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A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL:  
ENGAGING SECONDARY EDUCATORS  
IN MEDIA LITERACY USING THE  
ENGAGEMENT THEORY

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## America

Tony Hoagland

Then one of the students with blue hair and a tongue stud  
Says that America is for him a maximum security prison

Whose walls are made of Radio Shacks and Burger Kings, and MTV episodes  
Where you can't tell the show from the commercials,

And as I consider how to express how full of shit I think he is,  
He says that even when he's driving to the mall in his Isuzu

Trooper with a gang of his friends, letting rap music pour over them  
Like boiling Jacuzzi full of ballpeen hammers, even then he feels

Buried alive, captured and suffocated in the folds  
Of the thick satin quilt of America

And I wonder if this is a legitimate category of pain,  
Or whether he is just spin doctoring a better grade,

And then I remember that when I stabbed my father in the dream last night,  
It was not blood but money

That gushed out of him, bright green hundred dollar bills  
Spilling from his wounds, and — this is the weird part—,

He gasped, "Thank God—those Ben Franklins were  
Clogging up my heart—

And so I perish happily,  
Freed from that which kept me from my liberty"—

Which is when I knew it was a dream, since my dad  
Would never speak in rhymed couplets,

And I look at the student with his acne and cell phone and phony ghetto clothes  
And I think, "I'm asleep in America too,

And I don't know how to wake myself either,"  
And I remember what Marx said near the end of his life:

"I was listening to the cries of the past,

When I should have been listening to the cries of the future.”

But how could he have imagined 100 channels of 24-hour cable  
Or what kind of nightmare it might be

When each day you watch rivers of bright merchandise run past you  
And you are floating in your pleasure boat upon this river

Even while others are drowning underneath you  
And you see their faces twisting in the surface of the waters

And yet it seems to be your own hand  
Which turns the volume higher?

(2003, p 7)

## Abstract

The purpose of this action based research study is to create a model for professional development for high school teachers, which then can be used throughout the country, to integrate media literacy into the high school classroom curriculum. Focusing on the engagement theory, specific to technology and learning, this model assessed the needs of secondary educators regarding how they integrate media literacy into their specific discipline. Research Questions that were addressed are as follows: How can media literacy be integrated into the high school curriculum? Do secondary educators know how to use technology to incorporate media literacy into their discipline? Can the use of the Engagement Theory help secondary educators incorporate media literacy into their curriculum?

The researcher found that media literacy can and should be integrated into the high school curriculum as much as reasonably possible. The researcher has found that the only limits of media usage are the limitations of the educators' imagination. From the data collected, the researcher has concluded that secondary educators are lacking in their abilities to use technology to incorporate media literacy into their discipline. Although educators feel they themselves are media literate, the research shows that many of the educators were surprisingly ill equipped to transfer their knowledge of media literacy to their students. Through Engaged Learning, teachers can mirror the technology and the media, where appropriate, that students are already currently engaged in, and integrate it into their classroom curriculum. By engaging students with technology and media that already interests them, teachers will better hold the attention of their students and students will better comprehend the subject matter. Within the confines of the workshop, educators discussed some of their best practices using the media. Each of the examples given illustrated how students can be engaged by the use of technology and media.

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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

#### Background

Children and adolescents spend a significant amount of time in the presence of media (Roberts, 1980). For some, this is cause for alarm, or at least reason to take notice. There is considerable research to show correlation between children's viewing and learned behaviors and attitudes (Bandura, 1963), and people often see media exposure as a cause of societal problems. One solution is to educate and empower children through media literacy programs (Scharer, 2002; Semali, 2003). If, by age seven, young people are spending over six hours a day consuming media messages (Roberts, 1980), they deserve an education that prepares them to effectively and critically deal with those messages.

The average American child (ages 2-17 years old), watches 25 hours of television each week, plays computer or video games for seven hours each week, and accesses the Internet from home for four hours each week (among those who have Internet access) (mediafamily.org, 1999).

We are all awash in media. Television. Movies. The Internet. Billboards. Newspapers. Magazines. Radio. Newsletters. Individually and collectively, we spend more time with more media than ever before — an average of 10 ½ hours a day, 25% of that time using two media simultaneously, according to a recent study of 'Middletown, USA' by the University of South Carolina. says David Shaw for the Center for Media Literacy (2002, 2).

Media literacy allows the analysis of the onslaught of information that society is barraged with by the media. Media has grown and continues to grow at an exponential rate. While the media and its abilities and powers grow, so must society's ability to analyze it. Those who are media literate are able to digest and ultimately critically consider the validity of what is being heard or seen: be that print, electronic, or video. Media literacy consists of a series of communication capabilities, including the ability to access, examine, evaluate and communicate information in a range of formats from print and non-print messages, to electronic and video messages. Because it is interdisciplinary by nature, media literacy has become a necessary, unavoidable and reasonable response to the complex, continually changing electronic environment and message *mélange* that besieges our society. To become conscientious, competent citizens, individuals must develop expertise with the increasingly complicated information and entertainment media that addresses us on a multi-sensory level, affecting the way we think, feel and behave (The Alliance for a Media Literate America, n.d.).

Public education has neither the means nor the funding to create an entire media literacy program. However, media literacy can be incorporated into any discipline to promote critical thought in a public school setting. Technology can be used in a variety of fashions to integrate media literacy into the classroom. From video, to digital cameras, to the Internet, to television, technology is a key element in both illustrating and analyzing media.

Through *Engaged Learning*, Kearsley & Shneiderman (1999) assert that students

learn hands-on, using an active cognitive process, ultimately reasoning, and evaluating the problem and creating a sound, reasonable solution with which to give to a greater good, be that the classroom, the community, or society. Using engaged learning techniques; secondary educators involve active cognitive processes such as problem solving, reasoning, and decision-making. To that end, how best can secondary educators integrate media literacy into their classroom curriculum?

### Purpose

The purpose of this action based research study is to create a model for professional development for high school teachers, which then can be used throughout the country, to integrate media literacy into the high school classroom curriculum. Focusing on the engagement theory, specific to technology and learning, this model will assess the needs of secondary educators regarding how they integrate media literacy into their specific discipline. Ultimately the research will culminate with a workshop intended to deliver training to enhance the integration of media literacy into the curriculum.

Based upon the principle of “relate – create – donate” suggesting that learning activities: occur in a group setting (i.e., collaborative teams), and are project-based, engagement theory must have an outside (authentic) focus. The first principle, “relate”, highlights group efforts that involve communication, preparation, and organizational and social skills. The second principle, “create”, makes learning a creative activity with a

purpose. The third principle, “donate”, stresses the importance of making a useful contribution while learning. (Kearsley & Shneiderman, 1999) Contributions can be local to the classroom, the broader community, or to society as a whole.

### Research Questions

1. How can media literacy be integrated into the high school curriculum?
2. Do secondary educators know how to use technology to incorporate media literacy into their discipline?
3. Can the use of the Engagement Theory help secondary educators incorporate media literacy into their curriculum?

### Need for the Study

In all societies, educators have the privilege to empower their students, to make a difference in their students’ lives, to be a catalyst for change and growth. With the onset of the technological revolution coupled with the current millennial generation, the young people of America are dealing with a barrage of media messages: movies, music, books, magazines, newspapers, television, the Internet, e-mail, cell phones, billboards and other media are perpetually presented, encouraging people to buy certain products and/or buy into certain ideas. Because of the torrent of media messages, students are forced to try to comprehend what they are hearing and seeing. It behooves educators to prepare their

students, to the best of their ability, to critically analyze and evaluate the continual onslaught of media messages.

## Definitions

### *Media Literacy:*

As defined by The Center for Media Literacy, “Media Literacy is a 21<sup>st</sup> century approach to education. It provides a framework to access, analyze, evaluate and create messages in a variety of forms: from print, to video, to the Internet. Media literacy builds an understanding of the role of media in society as well as essential skills of inquiry and self-expression necessary for citizens of a democracy” (n.d. b, p.1)

*Engagement Theory:* Kearsley and Shneiderman set out the basic principles of engagement theory by suggesting that all student activities should involve active cognitive processes such as creating, problem-solving, reasoning, decision-making, and evaluation. In addition, students are intrinsically motivated to learn due to the meaningful nature of the learning environment and activities. (2004, p. 1)

## Summary

The purpose of this action research study is to create a model for professional development for high school teachers, which can be used throughout the country, to integrate media literacy into the high school classroom curriculum. This model will include assessing the needs of secondary educators regarding how they integrate media literacy into

their discipline, by means of a workshop to deliver training, specific to technology and learning focusing on engagement as a means to enhance students ability to critically evaluate and analyze media messages.

