

WIRTH

Wrote 5/11/93



GRIFFIN-WIRTH ASSOCIATES
public interest media & development

May 3, 1993

Dr. George Gerbner
Professor of Communication
The Annenberg School for Communication
University of Pennsylvania
3620 Walnut St.
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Dear Dr. Gerbner,

I am writing, as I was given you name as someone who is interested in the concept of media literacy.

About 18 months ago we released our video, Lines in the Sand. Lines in the Sand is a 12 minute video essay which explores the issue of management of the news during the Gulf war for the purpose of affecting public opinion. It is designed to be a discussion starter with the goal of helping students become more critical consumers of news.

We sold over 1,400 copies of the video to schools, libraries, media centers, religious organizations and civic groups and sales are continuing strong.

It has been purchased by instructors in a variety of curriculums: social studies, journalism, political science, English, religion and history and is appropriate for grades eight through college.

We received numerous reviews and letters of endorsement. They include:

- * Video Librarian - "Four star - Editor's choice"
- * Lander's Film & Video Review - "Highly recommended"
- * ABC Clio Video Rating Guide - "Four stars"
- * School Library Journal - "A welcome addition for social studies classes in current events or for communication classes in media."
- * Book Report - Journal for Junior and Senior High School Librarians - "Lines in the Sand should be seriously considered for purchase."
- * Journal of Social Education - "Highly recommended"
- * Quill & Scroll - "The video is ... ideally pitched toward discussions in journalism and social studies at all levels."

702 South Beech
Syracuse, New York 13210
315/476-3396

168 Parkway Drive
Syracuse, New York 13207
315/471-4953

We do not have an advertising budget and rely on reviews and notices in newsletters. Anything you can do to help spread the word would be appreciated. We think our video would be of great interest to people interested in the field of media literacy.

I've enclosed a copy of our press release and a few letters of endorsement.

I can be reached at (315)476-3396 if you have any questions.

Sincerely yours,

Pete Wirth

Peter Wirth



For more Information Call
Peter Wirth (315)476-3396

For Immediate Release

Lines in the Sand

"Modern wars are not won and lost on battlefields but in front of television screens, where attitudes and perceptions are bought and sold." With footage from Vietnam, the invasions of Grenada and Panama Lines in the Sand illustrates how the Pentagon increasingly managed the news we saw. Michael Deaver, who served as President Reagan's principal media advisor said that the Persian Gulf war was such a propaganda success that a team of public relations experts couldn't have planned it better.

This 12 minute video essay explores how information was controlled and news managed during the Gulf war to keep the disturbing realities of war from affecting the conscience of the US public. Lines in the Sand raises critical questions concerning the ways limited access to information shapes public opinion. Footage shot in Baghdad by producer and writer Ed Griffin-Nolan shows us the faces of the victims we did not see on the nightly news.

An interview with a geology professor who lost his wife and four daughters in the Ameria bomb shelter in Baghdad along with hundreds of civilians puts a human face on a war that was skillfully and intentionally kept from our view. "Victory, but victory at what price?" is the troubling moral question that Lines in the Sand leaves us to ponder.

Now in use in hundreds of schools and churches in the US and Canada Lines in the Sand premiered in the 35th London Film festival last November. Steven Bode, an organizer of the festival wrote "their analysis of the media coverage of the war and the questions it left unanswered is sharp, insightful and sobering." More recently, it aired on PBS in new York, Washington DC, San Francisco and a number of smaller cities.

Randy Pitman, from the Video Librarian gave Lines in the Sand a "Four star - Editor's choice" rating. He wrote "Lines in the Sand reminds us that not only were the human costs of the war neither calculated nor reported - they were ignored on purpose." Lander's Film and Video Review rated Lines in the Sand "Highly recommended." ABC Clio "Four stars" rating.

Kathy Akey, School Library Journal, " A welcome addition for social studies classes in current events or for communications classes in media."

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Journalism Education Association

"Leading the way in scholastic journalism and media education"

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Review "Lines in the Sand" and "Images of Conflict" by John Bowen, Lakewood (Ohio) H.S.

"Lines in the Sand" is not just about war, its coverage or its impact. It is about society and its beliefs, and how each are shaped.

It is condemnation and a celebration all rolled into one 12-minute essay of media coverage, or lack of it, of the Gulf War.

And, at the very least, it raises questions every journalism course should ask — when do journalists have the story, and more importantly, what is the story they should have.

The film and its companion study guide, "Images of Conflict," raise questions of ethics, accuracy, perspective and history.

As "Lines" shows images of what our government wanted us to see, it also raises the human element of the war we did not see — an Iraqi father who said he lost his family in what the United States said was a raid on a military shelter.

