from what is being taught. Being separate from the official curriculum does not, however, exempt any occurance in school from being learned by students. The use of sophisticated video equipment, the style of the program, its commercials, and the values it expresses are conveyed through what Eisner (1985) and many others have called the "implicit" or "hidden curriculum." Recognizing that there is much that pupils will learn from skillfully crafted commercials, it is illogical to say that those messages are not part of the curriculum. Even if students are able to detect flawed reasoning in classroom commercials, they are being conditioned to accept the presence of special interests as an integral part of the education process. They are not learning to be wary of the influence of commercial interests on intellectual pursuits. The importance of scholarly independence becomes part of the null curriculum.

One of the arguments made in defense of Channel One's commercials is that placed in perspective they are insignificant. The argument has numerous variations. Whether commercials are harmful or benign, students see dozens of them each day, so four more each day makes no difference (Walsh, 1989). Students will have seen all the commercials before on home TV (Rukeyser, 1989). Students don't watch or pay attention to the commercials (Chase, 1989). Students pay less attention to the ads than to the program (Walsh, 1989). Secondary school students are old enough not to be fooled by commercials (Rudinow, 1989/90).

It is not difficult to dispute these statements with reasonable replies. Many students who watch less TV at home (and even some students who watch a lot) will be seeing some commercials for the first time on Channel One. It is likely that in response to the demographics of the homogeneous audience there will be commercials produced for Channel One that are different from those shown on home TV. In the middle school class observed, attention to the commercials varied. Responses from the students ranged from silence to laughter to reciting the lines just before they were said on screen. Of course, advertisers are well aware that aspects of their messages are communicated successfully when the audience is not watching or paying attention. That subliminal approach to persuasion is offensive to some critics of the program.

The concern about proliferation of commercial rhetoric noted earlier in relation to ethics bears repeating here in the context of curriculum. As land developers and lumbering companies have depleted the earth's natural wealth, they, too, have long argued that the effect of taking a little bit more will be negligible. The remaining domains become ever more valuable as their resources become rare. The skills and attitudes required for reasoned discourse and rational behavior can similarly be seen as a jeopardized resource. The capacity of schools to promote these skills and attitudes seems endangered as commercial rhetoric there increases.

Does the showing of commercials in a classroom imply a sanctioning of the product? Do students infer such a sanction? It has been argued that Channel One's advertising is analogous to a teacher stopping a lesson to pitch a product, using some persuasive technique. "The television monitor is the teacher and blackboard in electronic form," so advertising on the TV is the same as if the teacher stopped a lesson to give a commercial message (Thomson, 1989, p. 23). This is seen as an abuse of the teacher's responsibility. Clearly, though, the effects would be quite different if teachers were to personally deliver product endorsements in class. How a commercial message is interpreted is very dependent upon the visual and verbal features of the delivery, plus expectations created by the persons and the technology in the instructional context (Salomon, 1979). The company has argued that its commercials are acceptable because commercials are shown in tapes teachers have themselves recorded off the air to play for their classes (Rukeyser, 1989). Aside from the argument that teachers do such taping on their own time and cannot be expected to take further time to edit out commercials, student inference of endorsement in these instances is, again, dependent upon many situational factors. This issue is amenable to empirical research.

Commercials: The Significance of Their Content

In the process of evaluating Channel One for adoption, people have been considering the appropriateness of the content of its commercials in relation to various sets of criteria. Criteria for the kinds of

appeals used to persuade the audience to buy have been discussed in the section on rhetoric and its ethics. In this section, I will describe two other sets of criteria: those concerned with taboos and with social consciousness.

Holding to taboos. It seems that the ads are most often considered by the educators and the public at the level of individual taboos--that is, in light of commonsense restrictions against references that cause discomfort or controversy among the public. In this view, commercials shown in school are not in themselves harmful, but certain classes of products and appeals express values that are unacceptable. For example, advertising alcoholic beverages would be taboo. One of the ads in the pilot was objected to, not because of the product but because the ad made light of graffiti.

