

OVERVIEW: MEDIA MANIA

This is a treatment for a thirty minute motion picture film which is intended for children aged six through fifteen. We hope to show children, through the use of live action and animation, how important it is for them to think critically about their entertainment. We want them to focus on the following major points:

- 1) The power of music and television to affect us physically, mentally and emotionally.
- 2) The undue influence and idolization given popular entertainment figures.
- 3) The motivation behind producers, manufacturers and merchandisers to market products and characters through popular shows.
- 4) The racial and sexual stereotyping that takes place in some entertainment.
- 5) The blurring of fantasy and reality that some children experience when they view entertainment.

The story follows the adventures of an 11 year old boy named Elliot. He has a group of friends, including Colin - a bully-like group leader; Jack - a loner who loves heavy metal music; Roger - an overweight, junk-food lover; Missy - a Madonna-wanna-be; and Michael - Elliot's 6 year old younger brother. Elliot's story begins when he experiences an electrical shock that sends him into a fantasy adventure. In his fantasy he meets Ray Gamma, an alien from outer space, and his animated sidekick Zip, who are sent to Earth by The Brain, leader of planet Zork, to investigate Elliot's mysterious condition of "sensory overload". Through the aliens' interactions with Elliot, his friends, and the zany and confusing cast of media characters, Elliot discovers he must "think" about the impact his popular culture has on him, his family and his friends.

MEDIA MANIA
KEY PRODUCTION PERSONNEL
AND BIO'S

Producer/Co-writer: Dan Taylor

Director/Co-writer: John Ellis

Star Performer/Pixilation Director: Mike Jittlov

Director of Photography/Associate Producer: Philip Cook

Art Director: Mike Walker

Set Director/Associate Producer: Alan Hoyt

Composer: John Massari

Senior Animator: Kent Burton

Costume Designer: Nancy Handwork

Production Studio: Taylor Made Images

Producer/Co-writer Dan Taylor has worked in the film industry for 19 years. For the last 13 years he has owned and operated Taylor Made Images, a Washington D.C. based firm, which supplies animation, special effects, props and sets to clients all over the world. He has been involved in all aspects of film production, from budget to creation to final edit. He has been a director of both live-action and animated products, for television and theater screens. Some of his past clients include Chevrolet, Kodak, Dupont, PBS, The Mazza Gallerie, US Coast Guard, The Washington Bullets, The Maryland Lottery, Ion Pictures, McDonalds and Home Team Sports. He contributed special effects to Star Quest: Beyond the Rising Moon, and The Killing Edge, and was most recently Visual Effects Director for Metamorphosis: The Alien Factor.

Director/Co-writer John R. Ellis has created dozens of films for a variety of clients over the last ten years. He has been an illustrator since 1970, and has worked for companies as diverse as Marvel Comics, Science News Magazine, and Prentice Hall Publishing. He has been involved in all aspects of film animation and live-action production including designing, producing, directing, animating, editing, and set/model construction. He has directed films for Hoover Vacuums, the I.R.S., WJZ-TV, The Mazza Gallerie, Kerry for Senate, the US Army and Navy and others. He was a camera operator on the movie, "I Go Pogo", and Visual Effects Producer on "Metamorphosis: The Alien Factor". He most recently was the Producer of the science fiction feature films, Star Quest: Beyond the Rising Moon, and The Killing Edge. He has been associated with Taylor Made Images for over ten years.

Star Performer/Pixilation Director Mike Jittlov is a film wizard par excellence, who has made everything from educational films and TV commercials, to entertaining personal short films and features. His first short animated film Good Grief(as a UCLA student) made it to the Academy Award finals, as have three of his more recent works. He has produced works for such clients as Random House, Broadway-Hale, all three TV networks and Universal Studios. His long association with Disney has included TV commercials for them, producing and starring in segments of two World of Disney episodes and creating the universe in the Black Hole TV special. He has a long list of awards and honors, but his biggest and most recent achievement is the creation of the truly amazing The Wizard of Speed and Time feature film.

Director of Photography/Associate Producer Philip Cook is an accomplished writer and director as well as a talented cinematographer. He has photographed dozens of live action and animated films. He has held the position of Director of Photography for Broadcast Arts, Taylor Made Images and Common Man Films. Some of his past clients include ABC, NBC, PBS, Arista Records, Casio, The US Coast Guard, Crest Toothpaste and York Peppermint Patties. His awards include a 1983 CLIO for his work for MTV, and an award for the popular rock video Don't Answer Me (for the Alan Parsons Project). He was both Director and Director of Photography on the feature films Star Quest: Beyond the Rising Moon and The Killing Edge, and was Second Unit Director and Director of Photography for Metamorphosis: The Alien Factor.

Art Director Mike Walker has worked in the motion picture field for over 14 years. He was Chief Animator for Consolidated Visual Center in Washington DC for eight years, and has been Art Director for Taylor Made Images for seven years, where he has provided concepts and production designs for animated and live action films. He has created models, storyboards, finished graphics, and animation of all types for a wide variety of projects. These include such clients as Chevrolet, Oldsmobile, Annenberg CPB, PBS, The Maryland Lottery, Dupont and many political TV spots. In 1984 he was the recipient of the Broadcast Designers Award. He has recently contributed designs and models for Star Quest: Beyond the Rising Moon, The Killing Edge, and Metamorphosis: The Alien Factor.

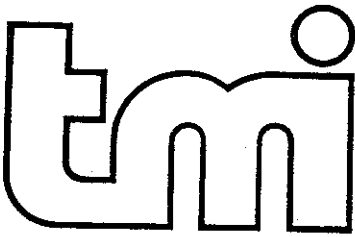
Set Director/Associate Producer Alan Hoyt is a skilled craftsman and an accomplished artist with over eleven years experience in set design. He is a 3-D artist specializing in model creation, miniature and full size set designs for motion pictures and still photography. He has done work for HBO, Showtime, Cinemax, Crest Toothpaste, Kenner Toys, Dupont, Sporto Shoes, The Smithsonian Institution, and many others. He has managed his own wood craftsman business designing and creating custom furniture and marquetry products. His works have been exhibited in Washington DC and New York City. In 1982 he received a CLIO award for his work for MTV. He has been a full time set director for Broadcast Arts and Taylor Made Images, and created sets and miniatures for both Star Quest: Beyond the Rising Moon, and Metamorphosis: The Alien Factor.