The review of literature in this study falls into three categories: Media Literacy, Engagement Theory, and Use of Engagement Theory to Incorporate Media Literacy into the Classroom. In Chapter II a review of research pertinent to this study is discussed.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In conducting this study, the researcher will rely on many sources. Articles and web sites on the current roles of media literacy as a teaching tool, the need for media literacy throughout the curriculum, and the skills and strategies needed for successful integration of media literacy will be reviewed. Research will be conducted at the Frank J. Guarini Library of New Jersey City University, the Hunterdon County Library, and on the World Wide Web. After reviewing the literature, the researcher found that the material could be divided into the following three categories: Media Literacy, Engagement Theory, and Use of Engagement Theory to Incorporate Media Literacy into the Classroom.

#### Media Literacy

The use of contemporary media to teach is becoming more and more prevalent.

Students are bombarded with media on a daily basis. Stark (2003) asserts that the study of media literacy can, at times, be emotionally and personally trying because students often internalize the academic study of media literacy, because the study of media is also the study of personal choices and subconscious decisions. It then becomes a method of self-reflection regarding choices and subconscious values that have been adopted. Stark encourages the incorporation of such media as *MAD Magazine* and *Saturday Night Live* into classroom curriculum as the demographics that are targeted with these media are the same demographic market within the average classroom.

Ithaca College *Project Look Sharp* offers the following key concepts to define Media Literacy: All media messages are ‘constructed’. Each medium has different characteristics, strengths, and a unique ‘language’ of construction. Different people interpret the same media message in different ways. Media messages are produced for particular purposes, including profit, persuasion, education, and artistic expression. Media have embedded values and points of view.

It is with these concepts in mind students must learn to analyze media messages so that they are better equipped to understand not only what is being presented, but also the motive behind the presentation.

Pattison (1982) states that literacy is an awareness of language and the ability to make a “judgment of the relations between the words of an assertion and the part of the universe about which the assertion is made” (p. 23). This is to suggest, it is not merely enough for a student to be able to decode words, sentences and paragraphs. Nor is it sufficient for the student to simply read a passage and extract a main idea. Literacy goals

should include these basic skills, but the goal should be to encourage students to make critical judgment calls about the message relative to the event, or external reality that a passage attempts to convey.

Heitzmann (1998) explains that the best history teachers use political cartoons (a.k.a. historical and editorial cartoons) in the classroom. This trend may easily be attributed to the cartoons ability to promote critical thinking as in the Bradley Commission's suggestions for developing "History Habits of the Mind" (p.1). Political cartoons also develop students multiple intelligences, especially those of special needs learners. The use of political cartoons is a useful tool for initiating classroom discussion, provides multi-disciplinary lessons, promotes high level questioning, and provides a basis for authentic assessment. Additionally, the humor of the cartoon adds instructional power without depreciating its intellectual value.

Feurerstien (1999) says that one of the main goals in education within the last decade is to develop critical thinking skills in students, in order to educate them to be active, involved citizens. She further states that critical thinking should be less concerned with conveying information and requiring memorization of empirical data. The underlying principle of critical thinking contends that an information society—a society based on producing and promoting proliferating knowledge—must be equipped with critical competence. This plan will ultimately equip future generations with the ability to generate ideas, while also providing them with the skill to reason and explain events that take place



within their daily lives.

Along the same lines as Feuerstien, Horn (2003) also speaks of the importance of critical thinking and its relation to media literacy. Horn contends that there is a hidden curriculum within the media. The hidden curriculum is a broad category that includes all of the unrecognized and sometimes unintended knowledge, principles, and ideas that are part of the learning process in schools and classrooms. Media is one of the most significant sources of hidden curriculum. Educators must become aware of how the media works to persuade, sell, and ultimately influence its audience. As Horn suggests, an individual's lack of experience in a given subject is replaced by what they see in the media. Without critical awareness promoted by media literacy, these individuals are susceptible to adopt the opinions represented within the media. As the media continues to present certain perceptions, the repetition validates the message, further authenticating its intended meaning. Therefore, the challenge to the educator is to continually analyze media, continually critique media messages, to ultimately seek out the rest of the context and deeper meaning that were not initially provided in the media message.

Teaching means that educators help their students learn how to discover knowledge for themselves. Helping students develop skills in critical and divergent thinking, instead of instructing them what to think, and how to think is a central component of the educational experience. Says Steinbrink and Cook (2003) "This theory on teaching is widely accepted, and therefore the problems stand as not *if* to teach critical thinking, but moreover *how* to

teach critical thinking.” (p.6). With the onslaught of media, educators are afforded a tool from our daily lives to access, analyze and evaluate.

In an interview with George Lucas, James Daley talks about the rules of visual story telling. Lucas says that grammatical rules in visual story telling are just as important as the grammatical rules of writing. Lucas asks the readers what emotion does the color red convey? What about blue? In music, if a musician wants the listener to feel sad, s/he will choose a particular chord. A fast rhythm makes the listener feel one way, while a slow rhythm makes the listener feel another. A multi-media presentation about a sobering subject, such as death, juxtaposed with a fast paced music will not communicate the intended point. Just as using the color red and/or jagged diagonal lines will not sooth or calm the viewer, instead it will invoke a feeling of movement, stress, and heat. Knowing how to communicate with color, music, graphics is as important as knowing what a subject and verb are, and what a question mark, exclamation point, and ellipsis mean (Daly, 2004)

Our society and the way we present and process information has been profoundly effected by television. It stands to reason that television should also have had a significant impact in the educational empire -- yet it hasn't, despite the fact that a vast amount of money and resources have been specifically geared towards television use in the classroom (Kearsley, 1998). The goal of media literacy, then, is to help students ask more critical questions of media messages and media guidelines, encouraging them to become not only more confident consumers and viewers, but also more self-determined, active and insightful

citizens.

## Engagement Theory

Engagement theory can be used to promote interactivity and to enhance communication within the classroom setting. It is a natural tool to use to integrate media literacy into the classroom to emphasize authentic learning.

“Engaged learning means that students are intrinsically motivated to learn due to the meaningful nature of the learning environment and activities. It also means that all student actions entail active cognitive processes such as creating, problem solving, reasoning, decision-making, and evaluation (Kearsley & Shneiderman, 1999, p. 1). The difference between engagement theory and earlier models of computer-based learning is that the emphasis was previously on individualized instruction and interactivity. Although engagement theory does promote interaction, it is human interaction in the context of group activities, not individual interaction with an instructional program. The more recent form of interaction tended to be measured by single responses (i.e. mouse clicks) whereas engagement requires assessment of larger units of work (e.g., reports, programs, user satisfaction). The defining difference between engagement and interactivity reveals the change in thinking concerning computers in education being used as communication tools rather than information/media delivery devices. Additionally, engagement theory places a great deal of emphasis on providing an authentic (i.e., significant and meaningful) setting

for learning, something not previously present (Kearsley & Shneiderman, 1998).

Academe requires students to acquire facts, information, knowledge, and wisdom, but a holistic view also includes the preparation for participation in family, community, work, and national structures. Additional goals could be personal growth, self-actualization, communication skills, and increased capacity for learning, critical thinking, and creative problem solving (Shneiderman, 1999, p. 1).

To respond to these goals, educators need a philosophy that they can adapt to their personal style, course curriculum, and class demographic. Shneiderman proposes the Relate-Create-Donate philosophy, which stresses: Relate: work in collaborative teams, create: develop ambitious projects, and donate: produce results that are meaningful to someone outside the classroom (Shneiderman, 1999).

Using Engagement Theory to Integrate Media Literacy Into the Classroom.

Project Look Smart of Ithaca College has twelve in-depth principles to integrate media into any curriculum. It suggests media can be used not only to practice and encourage critical thinking, but also as a tool for assessment. It can be a pedagogical tool for providing information on a subject, or used as a tool to connect students to the community. Media can also be used as a way to express students' opinions and understandings of the world and society (Table 1).