Many people would frown upon ads that deal with sexuality, depict sexual attraction, or imply the imminence of sex-related activity in one degree or another; they would consider such ads off-limits at school. Feminine hygiene products, for instance, would draw objections. Depending upon one's values, such objections could be considered genuinely moral or perversely hypocritical. Whittle has given comfort to most people who have concerns at this level by promising not to show commercials for alcohol, feminine hygiene, contraceptives, firearms, tobacco, political candidates, gambling, religion, and other items. The company decided that the ad with the graffiti had better be dropped. The company's purpose in imposing these self-restrictions was twofold. They protect against alienating the clientele, and they maintain the confidence of their less controversial advertisers who might lose revenue if associated by the public with the more controversial ones.

A member of the Ohio Board of Education argued adamantly for Channel One on the paradoxical grounds that there are far more objectionable products advertised in mass print publications held by school libraries and used as educational resources. Why are mass circulation magazines with such ads used in schools? The answer would seem to be that they are respected sources of factual information and literature, and no non-commercial substitutes are available. In the case of Channel One, however, comparable programming without commercials is now available. The Cable News Network and the Discovery Channel are two of a number of organizations that now present non-commercial news broadcasts geared to children and youth.

Social consciousness. Commercials have also been considered at the more general level of social values. There have been criticisms that the commercials advance hedonistic values of popular culture and consequently ignore values that are more traditional and pro-social. The commercials tend to glorify youth, aggressiveness, immediacy, narrow conceptions of beauty, and perhaps most pervasively, materialism. In doing so, they minimize egalitarian empathy, thoughtfulness, patience, inner beauty, and thrift.

A teacher at one of the pilot schools objected to the commercials, feeling that the values they were instilling were inherently opposed to the concern for social welfare he was trying to promote. He felt that school should be an "antidote" for the excess of such messages that are presented outside of school (Walsh, 1989). Neil Postman, in Teaching as a Conserving Activity (1979), claims that popular values that obscure historically important values should be shunned by educators. It could be argued that the materialistic values in commercials can coexist in persons, alongside altruistic values. It could also be argued that in the interest of developing critical thinking, values along the entire range should be presented in the classroom, with advocates from various persuasions making their cases and the teacher helping the children to evaluate the arguments. Research into and evidence for or against such arguments will not be discussed here.

Also at the level of social values is the argument that sexuality is inappropriate in the commercials to the extent that it and members of either sex are exploited. This is not the same as objecting to the presence of sexuality or sexual innuendo. It values sexuality but opposes the simplistic portrayal of intimate relationships as being flippant, easy, primarily physical, and manipulable through products.

It is safe to say that sexual references are not used in textbooks to persuade students of the validity of concepts. Hence, it is interesting to note that a cursory survey of the commercials on two sample Channel One programs and one current high school social studies text found quite a bit more skin exposed in the commercials than in the textbook pictures. This frequency may be an indication that the ban on products that might remind viewers of sexuality does not prevent it from being exploited.

Issues Relating to Self-Determination, Power, and Control

Inequality

Two opposite views have been expressed on the impact of Channel One upon the disparity between schools in lower and higher income areas. The obvious position is that poorer districts tend to be very much in need of better facilities, so that this equipment and programming provide a welcome boost. Of course the equipment must be used, and used appropriately if any advantage in educational quality is to be recouped. On the other hand, it has been suggested that schools that have sufficient equipment and adequate programs are likely to use CNN or another alternative rather than Whittle. Poorer urban and rural districts are more likely to be "seduced" by the offer of free equipment (Walsh, 1989) to accept commercials. Students in those districts will, it is said, become more susceptible to and more dependent upon the products and materialistic values in the commercials, as compared to students in more affluent districts. It could be unfair and predatory to create a consumerist climate for people who are less able to afford luxuries and expensive amenities. Commercials for those items may

increase the awareness among students of income differences among them. While such an awareness is not inherently harmful, at times it may reinforce social stratification in schools. Furthermore, in some schools the present climate of peer pressure to obtain certain highly-advertised, fashionable apparel has led to tension and violence.

State Versus Local Control

The discussion of Channel One's merits and shortcomings has in some places been caught up in disputes over who should determine a district's curriculum and its instructional materials. In North Carolina, there had been tension between local districts and the state as to the state's power to dictate what the districts could and could not do. It was not until some districts had already decided to adopt the program that the state made its decision to ban it statewide. Some districts seized the opportunity to take legal action challenging what they felt to be the state's infringement on their rights. Thus, when sides were taken in regard to Channel One in North Carolina, it was the issue of control that received national press. It is doubtful that other issues could have been given sufficient non-partisan consideration.