Composer John Massari has an impressive list of credits in television and feature films. He has scored episodes of Hart to Hart, T.J. Hooker and Michael Landon's Little House on the Prairie. He has had a long association with the Walt Disney Company, composing themes for The Wonderful World of Disney, Disney's 50th Anniversary, A Disney Christmas, The Disney Channel, the grand opening of Disney World's EPCOT Center, and the theme for the upcoming Baby Herman TV show. He created the timeless theme music for HBO's Ray Bradbury Theater. His wonderful feature film scores include White Light, The Lady in White and The Wizard of Speed and Time.

Senior Animator Kent Burton is an exceptional talent. He has won several CLIO awards for his animations for MTV and Showtime. He has been employed as Senior Animator by Broadcast Arts, Robert Grossman Productions, and Taylor Made Images. His clients have included Wendy's, Kenner Toys, Stovetop Stuffing, CBS, NBC, United Artists, Burger King and Crest Toothpaste. Kent has animated for such feature films as The Blob (1988), I Go Pogo, and Metamorphosis: The Alien Factor. Kent has most recently animated the Dinosaur Family sequences for the first season of the hit Saturday morning TV series Pee-Wee's Playhouse, for which he won an Emmy award in 1987.

Costume Designer Nancy Handwork has created costumes for a variety of film projects. She is a second generation theatrical costumer who has created imaginative garb ranging from period clothing through contemporary and futuristic designs. She has contributed costumes to such clients as Hoover Vacuums, The Internal Revenue Service, K-Mart, The World Science Fiction Corporation, The Maryland Renaissance Festival and MTV. In the science fiction community she is designated a Master Costumer, and is a founding member of the Maryland Costumer's Guild. She recently created both futuristic and contemporary costumes for Star Quest: Beyond the Rising Moon and The Killing Edge feature films.

Production Studio Taylor Made Images (TMI) is the only full-service special visual effects house located in the Mid-Atlantic region. For over 12 years TMI has provided many services to a wide variety of clients and applications, such as as cartoon animation, optical effects, titles, matte paintings, motion graphics, stop motion animation, high speed miniatures, motion control, live action photography, editing and full pre and post-production services. We utilize a large pool of both local and international freelance artists and craftsmen to create our productions. Our attitudes and techniques reflect a blending of the old and the new, enabling us to service clients in ways that our competitors are unable. We pride ourselves on bringing in projects cost efficiently, as a multi-faceted production team, being able to provide "more bang for the buck" for any size client.



TAYLOR MADE IMAGES

July 5th, 1990

MEDIA MANIA
Parents' Music Resource Center
Motion Picture Project
PRELIMINARY BUDGET

<u>Scriptwriting</u>	\$10,000.00
<u>Storyboards</u>	\$10,000.00
<u>Sets and Model Construction</u>	
Materials.....	\$15,000.00
Labor.....	\$30,000.00
<u>Special Makeup and Costumes</u>	
Materials.....	\$ 4,000.00
Labor.....	\$15,000.00
<u>Production</u>	
Equipment rental and supplies, etc.....	\$15,000.00
Labor.....	\$70,000.00
<u>Film and Lab</u>	
Stock.....	\$ 8,000.00
Processing and workprinting.....	\$ 8,000.00
Negative cutting.....	\$ 2,500.00
Answer print.....	\$ 1,000.00
<u>Sound/Music Production</u>	
Stock.....	\$ 500.00
Mix.....	\$ 3,000.00
Labor/talent.....	\$16,000.00
<u>Actors/Talent</u>	\$15,000.00
<u>Transportation</u>	\$ 2,000.00
<u>Administrative Expenses</u>	\$ 7,500.00
<u>Shipping</u>	\$ 1,500.00
<u>Insurance</u>	\$ 2,500.00
<u>Legal Fees</u>	\$ 3,500.00
<u>Proposal Retainer</u>	\$10,000.00
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Total.....	\$250,000.00

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Note from the Authors

This is a treatment for a thirty minute motion picture film which is intended to present an educational story in an entertaining format. We feel it is important to avoid the dry clinical approach that so often typifies educational films. In order to obtain the desired visibility it is necessary to inform through the power of entertainment.

This story revolves around the shock-induced fantasy-world of a child with an acute media overdose, a condition which may or may not be fictional. The use of a lot of detail, cliches from well known films and other entertainment, dynamic presentation, and spectacular visual effects should make for a winning combination. During the fantasy sequences only, it is our intention to present the parents and other adult figures in such a way that we do not show their faces. This will reinforce the lack of participation by parents in their children's entertainment experience. *How? Where shown?*

We have a lot of information to convey, and we must not present fiction as fact, therefore our approach requires detailed scrutiny, not only by our advisory board, but by each and every one of us as well.

We intend to fill the film with a lot of detail, wrap it up in an entertaining story, and have the overall package present the message in retrospect. We feel that the key to this project having the desired effect is to get children to be aware that forces, sometimes invisible ones, could be having an effect on them. Hopefully this film will also make programmers more aware of their need to be responsible to the viewing public. The following pages by no means represent the completed thought processes of a finished script. This is a work in progress and should be considered as such. We welcome your comments.

Dan Taylor and John Ellis.

*The main invisible forces
are the imaginary
characters!*

Synopsis: Media Mania

by Dan Taylor and John Ellis

We FADE IN on a middle class family's living room, the home of eleven year old ELLIOT PORTER. It is mid-October, and the room is full of the current generation of boys and girls of varying races, their clothing representative of their entertainment idols*. They are bathed in the shifting pale-blue light that emanates from the television set.

The sounds of a rock video, at a modest level, fill the room. The reasonable volume level has nothing to do with preference, but rather necessity. It would not be wise to disturb Elliot's parents, which could put an end to the kids' frequent video parties. We see that some of the kids are wearing headsets, listening at an obviously increased volume, and are pretending to play guitars. The cables to the headsets create a spiderweb entanglement, in which the kids maneuver with ease.