Stark (2003) also recognizes that "teaching media, like teaching anything else, can lead to some difficult discussions" (p. 305). Some of these difficult discussions can stem from personal choice of media, and what might otherwise feel like judgment of such choices. This exploration may sometimes feel like personal attacks rather than academic

discussion. Moreover, students who do begin to examine their choices and relationship with mass media, and their unquestioning acceptance of many media messages, may begin to ask some extremely serious questions of themselves regarding the subconscious values that they have adopted and choices they have made.

It has been common practice for many years for teachers to use video resources in the classroom to arouse interest in a new topic or to help students gain information about a subject. With this in mind, educators use documentaries to enhance critical thinking and critical viewing.

TABLE 1

Project Look Smart of Ithaca College offers these basic principles for integrating media literacy into the classroom curriculum:

<p><u>USE MEDIA TO</u></p>	<p><b>practice</b> general observation, analysis, perspective taking and production by encouraging students to think critically about information presented in any media message.</p>
	<p><b>stimulate</b> interest in a new topic by showing an interesting or familiar video clip or reading a short book or about the topic.</p>
	<p><b>identify</b> ways in which students may be already familiar with a topic through media by giving examples from popular media content, as well as to identify erroneous beliefs about a topic by analyzing media content that misrepresents a topic or presents false or misleading information about a topic.</p>
	<p><b>develop</b> an awareness of issues of credibility and bias in the media by teaching how to recognize the source (speaker) of a media message, the purpose of producing the message, and how that might influence the objective nature of information.</p>
	<p><b>compare</b> the ways different media present information about a topic, contrast ways in which information about a topic might be presented in a documentary, a TV news report, a newspaper article, an advertisement, or an educational children's program about a specific topic.</p>
	<p><b>analyze</b> the effect that specific media have had on a particular issue or topic historically and/or across different cultures by discussing the role that the media has played specific to this topic.</p>

**build and practice** specific curricular skills by ~~using print media to practice reading and comprehension skills.~~

	<p><b>express</b> student’s opinions and illustrate their understanding of the world by encouraging students to analyze media messages for distortions and bias issues of particular interest to them</p>
	<p><b>connect</b> students to the community and work towards positive change by finding collaborative possibilities for projects with community institutions that may involve students analyzing or creating media messages</p>
<p><u>USE MEDIA AS</u></p>	<p><b>a standard pedagogical tool</b> by providing information about the topic through a variety of media sources comparing the usefulness of different media, and addressing conflicting information that may come from different sources.</p>
	<p><b>an assessment tool</b> by having students summarize their knowledge about a topic in a final report, employing other forms of media beyond the standard written report</p>

Exemplifying this technique a teacher may choose to show a documentary, or a portion of a documentary without sound, after which the class may make critical decisions about the visual aspects of the documentary without being distracted by sound (Evely, 2000).

To bring visual communication into the classroom, educators must look at the whole world of communication in a more complete way. Educators need to cross the boundaries of individual disciplines and bring art and music into the English and history classrooms. Daly (2004) suggests that all disciplines form a circle of communication, music and art being the most emotional level of communications, while math and science are more methodical and precise. All modes of communication are enormously important, with each a part of the same circle, none with more weighted importance than the other, and they should all be treated as such. Daly also reminds us that without significance placed on the necessary visual grammar needed, visual literacy presentations will continue to be disjointed and confusing, as if the creator started with a period and ended with a capital letter.

To alleviate the potential weightiness of the topic, educators may choose to bring some levity into the classroom and use satire as a teaching tool. There is a large quantity of satire available that an educator may choose from in today's media: from Saturday Night Live, to Mad Magazine, to David Letterman to the Jay Leno Show. According to West and Orman (2003) "[Satire] is a way to boost public interest in a subject about which many Americans are not deeply absorbed. The idea is that politics does not hurt as much if you are



laughing at public officials.” Stark (2003) says that “Although it may seem unlikely that students are not absorbed in the mass media, the statement is nevertheless relevant to using satire in the teaching of media literacy” (p. 305).

There are a variety of techniques and media that can be used to integrate media literacy into the classroom curriculum. The limitations only consist of technological limitations and the limitations of the imagination of the educator.

When each day you watch rivers of bright merchandise run past you/  
And you are floating in your pleasure boat upon this river /  
Even while others are drowning underneath you /  
And you see their faces twisting in the surface of the waters /  
And yet it seems to be your own hand / Which turns the volume higher?  
(Hoagland, 2003, p. 7)

It is with media literacy that educators can help students to understand the impact and implications of their actions, and encourage them to not only lower the volume, but also critically analyze what it is they are viewing. As society moves further into the twenty-first century, and media and technology become more and more refined, instead of listening to the cries of the past, educators should begin to take note of the cries of the future.

## Summary

In conclusion, the review of literature in this study falls into three categories: Media Literacy, Engagement Theory, and Use of Engagement Theory to Incorporate Media Literacy into the Classroom. In the next section, the researcher will discuss the method used in conducting this research.

## CHAPTER III

### METHOD

#### Design of Study

In this study, the researcher studied the media literacy levels within Voorhees High School in Hunterdon County, New Jersey. This information was then be analyzed with feedback and a professional development workshop created to further the faculty's ability to integrate media literacy into their specific discipline. As stated at the beginning, the purpose of this action based research study was to create a model for professional development for high school teachers to integrate media literacy into the high school classroom curriculum, which can then be used throughout the country. Focusing on the engagement theory, specific to technology and learning, this model assesses the needs of secondary educators regarding how they integrate media literacy into their specific discipline. Ultimately the research culminated with a workshop intended to deliver training to enhance the integration of media literacy into the curriculum.

#### General Procedures

As a method of conducting this research study, the researcher chose action-based research. Action-based research is a “systemic enquiry designed to yield practical results

capable of improving a specific aspect of practice and made public to enable scrutiny and testing”

(DeBlieu, 2002, p.2). Action research is a process that explores problems and solutions in a collegial setting. “ Because the participants determine what issues they wish to address through the process, the activity builds on the individuals’ expertise and experiences, rather than someone else’s notion of what is going on in a school or a classroom” (DeBlieu, 2002 p. 3).

#### Documents Used in the Study

A questionnaire was designed for this study to identify media used by Voorhees Regional High School students on a regular basis (Appendix E). This questionnaire was designed to elicit detailed information regarding high school student’s level of routine media exposure. A questionnaire was also designed for the faculty at Voorhees Regional High School (Appendix D). This questionnaire was designed to identify the level of media literacy taught within their specific discipline, as well as identifying their willingness to integrate media literacy into their curriculum in the future. Additionally, there were letters sent requesting permission from all parents of the student participants, as well as letters of consent from the participating faculty (Appendices A & B).

#### Resources

As a basis for questions to include in the questionnaire, the researcher relied on specific high school students, a panel of experts consisting of teachers, university and college designer colleagues, and the researcher's academic advisor, Doctor Laura Zieger, before it was sent to Voorhees Regional High School for dissemination. Additionally, Ms. Lori H. McDaniel, independent filmmaker, designer, and artist, worked with the researcher to digitally film and edit the professional development workshop, and interviews of the participants regarding their views on media literacy.

#### Procedures for Analyzing Materials

The tally or frequency count is the calculation of how many people fit into a given category or the number of times a characteristic occurs. This calculation is expressed by both the absolute (actual number) and relative (percentage) totals (Southwest Missouri State University Web site) Frequency counts will be applied to each question of the survey to determine similarities and differences among participants, and their individual discipline. The questionnaire also contains a section for the respondent to give insight on research question number one. Upon completion of the analysis of the data, results were compiled as to how best to integrate media literacy into the high school curriculum.

#### Data Collection

The researcher gathered information for this study by mailing the questionnaire

(Appendix D) and a cover letter (Appendix B) to the Principal of Voorhees Regional High School for review. Mrs. Beth Nemeth, a faculty member at Voorhees Regional High School then disseminated the questionnaire to twenty faculty members within Voorhees Regional High School on behalf of the researcher for completion. A self-addressed stamped envelope was left with the principal of Voorhees High School for return of the questionnaires. The researcher then was in contact with the principal of Voorhees Regional High School two weeks after the distribution of the questionnaire for retrieval. A thank you letter was sent to the principal and the faculty who participated in the survey upon completion of the questionnaire (Appendix C).