It suggests the Gulf War was a managed war, unlike the Vietnam War where journalists could go where they wanted, and always, always could ask why.

These journalists might not get answers, but at least the reporters had the freedom to dig, to inquire, to go where the action was.

In the Gulf War, the media was tightly bound, if not by overt restrictions, by a covert assumption of its role. "Lines" suggests by the military fielding its own media blitz, experts and videobombs, the press was supplanted and diverted into covering only what the military wanted it, and therefore the American public, to see.

There might be disagreement there, and about the premise of the video, but that, indeed is the whole point.

These skills of analysis, decision making and critical thinking, are issues also raised by "Images," which accompanies the video.

Materials in this study guide tend to be quite critical, not only of the Pentagon, but also of the media. Learning journalists tend to think of the attack-dog role created by the Watergate era media, but lessons in "Images" point to the media's lap dog reality in Gulf coverage. Significantly, the various activities try to raise the why angle.

Since the study guide does quite a bit of comparing the Gulf War to the Vietnam War, in what some will think a slanted way, it might have to be supplemented with background on pro and anti-war attitudes of that era.

The study guide offers group activities and exercises examining the role of the media in the time of war. In all, the guide urges awareness and action in terms of the media. Awareness comes in terms of how and why the media covers stories. Action is generated in terms of exploration and creation of alternatives in ways information is created and received.

In all, the materials lead students to develop attitudes necessary for depth reporting — looking beyond the obvious and asking, always, why.

MORE

Regional Directors: Linda Ballew, Northwest; Vicki Scorsone, Southwest; Susan Hathaway, North Central; Jack Harkrider, South Central; Sherry Haklik, Northeast; Margaret M. Johnston, Southeast

Commission Chairs: H.L. Hall, Certification; Jack Kennedy, Development/Curriculum; Connie Fulkerson, Publications; John Bowen, Scholastic Press Rights

SPANISH TEXT

Llamados A Escribir. Compiled by Media Associates International, Inc., Bloomington, IL, 1992. 115 pp. paper.

Nine writers from a variety of Spanish-speaking nations have contributed chapters to this encouraging book about writing. All deal with the writing career or freelancing in addition to a regular position. And all describe their work and its goals from a special point of view, that of using the written word, be it journalism or more literary material, in behalf of the Christian religion.

Latin and Central America has many effective journalists, poets, novelists, and playwrights. But outside their continent or the narrow strip known as Central America only a few are known.

This book, then, is a contribution to knowledge of our neighbors at the typewriter or screen. Here is a sample of some of the writers in this book:

Samuel Escobar, of Peru, now lives in the U.S. and writes on theology. But his chapter discusses living and learning so as to have something to communicate through words.

C. Rene Padilla, born in Ecuador and for some time living in Argentina, now is on the faculty of Wheaton College, and is author of several books and serves also as an editor.

Elsie Romanenghi de Powell, born in Argentina, is the only female contributor to this book. A student of philosophy and a professor of the subject, she writes on writing as a vocation. Here is one of the most readable chapters because she uses specific examples and draws upon other writers.

TRAVEL WRITING

Farewell, Susan. *How to Make a Living as a Travel Writer.* New York: Paragon House, 1992. 201 pp. \$9.95.

Ms. Farewell has indeed fared well in her profession. And she describes what she and others have had to do to be successful financially. As far as it goes, the advice is sound. She does a fair job of equipping aspirants to such a career but she cannot give these ambitious ones certain qualities: persistence, patience, a willingness to live under stringent earnings, and other such qualities.

Readers of this review can get to work as soon as the book is read, because travel writing by no means means writing only about esoteric areas of the world off the U.S. coasts. There are travel pieces waiting to be written in one's towns and cities and in spots of the cutbacks by newspapers and magazines, some still seek copy for travel pages and for travel magazines.

WAR NEWS

"Lines in the Sand." 12-minute color videocassette, Syracuse, NY: Griffin-Wirth Associates, 1991. \$24; with guide, \$37.95.

This video editorial, as it might be called, is ideally pitched toward discussions in journalism and social studies classes at all levels. It is controversial and useful discussions will result.

The wars in which the United States has been involved since the Second World War have made some of the citizens increasingly doubtful about the government's respect for the Constitution. This country has found itself drawn into war or directed into it by political leaders who avoid giving the rank and file of the public any voice or choice.

This cassette reviews the Vietnam War and the power of the citizens to change national policy and then gives its attention to the Gulf War in the Middle East. The contention of the script writers is that the printed and electronic media reported news only as permitted by the military, under the familiar excuse that the facts must be kept secret or they will help the enemy.

Discussions could revolve about such questions as how much information and what kind should be disseminated by the media, who should decide what is to be released and to whom, and how to guarantee that everything deeply affecting the U.S. citizenry will be made known.