We meet COLIN, a twelve year old bully who fancies himself as some kind of "Rambo Commando". He is insulting to many of his friends and is known to pick on ROGER, an overweight child who Colin refers to as, "that couch potato". Colin excludes MISSY, a "Madonna-wanna-be", from many of his games, telling her she isn't "smart" enough to play with the boys, and should go clean the house instead. JACK, a boy they call "Metal Head", is a loner who seldom joins in with Colin's warlike games. He always wears the T-shirts advertising his favorite metal group, prompting the other kids to get into a screaming discussion about which

groups are better than others.

The parents enter suddenly to check on the children, instructing them not to eat too much junk-food, and remonstrating them for being so involved with the music videos instead of playing outdoors.

The parents exit, and after a few moments, the TV screen turns to visual and audio noise! The kids tear off their headsets in order to escape the unwanted screaming sound of static. The video tribe goes crazy! Colin suddenly jumps up and grabs Elliot's little brother, MICHAEL PORTER (age 6), by the collar and threateningly says, "Fix it, dweeb!". Elliot intervenes, saying, "Back off Colin, I'll fix it!". He starts fiddling with the VCR. He reaches behind the entertainment center to adjust the cables.

ZAP! CRACK! Elliot receives the full force of an electric shock! He is knocked to the floor. We see his point of view as the screen whites out. [We now enter a fantasy sequence that takes place outside of reality, all in Elliot's mind. This distortion extends to his perceptions of his family and friends as he begins to confuse reality with the fantasy of his entertainment world.]. The image fades back in, still Elliot's point of view, with his little brother Michael leaning over him. Michael asks him if he's okay, and Elliot replies that he isn't sure, but is probably all right.

The TV set is playing again, but something is different. His friends are decked out more colorfully. A subtle difference in lighting exists. A wide angle lense distorts the images. It is like we are in a slightly

*Inconsistent with
later?*

out of kilter dimension.

Michael helps Elliot to his feet. He is surrounded by his friends. One of them puts a headset on Elliot, and he begins to play "air guitar", mimicking the performer on the rock video.

We dissolve to the exterior of Elliot's house. The sounds of the kids and the rock video continue. We dissolve again to a high altitude view of Elliot's neighborhood. The sounds from Elliot's house are joined by various sounds from the other homes.

Through a series of dissolves we continue to move up and away from earth, until we see the planet rotating fully. The sound has built to a crescendo of totally confusing noise. We pull away as the earth disappears into the blackness, the noise now faint but still audible.

Out of the depths of deep space appears a rotating planet, ZORK. Our Narrator explains the location of Zork in a humorous way, as we take in the wondrous vista of this alien planet, a world not unlike our own. We finally settle on two alien companions, RAY GAMMA, and his little friend ZIP [an animated creature]. The obviously non-human pair are tuning in the planet earth which is slowly turning on their television screen. A noise is emanating from their screen: the sounds of Earth. The sound becomes a cacophony, totally unintelligible.

Gamma and Zip become extremely excited about their discovery. They leave their laboratory in search of their superior, THE BRAIN. As they pixilate down a long hallway, we become aware of massive doors at the far end, Ala "The Wizard of Oz". Gamma and Zip enter the "Throne Room".

The Brain materializes and hovers above them. He is a big, friendly, pulsating alien entity, who is always ready to assimilate their data. In a dazzling display of pixilation and animation effects, Gamma and Zip demonstrate a rapid representation of Earth's music, sounds and images. We recognize our own popular TV shows, music videos, and entertainment stars, from the opening theme music of well-known sitcoms, to the "Heeere's Johnny" introduction of the Tonight Show. The Brain suddenly calls the display to a halt, and in order to settle down the overly excited duo, he creates a "calm zone" in the center of the room.

A more serious, attentive and quieter atmosphere now exists. The Brain then produces an image in the center, a variety of stereotypical representations of people from Earth. A music video shows women as identical sexual objects. Movie action scenes depict glamorized violence. Commercials show stereotypical blacks and elderly. Brain observes that, "These earthlings describe themselves as "humans". However, their own transmission equipment presents a very narrow view of their humanity!". Brain then adjusts the images to feature ones of children. They are candid shots of them talking about their favorite music, and television programs; about being frightened when experiencing frightening entertainment; about the joy, the fun, the sadness, and in Elliot's case, the magic of entertainment. These interviews are intercut with shots from TV shows and other appropriate images, as well as shots of trance-like kids and family members watching television. We finish with a view of a TV show reflected on a child's eye.

Not clear. What
"inferred?"

The Brain then instructs our heroes to go to earth, and quietly observe the conditions there first hand: he wants to understand the power of music and entertainment on the human psyche, and its impact on their emotions, desires, actions and reactions. Gamma remarks that they haven't the time to study every single person on earth. The Brain goes into deep thought, then begins scanning images of children projected in the center of the room. The images finally settle on a repeating image of Elliot Porter saying, "It's like magic! It's like magic! etc.". The Brain orders them to observe the one called "ELLIOT PORTER". He cautions Gamma to be careful and to blend in with the people of earth, and with this, he changes Gamma's appearance to resemble a normal earthling, and instructs Zip to render himself invisible when humans are near. Gamma and Zip then blast-off for earth in their handy flying saucer.

When?
Where?
Why?

Meanwhile, back on earth, we are at a Friday night party that is being thrown by Elliot's parents. Elliot is maneuvering through a cluster of mobile, talkative adults. Their conversation reminds us of many tv commercials. Elliot's father makes a toast: "Here's to good times, tonight is something special!". Elliot wanders through, overhearing one couple's discussion: "Tastes great", she says. "No, less filling", he replies. Elliot, trying to get attention, tugs on his mother's dress, complaining of a stomach ache. She gives him a class of fizzy water, remarking, "Plop, plop, fizz, fizz. Oh, what a relief it is!". Dejected, Elliot takes his glass and sits down in front of the TV, and plugs in his headphones. A buzzing fills his head, unheard by those

Spiky
dream

around him. It grows louder and louder, drowning out the tinkle of cocktail glasses and party laughter until it reaches a crescendo, and then goes silent. Elliot's face is blank and expressionless. We know that something has gone wrong!