### Data Analysis

Material were analyzed for frequency of responses in each of the following areas: discipline taught, years of teaching, gender, certifications held, highest degree earned, and any additional pertinent information. A table was then developed to illustrate frequency counts, in each area within the questionnaire. Additionally, a qualitative analysis was conducted resulting in creating a model to illustrate the opportunities to integrate media literacy into a given discipline within the high school curriculum.

### Summary

In Chapter III the method used to conduct the research was discussed. In Chapter IV,

a review of the responses from the returned questionnaires will be examined for the findings.

The results from faculty and students will be analyzed for similarities and differences and then tabulated.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

#### Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher will present and discuss the data gathered in the study. First, the results of the survey will be reported to illustrate the level of media related technology activities that students of Voorhees Regional High School, located in Hunterdon County, New Jersey, use. Next, a scaled comparison of class scores was evaluated. The data collected was used as the basis for the Professional Development Workshop that was designed and implemented for the faculty of Voorhees Regional High School. At the Professional Development Workshop, faculty were asked to fill out pre and post surveys, after which this data was analyzed, totaling the percentage of media usage within the classroom, resulting in media literacy, the use of student engagement within the classroom, and the level of need for additional media literacy within the high school curriculum.

The purpose of this action based research study was to create a model for professional development for high school teachers, which then can be used throughout the country, to integrate media literacy into the high school classroom curriculum. Focusing on the engagement theory, specific to technology and learning, this model will assess the needs of secondary educators regarding how they integrate media literacy into their specific discipline. Ultimately the research culminated with a workshop intended to deliver training to

enhance the integration of media literacy into the classroom curriculum.

The purpose of the student survey was to determine a self-assessed need for media literacy within the high school classroom environment, and to use to design and implement a model for a Professional Development Workshop based upon the results of the survey.

The purpose of the data collection is to answer the following questions:

1. How can media literacy be integrated into the high school curriculum?
2. Do secondary educators know how to use technology to incorporate media literacy into their discipline?
3. Can the use of the Engagement Theory help secondary educators incorporate media literacy into their curriculum?

Upon completion of the surveys, the data was collated and compiled into tables and figures. These tables and figures are accompanied by narrative descriptions of the information presented. Chapter V will include an analysis and discussion of these findings.

#### Data Categorization and Discussion

The chair of the New Jersey City University Institutional Review Board approved this action-based research, its methods and its survey (Appendix A). The Voorhees Regional High School principal, Mr. David Steffan, waived the need for parental permission for one hundred students to participate in this survey (Appendix B). Of the one hundred requests, ninety-one surveys were returned (Appendix C). Four health teachers



were selected by a faculty delegate, Mrs. Elizabeth Nemeth, who disseminated the surveys to classes within each grade level (9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, & 12<sup>th</sup>) to ensure both a random sampling of the students, and that academic standing did not skew results. Students were allowed the first twenty minutes of their class time to complete this anonymous survey, comprised of ninety questions.

Students were asked to identify which modes of media and technology they had within their homes and within their rooms, as well as their interest in media literacy, in addition to how well monitored their technology and media use is by their parents or other adults. Students also approximated how much time they spent weekly on the computer, watching television, and playing video games. The researcher then analyzed the findings to discern the magnitude of a self-assessed need for media literacy throughout the ninety-one high school students surveyed, as well analyzed the findings relating to the level of supervision and conversation students are having with adults regarding the media they are watching. The researcher also found the mean of the amount of time spent with the various technologies. Some of the questions asked were how much time was spent in an average week online, watching television, and playing video games. Additionally, students were asked to identify if they had parental guidelines regarding their computer usage, their television viewing time, their movie viewing and their video game usage.

With the faculty survey, members of the Voorhees Regional High School Faculty were asked to explain their experience with media literacy, the level they engage their students

with the media, and their willingness to further integrate media literacy into their classroom environment. They were asked to describe their best practice using media literacy, as well as to list the resources that they have at their disposal to integrate media literacy into their class. Additionally, teachers were asked to explain what they perceive as barriers to including media literacy within their classroom. Upon completion of the Professional Development Workshop the faculty were asked to describe the level of success they felt the workshop offered in educating them in new, innovative ways of integrating the use of media through the use of engagement theory into their classroom. They were also asked if they felt there were ways in which the workshop could be improved.

### Student Surveys

Ninety-one students completed the student survey (Appendix B). The researcher included a variety of questions regarding the modes of media and technology that students are presently using, but paid particular attention to the results of the questions pertaining to a self-assessed need for media literacy, the length of time approximated that students are engaged in using media, as well as the level of parental/adult involvement, conversation and supervision with media and technology.

Students were asked to approximate the amount of time they spent watching television, playing video games, and time spent online. The approximated times were then added together and divided by 91 to discern an average of the time spent watching

television. Of the ninety-one high schools students surveyed, the average viewing time came to ten and a half hours weekly. In addition to the time in front of the television, students are playing an average of three and a half hours of video games weekly, and students are online for an average of twenty-one hours and fifteen minutes per week, totaling thirty-five hours and fifteen minutes, on average, of technology and media use for these high school students.

Nearly 70% of the students polled stated they felt media literacy would be helpful if integrated into the classroom environment. 54% of the students polled expressed an interest in discussing the media in a classroom setting. Additionally, approximately half of the students surveyed currently discuss what they are watching on television with an adult.

Table 2

Student data regarding media literacy data

	Is media literacy helpful if integrated into the classroom setting?	Is the meaning of what is watched regularly discussed with an adult?	Are students interested in discussing media literacy in the classroom?
Yes	76%	57%	59%
No	12%	42%	23%
No Answer	12%	1%	18%

The surveys also indicate that parental guidelines for movies, music and video games are exceptionally low, with only 26% of polled students disclosing that they do in

fact have parental guidelines for movies, 15% of students stating that they have parental guidelines for music and 11% of students polled revealed they have parental guidelines for video games. Furthermore, 32% of polled students admitted to chatting with people online that they did not know, while 64% of polled students acknowledged that they have conversations online that they would not want their parents to see. In addition to a lack of parental guidelines for a majority of the students polled, 30% of the polled students are receiving unsolicited sexually explicit emails.

Table 3

Student data regarding parental involvement

	Parental Guidelines for movies/ videos	Parental Guidelines for video games	Parental Guidelines regarding music	Ever chat with people you do not know?	IM conversations that you would not want your parents to see?	Ever receive unsolicited sexually explicit email?
Yes	26%	11%	15%	32%	64%	30%
No	65%	58%	72%	51%	18%	51%
No Answer	1%	22%	4%	8%	9%	10%

Faculty Surveys

In addition to student surveys, twenty faculty surveys were submitted for completion. Of the twenty surveys, nine surveys were returned. These questions pertained to experience with using media as a teaching tool, the importance of critical thinking, their perceived need for media literacy within their classroom curriculum, as well as surveying an interest in attending a professional development workshop related to Media Literacy.

Of the nine surveys returned, eight stated they would be interested in learning more about how better to integrate media literacy into their classroom curriculum. Eight faculty members felt critical thinking was an integral part of creating a lesson plan. Of the nine faculty members who submitted surveys two of them had a Bachelor’s Degree as their highest degree attained, while seven had Masters or Masters plus additional education as

their highest degree attained. The average age was 42.5 years while the average years teaching was 19. Of the nine faculty members, there were three women and six men surveyed. The nine teachers were comprised of four Special Education teachers, one Science teacher, one English teacher, one Social Studies teacher, one World Language teacher and one Art teacher.

Prior to the beginning of the Professional Development Workshop those faculty members who attended the workshop filled out a pre-workshop survey. The questions asked corresponded to the questions that students were asked. Teachers were asked the frequency they used video, film, and educational computer games as teaching tools. They were also asked to describe the manners in which they used the media within their class. In addition a few of those who attended were interviewed on film regarding the level of importance they place on media literacy, their desire to further integrate media literacy into their classroom, and their thoughts regarding more effective and efficient ways to engage students with technology and the media.

The researcher found that although the students were increasingly engaged with the media and technology, teachers are not using corresponding technology and media within the classroom. As stated earlier, the average student surveyed is spending over thirty-five hours weekly engaged with media and technology, while the teachers are using film, media, and computer technology sparingly within the classroom.