In Ohio, most members of the State Board of Education were favorably impressed by Whittle's demonstration of Channel One. Among members there is also a strong belief in the discretion of local boards whenever possible. Favoring both Channel One and local authority, some members seemed reluctant to interfere with any imminent local adoptions of the program. When one member who opposed the program proposed that the board request a legal ruling from the attorney general, there was strong opposition. But the proposal was passed. The Attorney General stated, in an opinion similar to one made in Kentucky, that the state board has the authority to decide whether the program meets the state's minimum educational standards. At this writing, it is not known whether any efforts will be made in Ohio to revise those standards to deal specifically with broadcast commercials. The decision also includes that local districts may secure programs from nonprofit educational companies. Profit-making sources are not mentioned. If a dispute over Whittle's for-profit status should develop in a district, it is possible that a further decision could be sought from the attorney general or that a suit could be filed.

It is ironic that the ability of local districts to adopt Channel One has been so adamantly defended, when Channel One itself emanates from a central authority and demands to be used every day. These bodies seem to be saying, in effect, that a district should have the right to hand over part of its curriculum decision making and instructional delivery to a distant company whose interest in the district is dependent on the company's self-interest. To entrust the responsibility for designing and prescribing the use of instructional materials to persons who are not knowledgeable about the context in which they will be used is characteristic of curricula with a technological orientation (Eisner, 1985).

Autonomy of Educators

Teachers and administrators have beliefs about their roles in determining what to teach and when and how to teach it. An NEA spokesperson said, "'We have problems with the fragmentation of teachers' teaching time'" (Walsh, 1989, p. 31). If Channel One is played to pupils during a regular class period, then for 36 hours of the school year the teacher is not allowed to decide what topics should be brought up or how. Is this or any news program so valuable and are the extra TV's that go with it so necessary that a teacher would willingly give up the ability to determine classwork or the approach to current events for so much of the year? Albert Shanker, President of the AFT, has argued that the program prevents one hour of regular content from being taught each week (Walsh, 1989). The commercials alone add up to six hours per year. The matter of whether Channel One is considered as fulfilling part of a district's regular curriculum or as an add-on is pertinent to the terms of teacher contracts. During the pilot phase of the program, the Cincinnati Federation of teachers filed a grievance to that effect.

The company has made sure that the school principal or a person designated by the principal has the opportunity to view the program each morning in advance, to ensure that it contains nothing objectionable. If a principal or designee were to be arbitrary in this screening process, issues of censorship and bias could be raised. It would seem necessary to devise an official set of criteria, perhaps similar to those used for textbook evaluation, to apply consistently to every program. There is also the matter of how an unsatisfactory item would be cut out. Would the principal: (a) blank out a portion of the broadcast; (b) eliminate the entire program for the day; or (c) caution teachers and/or students in advance of problems in the broadcast? Will principals inform teachers and students that a segment has been censored, or will there be dishonest excuses such as technical difficulty?

Control Over View of Reality

Whittle executive Ed Winter has said, "We are providing the fourth 'R' of education, and that 'R' is 'Reality.'" (Markey, 1989). That conception is very problematic if it is agreed that there is no single acceptable view of reality. While every person constructs an individual set of meanings from a media message, it is nevertheless possible for millions of students to derive essentially the same images and infer essentially the same imperatives when their news and commercial messages come from a single source. Because the program must be shown nearly every day, time for receiving competing messages from other sources, especially images of American culture and world circumstances, is greatly reduced. Under such circumstances, it comprises a virtual monopoly.

Given Whittle's affiliation with other news gathering and production organizations, there is a great deal of centralized power, capable over the long term of getting its own biases accepted by an entire generation. These organizations are linked not only by business agreements but by interlocking directorates and ownership. The vast majority of the world's mass media properties are now owned by approximately only two dozen companies (Bagdikian, 1989). The noncommercial program, CNN Newsroom, Channel One's main direct competitor, is produced by Turner Broadcasting. Media giant Time-Warner, which owns half of Whittle, is also on the board of directors of Turner ("Turner to Launch," 1989).