Gamma and Zip find Earth without mishap, but once in our atmosphere, Zip's antics cause navigation to become a thing of the past. Out of control, the ship barely avoids colliding with a variety of earth's landmarks. We see the ship fly over the Statue of Liberty and dip down into the Grand Canyon. It finally makes an extremely low pass over Washington DC, flying zanily past the Capitol building and other well-known monuments. They fly down a city street right over a variety of people who are so wrapped up in their walkmen and other entertainment distractions that they don't notice the spaceship at all.

The ship finally crashes through the side of a huge warehouse marked "The Acme Outdated Fad Merchandise Storage Co.". The ship comes to rest upon a pile of no longer popular toys and merchandise, such as hula hoops, transformers, cabbage patch dolls and pet rocks*.

In the warehouse office a large SECURITY GUARD is snoring in front of a television set with its picture rolling. The remains of a junk food fest litter the room and his rotund belly. The sound of the crash awakens him. He turns on his flashlight and heads out to investigate.

Gamma and Zip spill out of their open hatch onto a sea of toys. Zip curiously scans the sea of now useless objects and scratches his head. Gamma sees the huge crash-hole they made in the side of the building and

gasps! He frantically instructs zip to fetch the "Reconstruction Generator". Zip picks up a toy ray gun and hands it to his flustered friend. Gamma tries to use it to no avail. Once aware of the prank, he admonishes Zip, who darts into the ship and back with the alien device. With the security guard getting nearer, Gamma activates the device, putting the wall back to its original undamaged condition.

The guard is now fumbling with his keys to unlock our heroes' section of the warehouse. Gamma uses the reconstruction generator to put the toys back where they belong. Suddenly the door behind them starts to open. They look at their huge ship, clearly visible, then at each other, and gasp! The burly guard enters the room, his flashlight sweeping the shelves and aisles. All is as it should be! There is no sign of the ship or our alien friends. The confused yet still suspicious guard scratches his head as he scans with the light. Finally his beam falls on a trio of toys: a tiny spaceship, a stuffed Zip doll, and a Gamma action figure. The guard does a double-take and exits with a less than satisfied expression. Gamma returns to normal size. Leaving their ship behind, safely camouflaged as a toy, he and Zip set off to find Elliot.

The morning sky serenely illuminates a neatly kept community of middle class houses. The quiet calm is suddenly broken by the blaring siren and flashing lights of an ambulance speeding down the suburban streets. It stops in front of a small house. The mailbox in front of the home reads, "Porter". From across the street, and behind a tree, we see Gamma and Zip clandestinely viewing the events unfold.

Not Electric Shock?

Inside the house, Elliot sits frozen in front of the TV. The frenzy of Saturday morning programming dances across the screen. Elliot's eyes are wide and glazed. His broad smile, locked at full-extension, completes his comical-looking near-comatose state. He is suffering from full-blown sensory overload!

Elliot's parents recite rhetoric reminding us of dialogue from popular TV commercials. His dad offers him a handful of candies for "fast, fast relief". His mother holds up a box of Ram-O's junk food cereal, saying, "They get little soldiers up and running in the morning with sugar and over 400 vitamins!". Elliot's laughable expression remains unchanged. His parents' attitudes, mannerisms, (obviously changed from the beginning of the story), and in fact their entire house epitomizes the effects of unbridled media bombardment. The paramedics, in a bumbling and comical manner, enter and start to examine Elliot.

Outside, a small crowd of concerned neighbors starts to gather. Some of Elliot's friends are peering in through windows. Taking advantage of the situation, Zip becomes invisible, as he and Gamma cross the street, and blend in with the crowd to obtain information.

Inside the house, the chief paramedic informs Elliot's parents that while their son's vital signs are completely normal, he has never seen anything like this condition before. The other paramedics try to lay Elliot down on the stretcher, but can't get him out of his rigid sitting position. Still in his sitting position, they carry him out to the ambulance. Mom and Dad accompany them to the Medical Center.

After the ambulance speeds away, the crowd begins to disperse, and Gamma overhears the various conversations with interest. The kids are talking about how awesome Elliot's condition was, and that he looked like some popular entertainment figure*. As they discuss favorite entertainment, and what they are going to go watch, the voices trail off leaving Gamma and Zip alone in the front yard. Zip becomes visible as he and Gamma teleport themselves inside Elliot's now unoccupied house. The home though not offensively messy is jam-packed with the byproducts of media bombardment. Some rooms even have more than one TV set. Stereos and headsets abound. Zip accidentally land on a remote-control device, which turns on numerous televisions and stereos throughout the house. Gamma and Zip jump, startled by the sudden bombardment of noise. They switch it off quickly. The extensive creature comforts and paraphernalia suggest the possibility of thoughtless programmed purchasing. The decor of Elliot's room suggests this and more. Posters of rock stars, TV and movie stars fill the walls and ceiling*.

Gamma sits down on Elliot's bed. Suddenly he jumps up, scaring Zip. Gamma reaches down and picks up the action figure* he sat on, sets back down and asks if Brain is getting his transmission. A holographic image of Brain materializes in the room. Brain responds that it is interesting, and recommends that they observe some of Elliot's friends, but more importantly, that they investigate Elliot's condition. Gamma asks how to accomplish this, since they don't know where Elliot was taken, but to his dismay, Brain yawns and vanishes. Zip looks perplexed.

Meanwhile, at the Medical Center, Elliot is being examined by Dr. Howard, Dr. Fine, and Dr. Howard. They are reminiscent of the three stooges. They each have a prognosis:

- 1) Procrastination
- 2) Pass-the-buck-itis
- 3) Who-knows-aphobia

After a stooge-style procrastination in regard to diagnosis, Dr. Howard says, "CALL IN A SPECIALIST.". Dr. Fine then says, "A SPECIALIST!". Dr. Howard says, "A SPECIALIST! Nyuk, Nyuk, Nyuk!".