A professional development workshop was conducted at Voorhees Regional High School.

Seven faculty members of various disciplines attended with the expectation of learning more about specifically what within the media engages their students. Additionally, they hoped to learn new ways to integrate technology and media usage into their classroom. Although each educator reported that they did make an effort to integrate technology and media into their current class curriculum, each of them expressed a desire to learn to relate better to their students, and to enrich their current curriculum by further integration of media and media literacy into their classroom environment.

The workshop consisted of viewing a variety of commercials with an interactive discussion of how best each commercial might be best integrated into a given discipline. The participants were encouraged to be innovative, and think creatively. Attendees offered a variety of ways to integrate specific commercials into a classroom setting. One social studies teacher suggested assigning students a set time that would be entirely media/technology-free, with corresponding assignments to illustrate some of the effects of the quantity of media our society is continuously barraged with, as well as to help students to better understand times when technology was not as advanced as it is today. Other educators expressed concern over the lack of parental media literacy and the lack of parental interaction with their children with regards to the media. Discussion ensued regarding how best to rectify that specific problem. A suggestion was made to assign students to watch, with a parent, specific, chosen TV shows, and afterward have the student interview the parent regarding the show, thus obliging parent/child dialogue with the intent of engaging the parents in students viewing practices.

At the end of the workshop attendees were asked to complete a post-workshop survey to evaluate their experience of the workshop, and the value of the information they received. Six of the seven educators in attendance felt authentically engaged during the workshop. They actively participated, and were involved in the experience of learning. They felt the content was valuable, as was the workshop experience, and expressed an interest in participating in future follow-up workshops. A suggestion was also made to hold a workshop for the Parent Teacher Association, as it might enhance parental media literacy. There was one educator who felt as if she “tried to participate, but quickly became disengaged.” The researcher cannot explain this comment, nor can the researcher identify specifically what was the cause of the loss of attention with this particular participant, as she did not share that specific feedback within the confines of the post-workshop survey, or with the researcher.

## Summary

In Chapter IV, the researcher discussed the findings of the questionnaires and how the findings were categorized. In Chapter V these findings will be interpreted in relation to the relevant research reviews in Chapter II, and the researcher will begin her discussions of the findings, literature, and impact of this study.



## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

#### Introduction

Rod Serling said: "It is difficult to produce a television documentary that is both incisive and probing when every twelve minutes one is interrupted by twelve dancing rabbits singing about toilet paper." (Arlen, p.1) While the media is peppered with dancing rabbits, singing cats, and monkeys working in offices, it is also filled with public service announcements, newscasts, documentaries, and educational resources. While it offers entertainment, the media also delivers forces that educate, enlighten and empower. The challenge is finding a way to use the media as an educational tool, a resource to empower students and reach them in a manner that other resources are unable to.

The purpose of this research study was to address the following questions:

1. How can media literacy be integrated into the high school curriculum?
2. Do secondary educators know how to use technology to incorporate media literacy into their discipline?
3. Can the use of the Engagement Theory help secondary educators incorporate media literacy into their curriculum?

#### Research Question 1

*How can media literacy be integrated into the high school curriculum?*

Pattison (1982) states that literacy is an awareness of language and the ability to make a “judgment of the relations between the words of an assertion and the part of the universe about which the assertion is made” (p. 23). This is to suggest, it is not merely enough for a student to be able to decode words, sentences and paragraphs. Nor is it sufficient for the student to simply read a passage and extract a main idea. Literacy goals should include these basic skills, but the goal should be to encourage students to make critical judgment calls about the message relative to the event, or external reality that a passage attempts to convey.

Media literacy can and should be integrated into the high school curriculum as much as reasonably possible. In Language Arts, students can use the media as writing prompts for creative, expository, or technical writing. Newscasts can prompt reaction papers. Documentaries and newscasts can be used to learn about contemporary issues. In Visual Arts, advertisements can be analyzed for design and visual elements. In commercials visual literacy can be explored, encouraging students to more closely analyze what is being viewed and the reasons the advertisers made the decisions they did with regards to product placement and cinematography choices. In Social Studies/Civics classes, students can discuss current events, politics, state of the union, war and peace issues that are discussed within newscasts. Students can listen to music relative to war and terrorism and discuss the meaning of the lyrics. Classes can watch humorous, satirical shows, such as clips from Saturday Night Live, MAD TV, and Jay Leno, and discuss opposing views of what is happening in the news. In Health classes, students can use music videos to discuss gender

relations and sexuality, they can also use commercials for alcohol to further investigate issues of dependency. Educators can use film clips of a variety of films and documentaries to study race relations. In Math, teachers can have students chart and graph advertising costs during various viewing times, they can also use a variety of computer software programs to emulate the stock market or tax return programs to learn to prepare their taxes. Students can analyze the data of specific sports figures or particular teams. In career counseling classes students can discuss and compare and contrast the salaries of sports figures to political figures. In Science, students can compare the results of a documentary about the environmental effects of the Exxon Valdez oil spill with the manner in which Exxon creates a film, about the same subject. The researcher has found that the only limits of media usage are the limitations of the educators' imagination.

## Research Question 2

*Do secondary educators know how to use technology to incorporate media literacy into their discipline?*

Our society and the way we present and process information has been profoundly effected by television. It stands to reason that television should also have had a significant impact in the educational empire -- yet it hasn't, despite the fact that a vast amount of money and resources have been specifically geared towards television use in the classroom (Kearsley, 1998). The goal of media literacy, then, is to help students ask more critical

questions of media messages and media guidelines, encouraging them to become not only more confident consumers and viewers, but also more self-determined, active and insightful citizens.

From the data collected the researcher has concluded that secondary educators are lacking in their abilities to use technology to incorporate media literacy into their discipline. Although educators feel they themselves are media literate, the research shows that many of the educators were surprisingly ill equipped to transfer their knowledge of media literacy to their students. There was a large discrepancy in the amount of time students spent engaged with technology and the media compared to the amount of time teachers incorporated technology and the media into the classroom environment. The reasons for this disparity were varied. One suggested hindrance was a lack of access to computers, which would clearly be problematic with ensuring students technological literacy. Although each classroom within Voorhees Regional High School is equipped with a television with a VCR and DVD player, the teachers surveyed unanimously stated they used film, television and DVDs, on average, once a month.

### Research Question 3

*Can the use of the Engagement Theory help secondary educators incorporate media literacy into their curriculum?*

Through Engaged Learning, Kearsley & Shneiderman (1999) assert that students

learn hands-on, using an active cognitive process, ultimately reasoning, and evaluating the problem and creating a sound, reasonable solution with which to give to a greater good, be that the classroom, the community, or society. Using engaged learning techniques; secondary educators involve active cognitive processes such as problem solving, reasoning, and decision-making. Outside of the classroom students are already engaged with the both technology and media. The data shows that adolescents are already hands-on when it comes to technology; when it comes to using websites; when it comes to chatting online with friends, as well as with strangers. Adolescents play video games and computer games at home at an alarming rate. Adolescents are actively using technology for their own entertainment, communication, and on occasion educational purposes. Through Engaged Learning, teachers can mirror the technology and the media, where appropriate, that students are already currently engaged in, and integrate it into their classroom curriculum. By engaging students with technology and media that already interests them, teachers will better hold the attention of their students and students will better comprehend the subject matter.

Within the confines of the workshop, educators discussed some of their best practices using the media. Each of the examples given illustrated how students can be engaged by the use of technology and media. One attendee spoke about her use of stock market programs that she used to help students better understand financial planning, another spoke of using newscasts in her pre-law class, while another educator regularly uses sit-coms such as Frasier to teach her students about interpersonal relationships.

## Summary

In Chapter V, the researcher discussed the implications of the data received in the student questionnaire. In Chapter VI, the researcher will provide a summary, conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

Public education has neither the means nor the funding to create an entire media literacy program. However, media literacy can be incorporated into any discipline to promote critical thought in a public school setting. Technology can be used in a variety of fashions to integrate media literacy into the classroom. From video, to digital cameras, to the Internet, to television, technology is a key element in both illustrating and analyzing media. To become conscientious, competent citizens, individuals must develop expertise with the increasingly complicated information and entertainment media that addresses us on a multi-sensory level, affecting the way we think, feel and behave. (The Alliance for a Media Literate America, 2004) To this end, educators must learn techniques to integrate the media into their existing curriculum.