There are scenes here that were made known only by a small number of publications and a few radio and television stations. An example is the destruction by U.S. arms of a civilian shelter that took many lives. The media, however, in general treated the shelter as a military target.

The number of editors standing on guard against military deception has increased since the occupation of Somalia. They are demanding cooperation with their reporters in covering what may develop into a much larger conflict.

Such video reports as this one are useful in alerting everyone to the dangers of secrecy.

WRITER'S MARKET

Kissling, Mark, and Jenny Pfalzgraf, eds. *1993 Writer's Market.* Cincinnati, OH: Writer's Digest Books, 1992, 995 pp. \$26.95.

A good many changes have been made in this new edition of this market guide for writers of journalistic and other materials.

Not only are there new segments called Close-ups but there also are enlarged reports on the markets in certain areas of publishing.

The editors, however, cast some doubt about the estimate of the market for writers these days. They write:

"Right now there are more publishing opportunities for writers than ever before." The basis for this statement is not indicated. How is this possible: It seems to fly in the face of certain facts. Various large and small book publishing firms have merged or gone out of business. Newspapers and magazines of various types have ceased publication. *Editor and Publisher*, *Publisher's Weekly*, and other journals of the writing trade report the weakening of the market regularly.

This over-optimism should not be believed. It make the use of this valuable guide all the more important. Using the book to the full will disclose markets that are new or have been neglected. The guide is heavy with practical advice. More writers should use this book. Many writers fail to use it because they do not want to pay for it. These timid scribes should know that careful use of the book will return the investment in it many times over.

WRITING

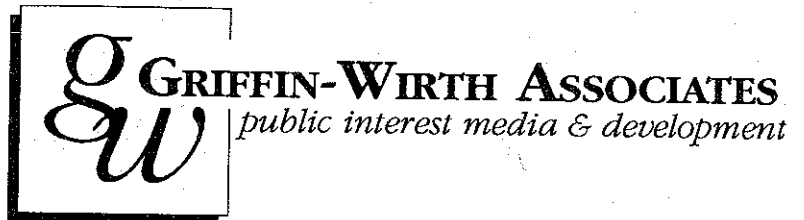
Fryxell, David A. *How to Write Fast (While Writing Well).* Cincinnati, OH: Writer's Digest Books, 1992. 198 pp. \$17.95.

Don't let the title annoy you.

Writing fast is not necessarily a virtue. The author of the book knows that, and has written a solidly helpful book for all who aspire to writing journalistically or in some other manner.

The author -- or his publisher -- wants to get your attention, and seeks to overcome the idea that this is one more book in a crowded field of similar volumes.

But Fryxell concentrates on writing well and considers all the problems that surround a writer in these times, with friendly, straight-forward advice based on his own and others' experience. He has something for article, book, essay, and other types of writers and uses practical, tried examples to back up his advice.



May 20, 1993

Annerberg School of Communications
University of Pennsylvania
George Gerbner
3620 Walnut St.
Philadelphia, PA 19104

Dear Mr. Gerbner,

Thank you for your willingness to help us in getting the word out about Lines in the Sand.

I've enclosed a review from a Professor of Religion at La Salle University in Philadelphia. Professor Kelly is also the President of the International Dietrich Bonhoeffer Society. I think you will find his review very interesting.

Please make sure you list the price for the video \$21.95 and video with study guide \$37.95 if you put a notice on the electronic bulletin boards and the Union for Democratic Information. Checks should be made out to Griffin-Wirth Associates.

The rest of this letter I think I've sent already but wanted to make sure, so I'm sending it again.

We have sold over 1,450 copies of the video to schools, libraries, media centers, religious organizations and civic groups and sales are continuing strong.

It has been purchased by instructors in a variety of curriculums: social studies, journalism, political science, English, religion and history and is appropriate for grades eight through college.

We have received numerous reviews and letters of endorsement. They include:

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WIRTH

~~Chris Wirth~~



ASSOCIATES
public interest media

July 21, 1993

George Gerbner
University of Penn.
3620 Walnut St.
Philadelphia, PA 19104

WG 2

Dear Mr. Gerbner,

I've enclosed a copy of our most recent article on the marketing of Lines in the Sand. We continue to sell about 10 to 15 copies per month.

I appreciate the fact that you are taking time from your busy schedule to review the video and put a notice on the computer networks you are involved with.

Sincerely yours,

Peter Wirth
Peter Wirth

ENTERED

818-786-9790

Let's represent the GW. Peter Wirth - name

GW ASSOCIATES USES PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Most of the articles in *PR Watch* are dedicated, unfortunately, to exposing the amoral excesses of a "communications industry" that worships money over principle and enables corporations to deceive and manipulate the public agenda. But what happens when the tools of public relations are put to work empowering citizen activists to become their own media experts? After 14 years of social activism, Peter Wirth decided to put this idea to the test by launching a public relations and marketing business called GW Associates.