The bias in the presentation of news in the fashion of the commercial networks is clearly toward superficiality and entertainment (Postman, 1985). Channel One has been said to bring students the "Madison Avenue version of reality" (Sheinfeld, 1989). This means that how public issues are presented is based on attracting the largest viewership. Companies demand that the products they sell get advertised where the most potential buyers will see them. So, particularly in times when government regulation is relaxed, the vast majority of commercial shows are not designed primarily to provoke thought but to attract numbers, thus attracting the money of corporate sponsors.

Whittle has claimed that the sponsors have no effect on program content (Rukeyser, 1989) and that the commercial slots are now entirely filled for the next three years. Yet it is doubtful that sponsors would tolerate a switch to a more measured format with more attention to complexities. John Wicklein, former professor of journalism at Ohio State University and former news director for channel 13, public TV in New York, has asserted that when public broadcasting relies on corporate sponsorship, the result is "'safe' programming that breaks no new ground and advances no troublesome ideas" (Sheinfeld, 1989). Perhaps there are studies that cite evidence relating to this issue for pure entertainment programming or commercial news broadcasts.

Even if they had the time, would teachers be capable of counteracting imbalances of views presented in the program, its commercials and its public affairs content, by leading discussion and assigning research? Many teachers seem to feel that network news coverage is the best that can be expected. They do not seem to consider its biases to be significant drawbacks. If a district, a school, a professional association, or a portion of a faculty were to judge those biases to be an important problem, they might find it worthwhile to locate resources--workshops or materials--for critical media literacy. Harty (1979) has suggested that teachers would benefit from learning criteria that have been developed for assessing bias in media. Instructional materials, such as those developed by Strategies for Media Literacy, in San Francisco, are available to teach students about mass media ("Autumn Release", 1990). Through such materials, teachers as well as studnts could become more aware of the system by which corporate

commercial sponsorship finances mass media and of the ethical conflicts inherent in such sponsorship.

Public Versus Private Funding

The crisis in public funding of education is clearly a reason for the emergence of Channel One. If public education is funded from private sources, what will the consequences be, in terms of the ability and the right of the various stakeholders to make decisions about policy, curriculum, and instructional practice? As the NEA committee on propaganda stated in regard to the same issue in 1929, "The difficulty of this problem will be lessened when all schools are supplied with adequate funds so that no school will be compelled to rely on gifts and donations from the outside" (Harty, 1979, p. 99). This major issue will not be taken up here, except to mention two orienting points. First, requiring students to be present for the commercials has been hotly contested as turning them into a "captive audience" (Walsh, 1989) for private profit. Second, it has been noted by a director of state instructional technology services in Ohio that such services--including TV programming, satellite links, and staff support for teachers--have been funded to different degrees in different states. The extent of those resources is one factor in determining the urgency of adopting a private service such as Whittle's.

Political-Economic Ideology

A major justification given by business groups for involving themselves in education is that they would help to make our nation more competitive by developing a more capable work force (Committee for Economic Development, 1985). Under current political and economic conditions, many schools eagerly accept corporate assistance and advice. It is becoming the sense of the American community--common sense--that business should be allowed to play an influential role in education. Molnar (1989/90) cautions that while the participation in education by business people as individuals is integral to democratic policy making, we should be wary of their participation "as representatives of powerful special interest groups."

One example of that kind of intrusion was documented by Rippa (1958). In 1940, with concerns about totalitarian governments mounting, the National Association of Manufacturers launched a project in which hundreds of American secondary school social science textbooks were evaluated for their possible "derision or contempt" of the free enterprise system. A second example during the same era was a protracted published attack by Forbes Magazine and the Adverting Federation on a series of social studies textbooks by Harold Rugg, a professor at Columbia University, which promoted critical reasoning for the understanding of capitalism (Spring, 1991).

"Productivity" is an economic term that is blithely transferred to the realm of education. On ABC-TV's Nightline, March 6, 1989,

Christopher Whittle said, "[W]e should weigh every new idea that is brought to American schools on the basis of results. If it produces, then I think it is a good idea." It has, on the other hand, been argued that when corporations increase productivity, one important result is a "vulgar efficiency" that neglects long-term and less tangible needs of workers (Wirth, 1983). While there is little doubt of the importance of America's economic competitiveness to its strength as a nation, an ideology zealously focused on that premise is likely to neglect crucial aesthetic and moral foundations of culture (see Huebner, 1975). Thus, some of the interests of business may be quite different from those of educators, students, parents, and the nation as a whole. This narrowness of focus upon the economic is evident in some of the heavily advertised products from which America's largest companies profit: products deficient in terms of their safety, nutritional value, environmental impact, and intellectual stimulation (Molnar, 1989/90). Also, for companies to want curricula that treat students as future employees who must adapt their habits to future corporate jobs can be seen as arrogant and stifling. Today's students may instead re-shape the businesses of the future and the very structure of business.