The purpose of this action based research study was to create a model for professional development for high school teachers, which then can be used throughout the country, to integrate media literacy into the high school classroom curriculum. Focusing on the engagement theory, specific to technology and learning, this model assessed the needs of secondary educators regarding how they integrate media literacy into their specific discipline. Ultimately

the research culminated with a workshop intended to deliver training to enhance the integration of media literacy into the curriculum.

### Research Questions

1. How can media literacy be integrated into the high school curriculum?
2. Do secondary educators know how to use technology to incorporate media literacy into their discipline?
3. Can the use of the Engagement Theory help secondary educators incorporate media literacy into their curriculum?

The use of contemporary media to teach is becoming more and more prevalent. We, as a society, are bombarded with media on a daily basis.

Ithaca College *Project Look Sharp* offers the following key concepts to define Media Literacy: “All media messages are ‘constructed’. Each medium has different characteristics, strengths, and a unique ‘language’ of construction. Different people interpret the same media message in different ways. Media messages are produced for particular purposes, including profit, persuasion, education, and artistic expression. Media have embedded values and points of view.”

It is with these concepts in mind students must learn to analyze media messages so that they are better equipped to understand not only what is being presented, but also the motive behind the presentation. Therefore, the challenge to the educator is to continually analyze media, continually critique media messages, to ultimately seek out the rest of the context and deeper meaning that were not initially provided in the media message.

In this study, the researcher studied the media literacy levels within Voorhees High



School in Hunterdon County, New Jersey. This information was then analyzed with feedback and a professional development workshop created to further the faculty's ability to integrate media literacy into their specific discipline. As stated at the beginning, the purpose of this action based research study is to create a model for professional development for high school teachers to integrate media literacy into the high school classroom curriculum, which can then be used throughout the country. Focusing on the engagement theory, specific to technology and learning, this model will assesses the needs of secondary educators regarding how they integrate media literacy into their specific discipline, Ultimately the research will culminate with a workshop intended to deliver training to enhance the integration of media literacy into the curriculum.

The researcher researched the methods and uses of media literacy within secondary education. After which an anonymous survey was sent to 91 Voorhees Regional High School students asking them about their media and technology preferences and experiences. Additionally, nine faculty members participated in a similar survey regarding their usage of media literacy within their classroom environment. The results of the student surveys were tabulated and averaged and then presented to the Voorhees Regional High School faculty who attended the professional development workshop. Those educators who were in attendance were shown a variety of ways to integrate media usage into their classroom curriculum. They were interviewed with regards to their personal media practices as well as their current level of integration of media literacy into their curriculum.

## Conclusions

Through the analysis of the literature and the data collected it has been established that media literacy can and should be integrated into the secondary curriculum. There are countless opportunities to integrate the media into the classroom setting. By using technology coupled with the hands on techniques within Engagement Theory students are more likely to completely process and retain information. By using topical media teachers are better able to reach students on their level.

The researcher has found that educators have difficulty incorporating media into their classroom. The data shows that students are spending more than 35 hours per week engaged with technology, while educators are stating they are using media in a variety of forms, as well as technology only about once monthly. The disparity is clear. Students are being exposed to the media and to the technology; they are simply being exposed without the benefit of adult guidance and supervision.

## Recommendations

The researcher would like to make the following recommendations for the State of New Jersey, New Jersey school administrators, faculty, parents, and future researchers:

For The State of New Jersey

The researcher recommends that the state of New Jersey further investigates opportunities to integrate media into the classroom, makes sufficient funds available for extensive professional development regarding the best manner in which teachers of each discipline can integrate the media into their classroom, and creates a forum with which educators can share their best practices regarding inclusion of media literacy, thus affording them the opportunity to share their experiences and educate one another. It is also recommended that the state of New Jersey creates statewide professional development opportunities, such as annual workshops or conferences for faculty and administrators to attend, and also work towards integrating media literacy guidelines into the Core Curriculum Standards for each discipline.

#### For New Jersey School Administrators

The researcher recommends New Jersey School administrators understand the importance of being a media literate citizen, and to thus encourage faculty to implement a variety of ways of inclusion of media literacy into the school curriculum, beyond the usual methods; of newsprint, and the Internet. Administrators should create a standardized list that can be customized by each faculty member of what media literacy includes, and supply corresponding resources. It is also recommended that New Jersey School administrators encourage faculty members to be creative and innovative in their integration of media literacy, and their use of technology to engage students in becoming media literate citizens.

It is recommended that New Jersey School administrators send at least two faculty members to the Annual National Media Education Conference, partner with local media literacy consultants who can come to the school for periodic in-service workshops, and create a media reference resource center, or at least one shelf in each classroom, with media literacy materials for teachers.

Administrators should also build toward having several teachers, library media specialists or staff development leaders gain the experience and expertise in the field needed to become in-house or in-district "consultants" or "coaches." Additionally, administrators should use videos to help faculty (or parents) understand the complexity of media issues that touch the young people in their school.

#### For New Jersey School Faculty members

The researcher recommends that New Jersey School faculty members subscribe to e-newsletters, list serves and publications that cover or serve the media literacy field, maintain critical thought within daily life and interactions with the media, to bring into the classroom, and continue to encourage critical thinking among their students, while being open and willing to continually bettering themselves with regards to professional development, and to new, inventive and inspired ways of using the media as a teaching tool. It is further recommended that New Jersey School faculty members should be open to and voice desires for continued professional development regarding best practices of media usage within the classroom.

They should also stimulate open conversation about; new TV series, popular movies, music, trends in advertising; whatever students are watching and talking about. Faculty members can connect with students' worlds by asking questions like: *"So it's the weekend. Have you seen any good videos lately?" "what's on TV tonight that's good?" "I'd like to go to a movie on Saturday — any idea what's playing at the mall?"* Faculty members should also create a media literacy bulletin board in the teacher's lounge and invite faculty to post short reviews of books, reflections on a new movie, analysis of an ad campaign, insightful work done by students. Additionally, faculty should promote reflection on media literacy pedagogy by reading the literature, exploring top media literacy sites on the Internet, critiquing and coaching each other.

#### For Parents of Students within New Jersey Schools

The researcher recommends parents of students within New Jersey Schools to be open to new ideas in the way their children are taught, to understand that because of the technology of the times, students now learn in a different manner than they did when they were in high school, and to be receptive to the media in all forms.

Parents are also recommended to make a concerted effort to create an open dialogue with their children and with the faculty within their children's school about the media, and the potential ways that the media can be used within the school setting, as well as to moderate what their children are watching and doing and discuss anything that seems

questionable with their children, thus encouraging a two-way dialogue. Parents are recommended to be an example to their children: to analyze the media for what it actually is; educational or entertainment.

#### For Future Researchers

The researcher recommends that future researchers use as many closed questions as possible within their surveys, use as many open-ended questions within dialogue and interviews as possible, and ensure that the facility where the workshop will be held is well suited with the best technology available. Additionally, it is recommended to solicit a listing of 'best practices' from faculty to make available as needed.

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APPENDIX A

NJCU INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD ACCEPTANCE LETTER

APPENDIX B

WAIVER OF INFORMED PARENT/STUDENT CONSENT

**Voorhees High School**

**Memo  
From Dave Steffan**

To: Ella Rue

Date: January 20, 2005

Re: Survey Permission Slips

Ella,

I received your email today regarding my decision not to require permission slips for the technology survey you are conducting. After reviewing it, I do not see anything sensitive or confidential in nature in the survey. Unless this violates the policy of your institution, you may proceed with the survey without permission slips.

APPENDIX C  
INFORMED FACULTY CONSENT

For the participants:

I agree to participate in a faculty development workshop entitled “*Engaging Secondary Educators in Media Literacy Using the Engagement Theory*”, which is being conducted by Ella Rue of the Educational Technology Department of New Jersey City University. The purpose of this faculty development workshop is to train Voorhees Regional High School educators to integrate media literacy into their classroom curriculum by use of the engagement theory. The effectiveness of the current use of media literacy and the outcome of the workshop will be evaluated. The data collected and interpreted by this study may be published in a research journal.

I understand that I will be required to attempt to create a basic lesson plan within my discipline. During creation and completion of this lesson plan I may be required to work independently or collaboratively as a part of a group. My participation in the study should not exceed a total of eight hours.