By this time Gamma and Zip, with some help from The Brain of course, have formulated their plans on how to find and observe Elliot and his friends. With the appropriate disguise, they will enter the local cable station. Zip will enter the computer core system, locate and interface with the transmission carrying programming to neighborhood homes, and travel into the television sets of Elliot's friends. He will be able to observe them from the inside looking out. No big deal, Zip does this kind of thing all the time. But we know that Zip will find himself in a comical situation, dodging the projected energies of the TV's electron gun, bounced around by the bombardment of sound waves, and the like.

At the cable station, a TV commercial is being shot. A "Rambo" like character with muscular arms is holding up a box of Ram-O's breakfast cereal. He says, "It would be your worst nightmare if you don't try my new breakfast cereal!". At this point ADRIAN, a high-strung ad exec type charges in and starts complaining loudly about the lighting being wrong.

Gamma enters, disguised as a custodian, attentively sweeping the set. With a less than graceful move, his broom knocks over the product setup, spilling the contents of the cereal box around Rambo's feet. Adrian screams, "You idiot! Do you know how long it took to set that up? No, of course you don't! Hours and hours! Dollars and dollars! Do you know what this means?". Gamma, backing up and confused, says, "No.". Adrian, clenching his fists and moving toward Gamma, says, "It means we lose dollars and dollars!".

Rambo grabs Adrian's arm, saying, "Take it easy, Adrian! You take this stuff too serious!". Adrian, Pursuing Gamma, says, "If I don't get this commercial done, the children won't see it! If the children don't see it, the parents won't buy it! If the parents don't buy it, the Ram-O's Breakfast food people will lose dollars and dollars and dollars!".

Rambo says, "Yo! Adrian! Calm down!". Adrian says to Gamma, "If the Ram-O's Breakfast food people lose dollars and dollars then I'll lose my job and dollars and dollars and dollars!". Adrian drops to his knees, repeating, "Dollars and dollars and dollars!", over and over again. He then starts literally pulling his hair out. Adrian has become a wild man. Rambo says, "Adrian. Stop it! Don't do that, Adrian!".

Gamma makes his way over to the studio door and escapes. Rambo loudly yells, "ADRIAN!", which echoes through the building as Gamma (with invisible Zip on his shoulder) runs down a hallway.

After he is sure of being a safe distance from the crazed madman,

What was the point?
(of this scene.)

(language)

Gamma slows to a fast walk. Talking to himself, he says, "Dollars and dollars and dollars!" mockingly.

Suddenly, in a burst of sparkling "Disney-dust drippy-downs", Zip materializes in front of Gamma, startling him. Gamma admonishes Zip, warning that he has been told not to scare people and other life-forms like that before. Zip makes a "I'm sorry" sound, and flies behind Gamma as they move on down the hall. Gamma says, "I'm not sure what "dollars and dollars and dollars" are, but they appear to be the cause of irresponsible behavior in some earthlings!". Zip nods in wide-eyed agreement.

Rounding a corner, Gamma finds himself at a set of double doors: Studio #2. Not noticing the red flashing "Shooting in process" light over the door, he peeks into the studio, and sees a talk show in progress.

From behind the talk show host, we can see the guests, the cameras, and Gamma (entering in the far corner of the studio). The host says, "Welcome back to "Is Too, Is Not". Our guests tonight are opera superstar DONNA PRIMA; and I.M. FRESH and the HOMEBOYS rap group, who's hit song, "Scullery Maid Baby", is based on the "Cinderella fairytale.". Gamma picks up a toolbox and clipboard to look busy.

I.M. Fresh, the rap musician, with his Homeboys adding rap symphonics in the background, raps, "Cinderella, met her fella, dumped the dude, 'cause he was yella!". Donna Prima sings back, in a high, operatic soprano, "Nooo, nooo...she fell in looove...they lived happily

What point does this scene make?

ever aaafter!"

Meanwhile, in the control room, we see the switching control panel and monitors, with I.M. Fresh visible on them. He says, "It's a brother's tale! She did him wrong!". Donna Prima says, "It is not! It's a fairytale! They fell in love!". "It is too!", says I.M. Fresh. "It is not!", says Donna. The dialogue degenerates into the "Is too, is not" of the show's title. The DIRECTOR says, "Take wide shot, Camera 2.". On the monitor we see Gamma enter, obviously ruining the show, but looking around trying to blend in (unsuccessfully of course). The director says, "What's going on? Bobby, who is that guy? Get him out of there. Cut! This show's a bust!!".

In the studio, Bobby the floor manager says (to Gamma), "Hey pal, ya can't just walk around in here!". Confused, Gamma walks off the set towards the control booth. He is seen by the director in the booth as he peers in smiling and waving. The director turns on the studio intercom speaker, and asks, "Can we help you with something, Buddy? If not, we've got a show to do here!". A very confused Gamma looks around, and focus' on the brand-name "Ampex*" on a piece of equipment. With a lack of any logical response to the director's query, he responds, "Ampex?". After a perplexed pause, one of the engineers says, "Oh, yeah! Ampex! He's here to install a new graphics module in the core. I'll show him where it is."

When they arrive at the computer core, a central corridor of many banks of electronic circuit panels, the engineer points at a panel and

says, "Here it is. Knock yourself out!". As his guide exits, leaving a confused Gamma to ponder this latest turn of a phrase, we suddenly see his expression change to one of excitement. "Zip! This is IT!", he cries out, putting his hands on the circuit panels. Zip materializes on his shoulder. Gamma requests The Brain's assistance. Brain's image forms in front of them, and cautions Zip on the conditions and possible dangers of traveling with electronic transmissions (This provides the opportunity for a brief lesson on the inner workings of television). He explains, "You go and find Elliot. Report his location back to Gamma, then go observe Elliot's friends, and Gamma will go and observe Elliot. When your complete these tasks, rendezvous at your spaceship and return home to Zork."

Zip spins around playfully and transforms into a comet of electrical impulses. He flies into the circuit panel, causing a beautiful display of electrical sparks and "Disney-dust drippy-downs". Outside the TV station, "Zip-the-comet" flies straight up out of the microwave dish, bounces off a satellite, and heads back towards earth.