While the Committee for Economic Development (1985) concentrates on ways that business can improve education, Channel One takes a step further. Rukeyser (1989) has added immediate business profit to the formula, saying, "Nor do we see any prospect that corporations would put up such sums in return solely for brief mentions of their largesse." This theme is echoed by Joe Zesbaugh, president of the Pacific Mountain Network, saying that when businesses provide "'big, innovative ideas,'" we must be willing to compensate them (Rukeyser, 1989).

Rukeyser (1989) has posed Channel One as a test case for the viability of "vigorous partnership" between business and education. To say that this case represents or embodies all vigorous partnerships between business in education is either: (a) to understate the variety of innovative relationships possible; or (b) to indicate that many companies are waiting in the wings to exchange goods and services for the privilege of advertising in the schools.

Spring (1984) suggests that the decline in the productivity of American business should not be attributed to the quality of education but perhaps to corporate economic decisions in the 1970's to take short-term profits rather than invest sufficiently in new capital. He suggests that high deficits and inflation spurred by the Vietnam War and policies relating to the energy crisis have also affected the nation's ability to compete worldwide. Thus, school curricula emphasizing technological training to fill corporate jobs might be no more valuable than studies in political science or philosophy. The involvement of corporate America in education is sometimes contradictory, robbing Peter to pay Paul. For example, corporations say they value critical thinking and higher order thinking among students. Yet, TV shows sponsored by those corporations provide ever-fewer incentives for their audiences to be reflective and rational.

Indoctrination With Dominant Ideas

One rationale for opposing Channel One has been that schools are entrusted with the job of educating, not indoctrinating (Thomson, 1989). However, indoctrination can be defined as instruction that is an attempt to establish faith in a particular interpretation of reality; hence, education in our schools often involves indoctrination. All language is rhetorical--that is, persuasive--to some degree (Johannesen, 1983). Thus, it would seem that before we conclude that commercials in the classroom are wrong because they indoctrinate our children, it is necessary to decide what criteria and standards to use to determine acceptable ways of carrying out indoctrination in school. If the problem is that commercial indoctrination serves narrow interests or that the companies that advertise are there by virtue of paying the most money, then the problem is not indoctrination per se. The questions that should be asked are "Who may indoctrinate?" and "How?"

"[T]he schools...have been given a trust by the American public to educate fairly and thus to prevent special interests from invading the classroom" (Thomson, 1989, p. 25). Special interests is a generally pejorative term that applies to persons and groups who are more concerned about promoting their own profit or ideology than the common good. But the term can be conveniently expanded to include any person or group with a vision of the common good or means of attaining it that differs from that of dominant groups, or persons whose interests are generally accepted. Ideas that differ from the common sense of the majority can be written off as representing special interests.

In one district that had installed Channel One, a central office administrator considered the commercials to be acceptable because their messages are not "controversial." She expressed the same sentiment about the self-serving materials and presentations of power companies and industry associations in school. On the other hand, she decried the "false pretense" of an animal rights group that had agreed to make a factual presentation but then openly advocated its position. Of course, people tend to be much more critical of positions with which they disagree than those of which they approve. Thus, it is not difficult to understand how a school district might criticize a fringe group for indoctrination while overlooking the practice in instances where it supports the district's commonsense position.

Extrapolations and Possible Responses

Technology has been developed to the point where a Channel One is for the first time economically feasible. With his slick program, equipment, and supplementary video services, Whittle has made deep inroads into resistence to the practice of requiring commercial TV in school. While skeptical observers have claimed that Whittle's confident predictions are grossly inflated, subscription rates up to now seem to indicate success in the present and near future. As the technology is

adopted and re-configured by other organizations, new offerings to the schools will contine to raise new issues or reintroduce old ones.