I understand that my responses will be anonymous and all data gathered will be confidential. I agree that any information obtained from this study may be used in any way thought best for publication or education provided that I am not identified and my name is not used.

I understand that there are no physical or psychological risks involved in this study, and that I am free to withdraw my participation at any time without penalty.

I understand that my participation does not imply employments with the principal, investigator, his affiliates, or any organization.

I also understand that the workshop will be taped, and an instructional video will be created. You have my permission to include me in this video.

Code	Name (please print)	Signature
A1		
A2		
A3		
A4		
A5		
A6		
A7		

APPENDIX D  
INFORMED PARENT/STUDENT CONSENT

Dear Parent/Guardian:

I am a graduate student in the Educational Technology Department at New Jersey City University. I will be conducting a research project under the supervision of Professor Laura Zieger as part of my master’s thesis concerning how best to integrate media literacy into the high school curriculum. I am requesting permission for your child to participate in this research. The goal of the study is to determine how best to integrate the teaching of media literacy into the high school classroom curriculum.

Children will be asked to complete a survey (see attached) regarding their media usage. Any child who expresses a desire not to participate is not required to do so. I will retain the surveys at the conclusion of the study. To preserve each child’s confidentiality no names will be used to identify individuals. Other researchers and educators may view the surveys when the data is presented at a professional conference. All data will be reported in terms of group results; individual results will not be reported.

Your decision whether or not to allow your child to participate in this study will have absolutely no effect on your child’s standing in his/her class. At the conclusion of the study a summary of the group results will be made available to all interested parents. If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at 908.832.2858 or you may contact Professor Laura Zieger at (201) 200.2000 ext. 3078. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ella Rue

Please indicate whether or not you wish to have your child participate in this study by checking the appropriate statement below and returning this letter to your child’s teacher by Feb. 1.

I grant permission for my child \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in this study.

I do not grant permission for my child \_\_\_\_\_ to participate in this study.

---

(Parent/Guardian signature)

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(Date)

APPENDIX E  
LETTER TO PRINCIPAL

Ella Rue  
8 Gary Lane  
Califon, NJ 07830

Mr. David Steffan, Principal  
Voorhees Regional High School  
256 County Road 513  
Glen Gardner, NJ, 08826

Dear Mr. Steffan:

As per our previous discussions, I am a graduate student at New Jersey City University and I am currently working towards my Masters Degree in Educational Technology. I am in the process of writing my thesis entitled "A Professional Development Model: *Engaging Secondary Educators in Media Literacy Using the Engagement Theory.*"

In this study the researcher will attempt to survey students and faculty from Voorhees High School about their experience with media literacy and the opportunities to integrate it into the curriculum.

Enclosed please find a survey (on white paper), which should be completed by a random sampling of twenty faculty members. All responses will be kept anonymous and confidential and the participants need not respond to all questions. Additionally, you will find a survey (on blue paper) for the students of those same faculty members. Again, all respondents will be kept anonymous, and participation is voluntary. I would appreciate the surveys completed and returned to me in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided by February 4, 2005.

If you have any question or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 201-200-2296. You may also contact my faculty advisor, Professor Laura Zieger, at 201-200-3078. Thank you for your time and effort. Your school will be mentioned in the Acknowledgements section of my thesis and I would be happy to send you a copy of my summary on request.

Sincerely yours,

Ella Rue  
enclosures



APPENDIX F  
FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Media Literacy: As defined by The Center for Media Literacy: “Media Literacy is a 21<sup>st</sup> century approach to education. It provides a framework to access, analyze, evaluate and create messages in a variety of forms: from print, to video, to the Internet. Media literacy builds an understanding of the role of media in society as well as essential skills of inquiry and self-expression necessary for citizens of a democracy”

Your first name only: \_\_\_\_\_ Your age: \_\_\_\_\_ Your gender:  male  
 female

Years teaching: \_\_\_\_\_ Current Discipline: \_\_\_\_\_ Years teaching this discipline:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Highest Degree earned: \_\_\_\_\_ Certifications held:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Do you currently incorporate media literacy teaching into your curriculum?  yes  no If yes, please list media used as a teaching tool: (i.e.: Television, Internet, Newspaper, Magazines, Radio etc.) Please list in order of most frequent use to least frequent use:

\_\_\_\_\_

Do you think critical thinking and media literacy is important? If so, why?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How much critical thinking time do they take in preparing your lesson plans?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Best practice using media: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Assessment used: \_\_\_\_\_

What resources do you have at your disposal to integrate media literacy into your discipline?

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In your opinion, how much technology skills do your students have? How can that be b o l s t e r e d ?

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When watching, reading, listening, etc to media how much emphasis do you put on critical thinking for yourself? \_\_\_\_\_

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What do you perceive as barriers to including media literacy into your curriculum? \_\_\_\_\_

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How do you feel media literacy can be better integrated into the high school curriculum, specific to your discipline? \_\_\_\_\_

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Would you like training as to how you might better integrate media literacy into your classroom curriculum?  yes  no If yes, would you attend a workshop highlighting techniques to integrate media literacy into your discipline?  yes  no

What is the best day to attend a professional development workshop? \_\_\_\_\_



APPENDIX G  
STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Media Literacy: As defined by The Center for Media Literacy: “Media Literacy is a 21<sup>st</sup> century approach to education. It provides a framework to access, analyze, evaluate and create messages in a variety of forms: from print, to video, to the Internet. Media literacy builds an understanding of the role of media in society as well as essential skills of inquiry and self-expression necessary for citizens of a democracy”

Please fill out this *anonymous* survey. Please do **NOT** include your name, only answer the questions as they are posed.

Gender:  
male  female

Your age: \_\_\_\_\_ Your grade in school: \_\_\_\_\_

Which of the following do you have in your **home**? (check all that apply)

Television

- Stereo System
- Personal Stereo System (Walkman, etc.)
- Computer
- Internet Access

- MP3 Player or iPod
- Video Game System
- DVD Player
- VCR
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Which of the following do you have in your **room**? (check all that apply)

- Television
- Stereo System
- Personal Stereo System (Walkman, etc.)
- Computer
- Internet Access
- MP3 Player or iPod
- Video Game System
- DVD Player
- VCR
- Phone
- Cell phone
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Which technologies named above do you think would be helpful in a classroom setting and why?

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If media literacy were integrated into the classroom, do you think you would learn more, understand more or retain more about the subject matter?

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### Television

What TV show(s) do you try to watch on a regular basis?

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What is your favorite TV show? What do you like most about it?

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How much time do you think you spend watching TV each week? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you usually watch TV with your parents, your family, friends, or alone?

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Do you discuss the meaning of what you are watching, listening, hearing, reading, etc with a family member, friend, teacher neighbor, etc.?  yes  no

Would you be interested in it being discussing the media in the classroom setting?

Do you tape any shows?  yes  no

Do you watch any programs of which your parents would disapprove?

yes  no If yes, what shows are they? \_\_\_\_\_

### Movies

What were the last three movies you've seen at the movie theater?

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What is the best movie you've seen in the movie theater in the last twelve months? Why?



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What are the last three movies on video or DVD that you've rented and watched at home?

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What were the last three rented videos or DVDs that you watched at somebody else's house? \_\_\_\_\_

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What is your favorite movie of all time? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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How much time do you spend watching movies (either rented or in a movie theater) each week? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you ever been admitted to an R or NC-17 rated movie without being accompanied by an adult? (If you are younger than 17)  yes  no

Do your parents have guidelines for what movies/videos you see?  yes  no

If yes, what are they? \_\_\_\_\_

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Have you seen any movies/videos of which your parents would disapprove?  yes  no

If yes, what were they?

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### Video Gaming

Do you have a video game system in your home?  yes  no If yes, what systems?

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What are your three favorite video or computer games? Why?

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What were the last three video/computer games you've purchased or received as gifts?

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Do you rent video games? Which ones most recently?

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Where do you typically play video games (home, friend's, other)?

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Do your parents play video games with you? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do your parents have any guidelines for which games you can play/rent/buy?

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Do you have any video games of which your parents would disapprove?

yes  no If yes, which games \_\_\_\_\_

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Have your parents ever bought you a game that they would disapprove of if they knew what was on it?  yes  no If yes, what game?