Back at the Medical Center, our trio of stooge-doctors have Elliot seated in front of a projection tv. Elliot has an outlandish "Rube Goldberg" style electronic helmet on his head, one which no doctor except a stooge would use to study him. It is an amusing conglomeration of megaphones, lenses, and antennae that would make Dr. Seuss proud. One of the stooges uses a remote control clicker to change the channel. One at a time, the doctors say, "No response.". The doctors then wheel a

fluoroscope (X-ray device) in front of Elliot and turn his stereo headphones on. They gasp as a swirling frenzy of musical notes dance inside his body, causing his organs to flee in the opposite direction.

We now find ourselves at a microwave relay station. Zip-the-comet suddenly flies down and hits the relay station's microwave dish. He travels into the dish, and then into the above-ground cables. We see the cables light up as he quickly flies through dozens of them. We see Zip stop suddenly at a junction, materialize, and take out a map to consult. Now sure of his route, he turns back into energy and shoots down one cable after another, into the Medical Center.

Inside, Elliot is still undergoing zany examinations. The wacky headgear is even bigger now. The stooge-doctors are huddled in the background ignoring Elliot. Suddenly, in an explosion of light and sound, Zip erupts from the tv set, partly in his electrical comet form, and comes face-to-face with Elliot! He found him! One of Elliot's eyes flinches in response to Zip's appearance! Then Zip disappears as quickly as he arrived.

We follow Zip-the-comet out of the Medical Center, through the cables, and from a high angle, into a house in Elliot's neighborhood. Once inside the tv set (bouncing around), he shrinks down to tiny size, and enters the electron gun on his way to the picture tube. He dodges the electron-projectiles as they impact the back of the tv screen, creating an image of a "heavy metal style rocker*".

Zip approaches the screen, and peers through the vibrating phosphor-

dots to see the young boy the kids call "METAL HEAD", mimicking his on-screen rock hero. Zip looks on, mesmerized by the music and haunting image of the young earthling. The boy is watching himself in a full length mirror. The reflection he sees in the mirror is not himself as he really is, but a fantasized view of himself in makeup and a costume identical to the menacing one worn by his idol. His face distorts and grimaces with the music. Zip continues to watch.

Back at the Medical Center, we see that the helmet on Elliot is weirder and more expansive than ever. Using over-sized ridiculous tools, the stooges continue to work on the rig, as Elliot sits dwarfed within its confines. Gamma, disguised as specialist Dr. Figmen Solo, enters through a door in the background. Gamma startles the stooges at first, who bump into each other, then they all begin to greet themselves and each other several times over. Gamma then says, "Gentlemen, please! I would like to examine the patient alone!". The stooges grouse and argue typically as they exit the room.

Gamma maneuvers close to Elliot, moving aside intricate doodads on the helmet, finally to clear an unhampered pathway to Elliot's face. He says, "Elliot!", and suddenly, Elliot's eyes blink as he becomes conscious. "Who are you?", Elliot asks. "I'm Ray Gamma. I'm here to rescue you!" he replies. Elliot, further confused, asks, "Where am I, and who are you?". Gamma explains that "You're at the Medical Center. You had a little accident, and I'm an alien from outer space, the planet Zork to be exact. I've been sent to observe you."

which? Electric shock
or "overload?"

Elliot stares dumbfounded at him, then cries out, "Mom!". Gamma cautions, "It's okay, Elliot! Don't panic!". Elliot says, "I want to go home! I want my MTV!---(he notices the TV set)---oh WOW, man! Cool large screen tv dude! Awesome!". Gamma points the remote control at the tv and shuts it off. He then touches Elliot's head and puts him back in his previous unconscious state. Grabbing Elliot's hands, he says, "Come with me Elliot, there are things I must show you.". He pulls Elliot up, and in a shower of "Disney dust", Elliot's dream-self separates from his physical body. There are now two Elliots: the unconscious one in the examining chair (in a hospital gown); the other transparent, yet conscious, and dressed in his camouflage army-style clothes he was wearing at the video party. Elliot looks at himself seated in the chair, and asks how Gamma did it. Gamma replies that he is from outer space. Elliot asks if this is real, and Gamma points out that reality is easy to distort when you spend so much time in a fantasy world. Elliot asks what is wrong with him, and Gamma explains that Elliot is suffering from sensory overload. He messed up his inner balance, his psychic harmony. Elliot says, "My what?". Gamma takes him by the hand and they exit by walking right through the wall.

Meanwhile, we find Zip framed by dancing phosphor-dots, and we hear the sounds of war. Zip is observing Commando Colin, one of Elliot's friends from the video party, who is playing war, imitating the violent acts of combat. He is decked out in khaki combat clothing and has a variety of toy weapons at his disposal. We see Zip watching, captivated,

But so do we here?

as the sounds of war grow louder.

As we begin Elliot and Gamma's "A Christmas Carol" style journey, we travel to the past, and see a twinkie being unwrapped, and placed in someone's mouth. It turns out to be Elliot's. We have traveled back in time to the night of his parent's party. There are junk food wrappers surrounding him as he sits mesmerized watching a rock video. Elliot is wearing earphones, so we barely hear the sound of the video. Suddenly the "spirit-Elliot" and Gamma enter through the wall. spirit-Elliot says, "Hey, there I am again. Hey, Elliot, it's me, Elliot!". Gamma explains that no one is able to see or hear them on this journey. He explains that this is the night that Elliot suffered sensory overload. Spirit-Elliot looks confused.

Suddenly there is a "reality shift"; we see the room distort, Elliot's eyes flicker with light, the sound of static begins: this is the moment of Elliot's "sensory overload". Gamma is still explaining that Elliot is the first human to experience this condition, one that has been cured for many eons on Zork. But, on other worlds, it has destroyed entire civilizations. Elliot asks if this is a joke, and Gamma replies that it is not. Elliot then asks, "Hey! What about me? What about my world?". Gamma replies sincerely, "That's up to you, Elliot.". Gamma walks out through the wall, and Elliot runs after him, also disappearing through the wall.