The advent of non-commercial competition of comparable quality may prevent the company from transgressing its current standards of practice, both in its production of news and in its commercials. In the future, however, somewhat different directions are likely to be taken or, at least, considered by Whittle or competitors entering the field of commercial classroom broadcasting. The following are not proven arguments but rather possible directions that might be taken by such companies. Given the numerous economic and social variables involved, these ideas could be described as imprudent predictions:

Despite claims of journalistic professionalism, such companies will eventually attempt to: (1) increase the amount or proportion of commercial time; (2) include more sexual innuendo in their commerials; and (3) take advantage of pop cultural values, including popular sexual values, in their news. As in "advertorials" and single-sponsor publications which are becoming increasingly common and are supported by Whittle, programs will begin to blur the boundary between news and advertising (e.g., by including one in the other). Whittle and other providers will be less sanguine about limiting the kinds of products advertised. Although Whittle claims TV commercials in school are not appropriate for elementary school children, he or some other marketer will try to place TV commercials in elementary classrooms.

In states where instructional television services are not adequate in the eyes of teachers and administrators, the attraction of Whittle's programming from the Pacific Mountain Network will be great, and districts will re-sign with Whittle. Extensions will be developed in conjunction with news broadcasts. Educators on Whittle's staff or elsewhere will develop variations of the programs whereby standard kinds of questions are asked, standardized tests are included, and comparitive scores can be published. Individual news and feature sequences from the broadcasts will be placed in a videodisc database, to be accessed by teachers as desired, to introduce or add to their lessons throughout the year. With each sequence will appear a brief commercial message similar to those of underwriters of public television programs. Whittle will increasingly emphasize the company's wall posters and make them a part of the Channel One package. Other vendors will come out with competing posters. Many of the producers already have 800 hotlines by which adults can call in their questions, suggestions, and criticisms. Some producer will promote a hotline specifically for students, perhaps employing a pay-basis 900 number. News broadcasts or the associated staff development programming will include a feature that summarizes this input. Corporate support for education, accompanied by commercial exploitation of student populations, will spread in major proportions to Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Continuing to speculate, one can envision various kinds of future responses by schools and the public to Channel One and its counterparts.

Persons who have reservations about the program will express opposition in a number of ways, including open discussion, political and legal action, curricular change, administrative requirements, boycott, and resistance:

Whether to outlaw required commercial TV in school or not is a political issue. As other entrepreneurs with commercial products and ostensibly educational services try to enter schools under principles similar to those employed by Whittle, citizens will work for passage of restrictive state laws. To ban these applications of the technology may, however, chill and hinder future adaptations that might promote the flow of knowledge in less questionable fashion. Legislating Channel One out of existence in any state will not end the game. Only discussion, study, and better understanding will minimize or improve the use of the program and help control the creation of unacceptable offspring.

A valuable publication will be written and disseminated explaining many of the important issues from as many viewpoints as possible. It will be received by state authorities, and it will be periodically updated as issues become clarified. Some districts that already subscribe to Channel One will re-evaluate their commitment. Persons who argue in legal terms, "We have already signed the contract," and "We wish to act in good faith," will be overridden by educators newly impressed with criticism of the program. Some schools will require, in order for Channel One or other mediated presentations to be used, instruction in critical media analysis. They will also allot time for it to be taught. Teachers will be educated as to its purpose and techniques. They will be provided appropriate materials, including criteria by which to assess commercials. In districts where media analysis is not encouraged, teachers opposed to Channel One will, at their own risk or a risk shared with colleagues, resist, subvert, or speak out against the program in their schools. They will take time from other subjects to teach criticism of commercialism. They will resist the program by covering the screen or not showing the program at all. They will see that competing products are brought to school, and they will play competing news broadcasts on portable TV's and radios, including foreign broadcasts over short wave.

Some schools will watch Channel One and not use the TV's for anything else. Principals will become bored of reviewing the program every day and discontinue doing so. Teachers will be assigned the task. The question of being paid for this added responsibility will be raised. Principals will be held responsible by community members for failing to screen out objectionable portions. Just as the 162-game baseball schedule is hard for many people to tolerate, 162 news broadcasts (the required ninety percent of 180 school days) mostly in the same format, will result in decreased student interest except during coverage of special events. Schools will convince Whittle to require less viewing of their students, and the company, reluctant to engage in legal disputes, will allow this to happen.