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How much time do you think you spend playing video/computer games each week?

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Computer/Internet

Do you have Internet access?  yes  no

If yes, what type of connection (dial-up, DSL, Cable, Wireless, etc)?

Do you have an IM screen name?  yes  no

What IM programs do you use (AIM, MSN, Yahoo, ICQ, etc.)?

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What do you like most about instant messaging? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you ever chat with people whom you don't know?  yes  no

Have you ever had IM conversations that you wouldn't want your parents to see?  yes

no

How much time do you think you spend online each week? \_\_\_\_\_

What are your three favorite websites? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you have content filters on your computer that limit what websites you go to?  yes

no

Do you ever go to any websites of which your parents would disapprove?

yes  no

Have you ever viewed pornography on the Internet?  yes  no

Do you use e-mail?  yes  no

How many different e-mail addresses do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

How much e-mail do you get on average per day? \_\_\_\_\_

What percentage would you say is spam? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you ever get unsolicited sexually explicit email?  yes  no

Do you have your own website?  yes  no

Do you blog?  yes  no

Are you a member of any on-line communities (chat rooms, discussion boards, forums, etc.)?  yes  no If yes, which ones?

How much time do you spend in chat rooms? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you play games online?  yes  no

Do you own a digital camera?  yes  no If yes, still or video?

Do you have a web cam?  yes  no

What percentage of your time on the Internet is used to do the following?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Homework/Research
- \_\_\_\_\_ Browsing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Entertainment
- \_\_\_\_\_ Communication (E-mail, IM, Chatting, Blogging, Forum discussions)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Playing Games
- \_\_\_\_\_ Downloading Files/Music
- \_\_\_\_\_ Shopping/Purchasing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other – Please List \_\_\_\_\_

Music

What is your favorite type of music? (i.e.; rock, punk, heavy metal, pop, country, classical, jazz, etc.)

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Who is your favorite musical artist or band? Why?

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What is your favorite CD? Why?

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What is your favorite song? Why?

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Is there a song you can think of that has deep significance for you? Why is it significant to you?

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Do you download music?  yes  no

Do you pay for the music you download or do you get the songs through file sharing networks (KaZaA, limewire etc.)?  yes  no

What are the last three CDs you've either purchased or downloaded?

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Do you burn CDs on your computer?  yes  no

Do your parents have any guidelines for the music you purchase/listen to?  
 yes  no

Are your parents aware of the music that you have?  yes  no

Do you have any CDs/music of which your parents would disapprove?  
 yes  no

How do you learn lyrics (websites, liner notes, etc.)?  yes  no

Have you ever gone to a live concert? Which ones? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you have MTV or other music video channels in your home?  yes  no

Do you watch MTV or other music video channels?  yes  no

If yes, which ones? \_\_\_\_\_

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How much do you typically watch in a week? \_\_\_\_\_

What is currently your favorite music video? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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What is your favorite music video of all time? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Radio**

What is your favorite radio station? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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At what time(s) of day do you most often listen to the radio?  Morning  Afternoon  
 Evening

Do you listen to any talk radio shows?  yes  no If yes, which ones?

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How much time do you think you spend listening to the radio each week? \_\_\_\_\_

**Magazines**

What magazines do you read regularly? \_\_\_\_\_

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What magazines do you have a subscription to? \_\_\_\_\_

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What magazines do you buy on a regular basis? \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you ever read magazines of which your parents would disapprove?

yes  no If yes, which ones? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Cell Phones**

Do you have your own cell phone?  yes  no If yes:

How often do you use your cell phone? \_\_\_\_\_

Who do you use it to call? (Family? Friends?) \_\_\_\_\_

Do you download ring-tones?  yes  no

Do you use text messaging?  yes  no

Do you access the internet with your cell phone?  yes  no

Do you use your cell phone to take, send, or receive pictures?  yes  no

Who pays your cell phone bill?  you  parents



APPENDIX H  
THANK YOU LETTER

Ella Rue  
8 Gary Lane  
Califon, NJ 07830

Voorhees Regional High School  
256 County Road 513  
Glen Gardner, NJ, 08826

Dear

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for taking the time to fill out my Media Literacy Questionnaire, and to participate in the Media Literacy Professional Development workshop. Your input was invaluable for the completion of my thesis, but moreover for the creation of a model that can be shared with other educators across the country. Your professionalism was much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Ella Rue

APPENDIX I  
WORKSHOP Pre-SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Program Title: Integrating Media Literacy into the High School Curriculum: Voorhees High School

Program Date: Monday, March 7, 2005      Time: 2:30—5:30 PM    Presenter: Ella Rue

Discipline: \_\_\_\_\_ Years Teaching: \_\_\_\_\_ Highest Degree earned: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Do you integrate Media Literacy into your discipline?

A. **q** never    B. **q** monthly    C. **q** 1-3 times a month    D. **q** weekly    E. **q** daily

If yes, How?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. On average, how much hands-on computer time do your students get in each class?

A. **q** never    B. **q** 10 minutes    C. **q** 20 minutes    D. **q** 30 minutes    E. **q** entire class

Please list how:

\_\_\_\_\_

3. How often do you assign homework that includes the use of the computer?

A. **q** never    B. **q** monthly    C. **q** 1-3 times a month    D. **q** weekly    E. **q** daily

4. How often do you use video/film/TV in your classroom?

A. **q** never    B. **q** monthly    C. **q** 1-3 times a month    D. **q** weekly    E. **q** daily

If yes, how?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you ever tape TV shows to use within the classroom?      **q** Yes    **q** No

If yes, what types of shows? A. **q** Newscasts, example: \_\_\_\_\_

B. **q** Sit Com, example: \_\_\_\_\_ C. **q** Music Videos, example: \_\_\_\_\_

D. **q** Documentaries, example: \_\_\_\_\_ E. **q** Cartoons, example: \_\_\_\_\_ F. **q**

Movies, example: \_\_\_\_\_ G. **q** Other, example: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you use Instant Messaging in the classroom as a teaching/learning tool? **q** Yes **q** No Why?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. How often do you use the Internet in the classroom?

A. **q** never    B. **q** monthly    C. **q** 1-3 times a month    D. **q** weekly    E. **q** daily

If yes, how?

\_\_\_\_\_

8. How often do you use educational computer games in the classroom?

A. **q** never    B. **q** monthly    C. **q** 1-3 times a month    D. **q** weekly    E. **q** daily

What is the game you use most often? And Why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. What do you hope to gain from this workshop? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you teach your students Netiquette? If so, how?

APPENDIX J

WORKSHOP Post-SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Program Title: Integrating Media Literacy into the High School Curriculum: Voorhees High School

Program Date: Monday, March 7, 2005      Time: 2:30—5:30 PM    Presenter: Ella Rue

**Discipline:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Years Teaching:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Highest Degree earned:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Grade:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Please select one of the following that best indicates your level of involvement throughout most of this experience.**

**A. q Authentic Engagement** -- I was very involved in this learning experience most of the time. The content will be valuable to me and to my school or department or school system.

**B. q Ritual Engagement** -- I participated in this learning experience throughout the time allotted. I believe attendance at this program is part of what others expect of me.

**C. q Passive Compliance** -- Although I was present during the learning experience, I did not always clearly focus on the content. Most of the time my attention was on other matters.

**D. q Rebellion** -- Throughout this experience I found ways, other than planned activities, to occupy my time & attention.

**2. What did you expect to learn from this workshop?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**3. What did you learn from this workshop?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**4. Do you think your students will benefit from this information?**      **q Yes q No**

**5. Did you find including media literacy into the classroom a valuable experience?**  
**q Yes q No**

**6. What do you value most from this experience?** \_\_\_\_\_

**7. Will you use information from this workshop in a classroom setting?**      **q Yes q No**

**8. What specifically will you use from the workshop in the classroom?**

**A. q Curriculum ideas (please specify)** \_\_\_\_\_

**B. q More interactivity with students**

**C. q Use of film within the classroom**

**D. q Use of streaming video within the classroom**

**E. q Change in mode of delivery of material**

**F. q Other** \_\_\_\_\_

**9. What worked best in this workshop?** \_\_\_\_\_

**10. How could this workshop be improved?** \_\_\_\_\_

**11. Would you be interested in follow-up workshops?**      **q Yes q No**

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