We now travel back to the present and see Elliot's little brother Michael playing on a playground see-saw with a friend. Other kids are

*really? or stories, distortions,
propaganda?*

playing on various slides, jungle gyms, etc. As Gamma and Elliot appear, we hear Elliot ask, "What do you mean it's up to me? What are we doing here?". Gamma says, "You and some of your friends are controlled by the energy transmissions you watch and listen to.". Elliot is skeptical.

Then a group of older kids arrive: Commando Colin and his "Army Task Force". Colin puts his foot on the low end of the teeter-totter and pushes Michael's friend off, leaving Michael way up in the air. He tells Michael that he warned him to stay out of his territory. Michael protests, so Colin bounces the see-saw with his foot, making it hard for Michael to keep his balance. Gamma holds Elliot back, advising that they still can't hear or see him. Michael finally gives in, addressing his tormentor as "Commando Colin, SIR". Colin and his friends then start blasting Michael with their big, battery powered, automatic (1 quart backpack reservoir) squirt guns*. Michael loses his grip on the wet teeter-totter handle and falls to the ground. Colin kicks the low end of the teeter-totter up in the air, causing it to come crashing down, barely missing Michael. The task force continues to blast him with water as they mouth the sounds of real gunfire. Michael finds his glasses on the ground. They are broken. He cannot hold back any longer, and begins to cry. We see Elliot, wide eyed, breathing heavy and extremely concerned.

We see Zip-the-comet shooting down another above ground cable, and into a house. Inside the house we see MISSY and two of her friends (DEBBIE and MOLLY) dressed up like a parade of Madonnas, dancing and

singing along with their video idol, a take-off of "Papa Don't Preach" (early Madonna song*), "Teacher don't preach/I'm in trouble deep/I'm makin' all "F's"/I've been losin' sleep/But I made up my mind/Ain't goin' to summer school!". They throw their schoolbooks in the air and dance around. One of the girls, Debbie, the only one with dark hair, accidentally stumbles into Missy. Missy pushes her down, saying, "Clumsy! You don't have the right hair color. You're not pretty enough to play!". Missy and Molly laugh cruelly. Debbie's feelings have been hurt. Zip looks worried!

Putting it in? What's the lesson?

We are back at the "warehouse of outdated fad merchandise" now. Through a rack of outdated toys, we see Gamma and Elliot enter. Gamma is calling out for Zip. Elliot is asking him if Michael is okay. Gamma takes a deep breath, and explains, "If you mean did Commando Colin injure him, the answer is no. Zip! Are you here?". Michael asks where they are and who Zip is. Gamma explains that it is a warehouse of outdated fad merchandise*, and that Zip is a friend of his.

Meanwhile, Zip flies down a cable into another house, ending up looking through the television's vibrating phosphor-dots into the living room of ROGER, the overweight child from the video party. Zip sees Roger rapidly, like in a silent movie, stuffing his face with junk food. Zip rubs his eyes, and looks, to see Roger looking larger. He rubs his eyes again, in disbelief, and looks to see Roger even larger still. This continues until Roger becomes so incredibly huge, that he achieves "critical mass", and suddenly vibrates, changing himself into,

literally, a giant potato! The giant "couch-potato's" many "eyes" (visual pun) all turn toward the television set to watch. Zip looks horrified, gasps an, "Oh, no!!" sound, and rockets out of the house and down the overhead cables to escape.

Back at the warehouse, Elliot picks up a toy* and remarks that he has a lot of this stuff at home. Gamma says, "I'm sure you do!". Elliot picks up a squirt gun* like Colin's. He says, "What a jerk Colin is. He acts like this stuff is real, like he's a real soldier!". Gamma reaches over and removes Elliot's play dogtags, saying, "And what about you, G.I. Joe?*". Elliot tries to snatch the tags back, and when he snags the chain, a burst of "Disney dust" erupts from the point of contact. Gamma maintains his grip, says, "Think, Elliot, think!", smiles at him, and then releases his grip. Elliot looks at the dogtag, and sees the word "Think" written in sparkly animation. Elliot smiles as he looks at the dogtag. But as he becomes aware of Gamma's now serious attitude, the smile drains away, and he asks, "What's wrong?". Gamma says, "There's something else I have to show you. Come with me!".

They journey to the future and find themselves once again in Elliot's living room. But now it is Christmas time and there are decorations all around. Little Michael is sitting in front of the tv watching a "900 number call Santa" commercial*, which is followed by a plethora of holiday toy ads*.

Elliot says, "Oh, neat! Hey Michael, it's Christmas time. Oh, yeah, I forgot, he can't hear me. That little guy loves Christmas.". Michael

gets up and answers the doorbell to find SARA the babysitter. Sara asks, "How is Elliot doing?". Michael says, "There's been no change. Mom and Dad are going to the hospital to visit him.". Elliot says, "You mean I'm still in the hospital?". Gamma just looks at him, expressionless. We see the parents leaving when dad dashes back in and sheepishly grabs his car keys. "Don't leave home without it," he says to Michael, who shrugs with disgust and plops down in front of the TV.

Sara is talking to Michael, but he is not responding. As we come around to see Michael's face, we see that he is now in the same sensory overload comatose state that Elliot is in. A shocked expression takes over Elliot's face. "No! NO! NOT MICHAEL!" Gamma hugs him to provide some measure of comfort. Elliot cries, "Help him, please! Help him, help us, help me!". Elliot's words echo into the distance as we see his face very closely.

We start to hear different words, faint at first, then louder. "Elliot. Elliot. Elliot!". He opens his eyes to find himself in the Medical center. Confused, he looks around to see SANTA CLAUS, who says, "Elliot, can you hear me?". Elliot says, "SANTA CLAUS!!". Santa Claus says, "No, Elliot. I'm Dr. Howard. I'm one of Santa's helpers at a benefit tonight. I just stopped to check on you on my way out. Elliot, you've been gone for a long time. Welcome back!".

It is now two weeks later: the night of Christmas eve. We are back at Elliot's house. Elliot has been very depressed since regaining consciousness, because he now believes that his adventures with Ray

Well, weren't they?