Citizens will claim that if installation of the accompanying equipment has been so important in the decision to adopt the program, then the amount and kinds of uses of the equipment ought to stand up well to scrutiny. They will demand provisions for accountability in the use of the program and the equipment. Teachers and administrators who are already held accountable for such things as student test scores and for showing Channel One will then be accountable for their frequency of using the equipment for educational purposes beyond Channel One. Some educators will be reprimanded for using the equipment inappropriately or failing to take advantage of it.

The program is skillfully marketed to school districts without the kind of competition present in the textbook marketing process. Because the program is to be used so extensively, some state and local school authorities will require that it be subject to no less rigorous review than the textbooks they adopt. To accomplish this review, school boards will push for free access to all past programs, perhaps on videodisc, indexed according to the topics covered and products advertised, so that the coverage of those topics and the presentation of those products can be evaluated. Some boards will adopt formal criteria for evaluation of such programs.

Perceiving an inconsistency--a hypocrasy--in companies providing programming and commercials that glorify materialism and violence on regular TV while at the same time sponsoring classroom news broadcasts, parent groups will refuse to allow in-school programming sponsored by such companies. Some school districts will reject the disproportionate share of responsibility that they have been given for remedying social decadence and demand changes in commercial TV. Legislation or a court settlement will require in-school commercials be encased in clear, strong disclaimors: "X is not endorsed by Y."Other legislation will go further, prompting companies to re-fashion the nature of in-school commercials, simply naming the products, showing them, stating why they might be useful, and providing some important distinctions between them and other products. A segment of the advertising industry will successfully adopt the model for regular TV broadcasts.

While the presentation of this section has been somewhat whimsical, the ideas are nevertheless based on a studied look at current and past circumstances.

Conclusion

To make an informed decision about whether to support or oppose the entry of a venture such as Channel One in schools, one must examine it in terms of a number of different issues and the questions evolving from those issues. Matters of the instructional effectiveness of a resource have little meaning until placed in a context of values that have been agree upon to orient the curriculum. Nor can ethics be readily invoked without reference to a particular discipline and theoretical orientation within it. In the heat of the decision-making process, participants

have often begged each other's questions, because they have not been able to distinguish between issues of curriculum and instruction or they have not been able to cite clear grounds for their ethical claims. Decisions must take into account the interests and rights of the diverse groups of stakeholders in the schools involved. The history of the influences of business upon education and of the relations between mass media and the education community provides information about how some of the present issues have been dealt with before and suggests how they might be addressed today. From these perspectives, this paper has briefly examined Channel One in some of its many aspects. The phenomenon of Channel One can be heard as an alert, bringing to public awareness issues and questions that are likely to remain salient as economic feasibility permits the public and private sectors to exploit advancing electronic technologies for educational purposes. It is hoped that the discussions herein have suggested directions for investigation through which the issues and questions might be further clarified.

References

Action for Children's Television. (1990). Classroom news and commercials in the classroom. Cambridge, MA: Author.

Alinsky, S. D. (1971). Rules for radicals. New York: Random House.

Autumn release for Media and You activity book. (1990, summer). Strategies, p. 4.

Bagdikian, B. H. (1989). Cornering hearts and minds: The lords of the global village. The Nation, 248, 23, 805-820.

Blumenfeld, P. C., Mergendoller, J. R., & Swartout, D. W. (1987). Task as a heuristic for understanding student learning and motivation. Journal of Curriculum Studies, 19, 2, 135-148.

Broudy, H. (1954). Building a philosophy of education. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Chase, D. (1990, March 20). Kids give 'Channel One' thumbs up. Advertising Age, pp. 64-65.

Committee for Economic Development. (1985). Investing in our children. Washington, DC: Author.

Consumers Union. (1990). Selling America's children: Commercial pressure on kids of the 90's. Washington, DC: Author.

Eisner, E. (1985). The educational imagination. New York: Macmillan.

Eisner, E., and Vallance, E. (1974). Conflicting conceptions of curriculum. Berkeley, CA: McCutchan.

Feinberg, W., and Soltis, J. (1985). School and society. New York: Macmillan.

Gerboth, B. (1990, September 19). Students boycott TV program: Say Channel One lacks depth. The Forum, pp. A1, A5.

Harty, S. (1979). Hucksters in the classroom: A review of industry propaganda in schools. Washington, DC: Center for Study of Responsive Law.