"Too many activists bitch and moan about news coverage and how it's impossible to work with the media," Wirth says. "They talk about educating the public and changing society, while using methodologies that reach small, self-selecting audiences. For example, 99% of the people in any community will never come to a public presentation to hear a speaker. They get their news from radio, TV and print media. Unless activists learn to work with the media, our messages will reach only a small audience."

JOE BAST BOMBS IN PEORIA

Fleishman Hillard's anti-Green PR efforts didn't play well in Peoria, IL. F-H is promoting Joe Bast's book, *Eco-Sanity*. Although Bast claims to be "a very deep shade of green," his book champions an anti-environmental perspective. That's not surprising, since Bast and co-author Peter J. Hill are associated with business-funded groups, respectively the Heartland Institute and the Political Economy Research Center.

Elaine Hopkins, a reporter with Peoria's *Journal Star*, was surprised when Bast arrived with a Fleishman-Hillard publicist. "Environmentalists rarely arrive at the *Journal Star* accompanied by PR reps," Hopkins wrote. "Whoa, I thought. Who's paying for this, and why?"

Hopkins' article concludes, "The authors say they are environmentalists, but they're backed by corporations who will profit from fewer environmental regulations. We need honest debate about the future of our planet, debate free of hidden agendas or secret spins. . . . The Heartland's association with 'greenwashing' casts a shadow over the ideas presented in *Eco-Sanity*. Let's hope the book is ignored." ■

The problem in reaching that audience, he says, is not cost but attitude. "Many activists don't even try to work with the media because they don't believe it's possible. They don't learn the necessary media skills and stick with them long enough to see results. The difference between reaching fifty people and five hundred thousand may literally be the cost of some postage stamps for a news release, and some follow-up phone calls."

In addition to teaching and training people to integrate a media strategy into their grassroots work, GW Associates has already logged several successful campaigns to educate the public about a variety of social change issues:

- Marketing *Lines in the Sand*, a twelve-minute, independently-produced video essay critiquing media coverage of the Gulf War. More than 1,800 schools, libraries and religious groups have purchased the video, which has also reached millions of viewers on PBS TV stations.
- Producing *Living Media*, a 60-minute audio instruction tape that trains travelers to third world countries to use the media to share their experiences. Thousands of people are using the training tape. They range from student environmentalists back from the rainforest, to observers of the election process in El Salvador.
- GW has worked with Pastors for Peace to arrange scores of interviews for returnees from Cuba, and consulted for labor unions on raising occupational safety and health issues and media coverage of strikes.

GW's prices are designed to make their services accessible to grassroots organizations. If you're anxious to take your message to a wider audience but aren't sure you know how, contact GW Associates, 702 S. Beech, Syracuse, NY 13210; phone (315) 476-3396. ■

"PLUTONIUM IS OUR FRIEND"

Woodsy Owl, take a hike. The newest 'green' cartoon celebrity is Mr. Pluto. That's 'Pluto' as in plutonium, the world's deadliest element. Mr. Pluto is sort of a toxic Nerf-like creature, designed and promoted by the Japanese Power Reactor and Nuclear Development Corporation. His job is to convince school children that plutonium is wonderful stuff. In one TV spot the cute Mr. Pluto says, "If everybody treats me with a peaceful and warm heart, I'll never be scary or dangerous. Its really too bad that I was first used as a tool of war in atomic weapons. But I really don't like war. In fact, what I do like is to work peacefully." ■

THE ANNENBERG SCHOOL FOR
COMMUNICATION

UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

3620 Walnut Street Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104-6220

August 10, 1993

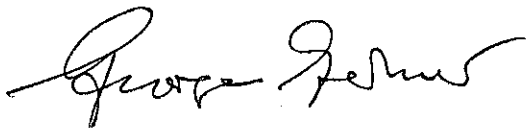
Peter Wirth
GW Associates
702 South Beach
Syracuse, NY 13210

Dear Mr. Wirth:

At last I had the opportunity to view Lines in the Sand. I am sending out the following message, which you are welcome to edit and use as you see fit.

I had the opportunity to view Lines in the Sand, a video produced by Griffin-Wirth Associates (702 South Beach, Syracuse, N.Y. 13210, \$21.95, with study guide \$37.95). Its powerful imagery shows as well as tells the story behind the official version of the war in the Persian Gulf, a story of unprecedented slaughter. An indispensable teaching tool on that continuing Middle East conflict.

Sincerely yours,



George Gerbner
Professor of Communication and Dean Emeritus