Gamma and Zip were all a dream. He is in his room, staring into his mirror at himself, while Michael is laying on his bed looking at a comic book. Michael says, "Come on Elliot, let's go watch Captain Justice* and Lady Liberty!*". Elliot says (aggressively), "I told you Michael, I don't want to!". Michael gets upset, and says, "You're not nice. I don't like you anymore. Lady Liberty's gonna use her magic on you!". Elliot says, "Lady Liberty and Captain Justice aren't real! There's no such thing as magic!". Michael becomes upset, and tries to run out of the room, but Elliot grabs his arm, stopping him. He says, "I'm sorry, Michael."

As Elliot hugs his little brother, out of the corner of his eye, he sees light reflecting from his dogtags, which are hanging on his coat-rack. When he grabs the tags, and turns them over, to his amazement, the word "Think" is still there! He takes his little brother by the hand, and says, "Michael, come with me!". Elliot now suspects that it may not have been a dream after all. He and Michael head for "The Acme Outdated Fad Merchandise Storage Co." warehouse.

Inside the warehouse we see the tiny silhouetted figures of Elliot and Michael enter through a door at the far end. Elliot looks again at the dogtags, and then calls out, "Ray!", as he and Michael continue walking. He asks again if Ray can hear him. Michael asks who "Ray" is, and Elliot says, "A spaceman.". Michael says, "A real spaceman?". Elliot drops down on one knee, looks Michael square in the eye, and says, "Yeah. A real spaceman!". Michael exults. Now they both call out for Ray

together.

After a while, Elliot sits down, dejected, and apologizes to Michael for leading him on a wild goose chase in the middle of the night. He tells Michael that there isn't any spaceman or magic. Suddenly the large bay door starts to open with shafts of light streaming in. A figure appears in the bright mist. It is the security guard, who says, "Hey! You kids! What are you doing in here?". (He starts walking towards them) "You're in big trouble, gentlemen!".

The guard moves closer, very threatening, but suddenly in a flash of Disney dust, he freezes in mid stride. The boys watch in amazement, and then, in another flash of animated sparkles, Zip appears. Elliot's eyes flinch, and he says, "I remember! You're Zip!". Zip nods in affirmation, and spins around, floating in the air and giggling. Elliot introduces himself and Michael to Zip, then asks where Ray is.

Zip flies over to their miniature spaceship on the storage rack. The boys follow. They look at the ship, then at Zip. They are confused. Suddenly the tiny ship takes off, and flies around the warehouse, leaving a trail of sparkling Disney dust. Then the ship lands in the open center of the warehouse, and in a swirl of Disney dust flourish, it grows to its full size. The hatch on top opens, and Gamma rises up in a formal version of his spacesuit, making a grand entrance.

Elliot tells Michael, "It's Ray! Hi, Ray!". Michael, amazed, waves and says, "Hi, Ray!". Gamma greets them, and says that he was hoping they would come. Elliot asks if he (Gamma) is real, and if magic is real

too. Gamma smiles and replies, "Magic is all the wonders of the universe. Nature, your imagination, your family, friends old and new, and life itself. Yes, Elliot, it's real. Don't limit your experience to the sights and sounds of your sensory stimulation equipment.". Michael says, "Our what?". Elliot says, "TV, stereos, walkmen*, radios, you know!".

Gamma says, "Your equipment offers a variety of entertainment, some constructive, some destructive. It is important to choose wisely.".

At this point, Gamma goes into a pixilated song and dance animation sequence. The song will reinforce the themes of the film, and will be an uplifting segment. The animation will involve the objects in the warehouse, assuring us of no shortage of props. The sequence will end with Gamma and Zip leaving in the ship, flying up into the heavens, with the two boys standing and waving in the wind and sparkling light of their departure.

Gamma and Zip enter the throne room on Zork. They then relate the story of their adventures on earth. They tell of both the responsible and irresponsible uses of music and television, and the influence they exert on the human psyche. "The power of music and television on the human species is a strange and frightening thing to behold," says Gamma. "It makes them laugh, it makes them cry. It sometimes teaches them and it sometimes distorts the truth. It can show them amazing things, but they don't always use it wisely.". Finally, Brain says, "I understand. Thank you for collecting this data for me. You may go now.". Gamma and

then

Zip flash a worried look at each other. Gamma then asks, "But what about Elliot? What is going to happen to him?". The Brain smiles, and says, "He'll be fine, Elliot Porter will be just fine! Everyone will be fine, if they just THINK!". With these last words, The Brain smiles and looks right at us! Brain's final word, "THINK", echoes into the distance, as everything fades to black.

We hear the words, "Elliot. Elliot! Wake up Elliot!". The picture fades in on Dr. Howard, this time in his Dr.'s smock. We see his face as he looks down at Elliot. The Dr. says, "Welcome back, son! You're okay! You're in the Medical Center because you suffered a pretty nasty electrical shock!". Elliot's parents are there. They are glad to have Elliot back. They hug him, and tell him how much they love him. Michael is there too, and the two siblings embrace and express that they missed each other. The Porter family now realize how fragile and precious their time is together, and they vow to become more involved in one another's lives.

Dr. Howard lifts up a dry cleaning bag containing a Santa suit, and drapes it over his arm, explaining that it's Christmas eve, and he is one of Santa's helpers for a benefit that night. He states that this is a time to share with one's family, and upon wishing a "Merry Christmas" to Elliot, he exits, almost running into the janitor sweeping the hallway. The janitor looks up and we see that it is Gamma! He winks at Elliot, and then moves on down the hall (out of view).

Elliot suddenly thinks of something, reaches into his hospital gown,

and pulls out his dogtags. We cannot see what he does, but as he looks at the dogtag, he smiles mysteriously, and we fade to black.

We then hear the director yell, "Cut! Print! That's a wrap!". From the shadow of a camera, we pull back to see the hospital set, actors and technicians start shaking hands, congratulating each other. We roll our end credits over a behind-the-scenes montage of this production, which reveals many of the tricks and illusions that were used in the show's creation.

Following the credits, we flash on the word "THINK", with highlights and Disney Dust. Fade out.

The End.