Huebner, D. (1975). Curricular language and classroom meanings. In W. Pinar (Ed.), Curriculum theorizing: The reconceptualists (pp. 217-236). Berkeley, CA: McCutchan.

Johannesen, R. L. (1983). Ethics in human communication (2nd Ed.). Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Kaestle, C. F. (1982). Ideology and American educational history. History of Education Quarterly, 22, 123-137.

Kaestle, C. F. (1983). Pillars of the republic. New York: Hill & Wang.

Markey, J. (1989, January 22). It's a billboard jungle in there. Chicago Sun-Times, p. _.

Mayer, J. (1989, August 8). Political baptism: How Chris Whittle faltered on the issue of TV ads in schools. Wall Street Journal, pp. 1, _.

McCutcheon, G. (1982). What in the world is curriculum theory? Theory Into Practice, 21, 1, 18-23.

Molnar, A. (1989/90). Business involvement in schools: Separating wheat from chaff. Educational Leadership, 47, 4, 68-69.

Montgomery, K. C. (1989). Target: prime time: Advocacy groups and the struggle over entertainment television. New York: Oxford University Press.

Petry, J. (1990, November 15). Teachers tell their stories about television in the classroom. In T. McCain, & M. Cambre, (Chairs), Television in the classroom of the 1990's: Corporate sponsorship, curriculum, commercialism and current events. Symposium conducted by the Center for Advanced Study of Telecommunications, Columbus, Ohio.

Pitsch, M. (1991, February 20). Senator examining Alexander's finances, but others wonder what he's looking for. Education Week, pp. 21-22.

Postman, N. (1979). Teaching as a conserving activity. New York: Delacorte.

Postman, N. (1985). Amusing ourselves to death: Public discourse in the age of show business. New York: Viking.

Rippa, S. A. (1958). The textbook controversy and the free enterprise campaign, 1940-1941. History of Education Journal, 9, 3, 49-58.

Rose, M. (1988, September). Clutter & waste: How to get a doctor's appointment. Direct Marketing, pp. 34-35.

Rudinow, J. (1989/90). Channel One whittles away at education. Educational Leadership, 47, 4, 70-73.

Rukeyser, W. S. (1989, March 22). On commercial television in schools: Channel One creates opportunity for 'mutually beneficial' relationship. Education Week, pp. 23, 25

Salomon, G. (1979). Interaction of media, cognition, and learning. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sheinfeld, L. P. (1989, October). Dangerous liaisons. Film Comment, pp. __-__.

Spring, J. (1984). Education and the Sony war. Phi Delta Kappan, 65, 8, 534-537.

Spring, J. (1990). The American school 1642-1990 (2nd ed.). New York: Longman.

Spring, J. (1991). American education: An introduction to social and political aspects (5th ed.). New York: Longman.

Spring, J. H. (1972). Education and the rise of the corporate state. Boston: Beacon Press.

Tate, C. (1989). Opinion: On Chris Whittle's school news scheme. Columbia Journalism Review, 28, 1, 52.

Thomson, S. D. (1989, March 22). On commercial television in schools: Whittle's plan 'violates public trust,' relies on 'worst' teaching model. Education Week, p. 23, 25.

Turner to launch 'CNN Newsroom' in high school. (1989, May 1). Broadcasting, pp. _, _.

Tyack, D., and Hansot, E. (1982). Managers of virtue. New York: Basic Books.

Vallance, E. (1986). A second look at Conflicting conceptions of curriculum. Theory Into Practice, 25, 1, 24-30.

Walsh, M. (1989, March 15). Channel One debut wins viewer plaudits, but school groups pan 'commercialism.' Education Week, pp. 1, 31.

Walsh, M. (1990, October 31). Whittle to unveil new programming for teachers. Education Week, p. 4.

Walsh, M. (1990, November 21). Shanker quits 'Channel One' advisory panel. Education Week, p. 4.

Windsor, F. (1990, November 15). Public affairs television for the classroom. In T. McCain, & M. Cambre, (Chairs), Television in the classroom of the 1990's: Corporate sponsorship, curriculum, commercialism and current events. Symposium conducted by the Center for Advanced Study of Telecommunications, Columbus, Ohio.

Wirth, A. G. (1983). Productive work--in industry and schools. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.