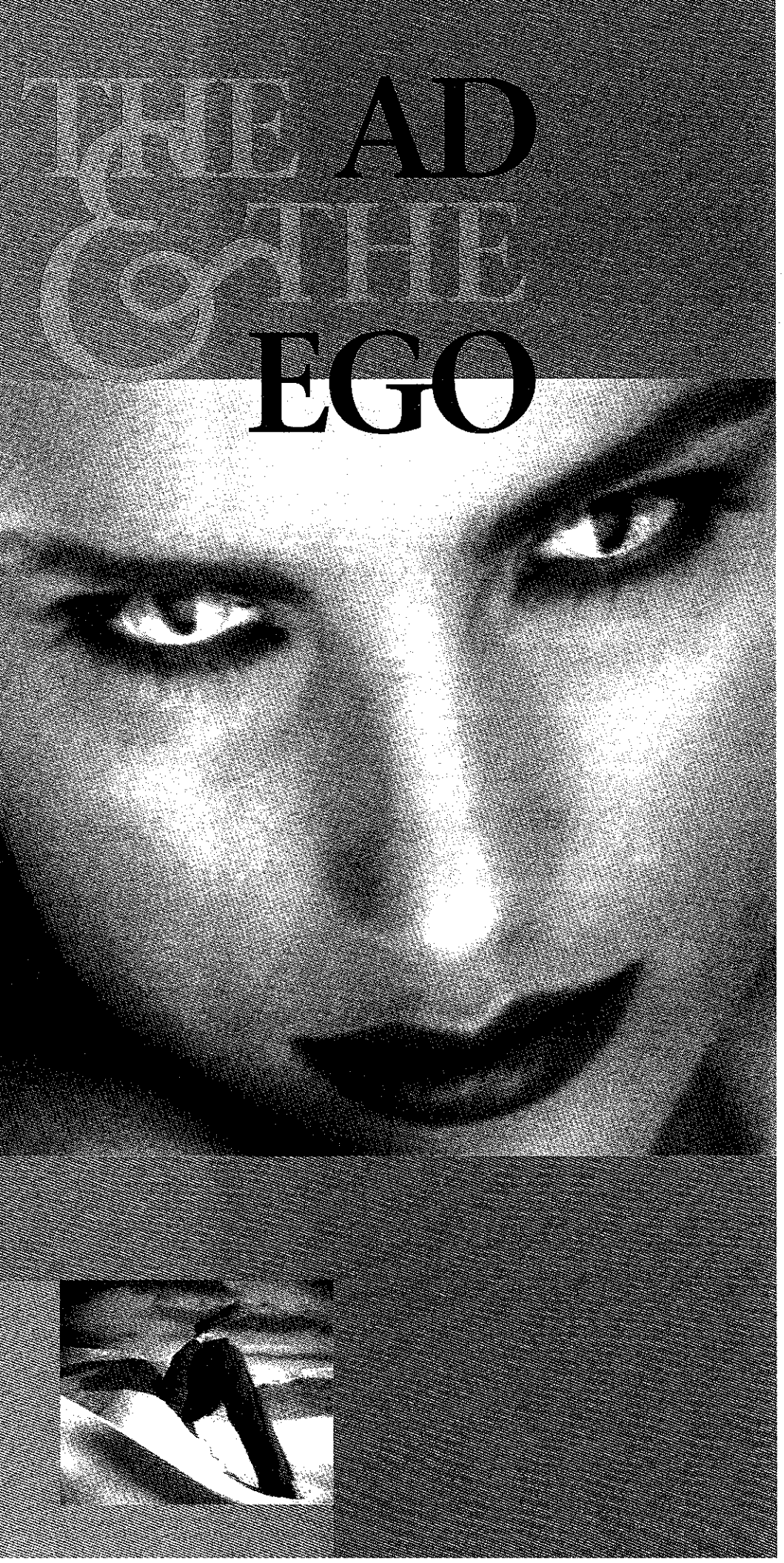
THE MEDIATED MIND:
A New Video Library on Media and Society



Students will never look at an ad the same way again after screening **The Ad and the Ego,** the first comprehensive examination of advertising and our culture of consumption. The film artfully intercuts clips from hundreds of familiar television ads with insights from Stuart Ewen, Jean Kilbourne, Richard Pollay, Sut Jhally, Bernard McGrane and other noted critics, performing a cultural psychoanalysis of late 20th century America and its principal inhabitants, Consumer Man and Woman.

The Ad and the Ego depicts how the market economy has metastasized until today commercialism invades the most intimate aspects of our lives. The average American is exposed to 1500 ads a day. But, like the air we breathe, we pay advertising little attention, preferring to believe we're impervious to it.

Scholars point out that advertising's constant stream of messages forms the neural network of a consumer society, integrating individual psychology, mass culture and commodity production. As the film progresses, we begin to perceive how ads for Nike, Calvin Klein, Oil of Olay, and Suzuki are selling more than products. As Jean Kilbourne argues, they sell us values, concepts of love and sexuality, romance and success, a sense of identity, above all, what is "normal."

Leading media critics demonstrate how living in an advertising infused environment creates a psychology of need, massaging our anxieties, doubts, and discontents, into a boundless hunger for more things. One message you'll never hear in an ad, sociologist Bernard McGrane observes, is "You're OK."

The Ad and the Ego traces advertising's development from its largely descriptive 19th century origins through today's ads which eschew rational arguments for symbols and imagery playing directly to our emotions. Sut Jhally describes ads as "the dream life of our culture" and explains the persuasive techniques they use to invest commodities with powerful properties magically able to transform the mundane lives of their purchasers.

The Ad and the Ego goes on to demonstrate the link between our debased public discourse and a culture which defines freedom as consumer choice rather than civic deliberation. It analyzes the "selling" of political beliefs to demonstrate how citizenship has increasingly been replaced by spectatorship, civil society by consumer culture.

The Ad and the Ego makes the critical connections between the rise of consumerism, environmental degradation and our blind commitment to economic growth at any cost. This pathbreaking new film will help students of communications, sociology, psychology, marketing and business ethics better understand the central role of advertising in our society and our psyches.

*"**The Ad and the Ego** is the first comprehensive documentary on the cultural impact of advertising in America. It should be required viewing for every consumer - which means all of us."*
— Neil Postman
New York University
***author,* Amusing Ourselves to Death**

*"**The Ad and the Ego** is the only thing on video to make clear and to counter the - shall we say it? - evil of an ad ad ad world. With ad imagery both familiar and frightening, audio by the brightly negative Negativland, and talking heads who smartly walk you through the many minefields of illusion, **The Ad and the Ego** brilliantly dismantles one of the ego's most comforting self-flatteries: that we are immune to advertising. Consider this your first real inoculation."*
—Leslie Savan,* Village Voice *ad critic
***author,* The Sponsored Life**

"A desperately needed antidote to the ocean of commercial messages that threaten to overwhelm our senses. Imaginatively conceived and produced, it explains the psychological mechanisms which give the messages and images their awesome power. An educational tour de force which should be welcomed in classrooms across the nation."
— Herbert Schiller
University of California, San Diego

"A useful provocation that anyone concerned with the future of our culture should take seriously."
—Todd Gitlin, New York University

"A much-needed video update of the classic Hidden Persuaders. *It shows how omnipresent advertising not only shapes our buying habits, but our view of ourselves and our society."*
—Joan Claybrook, President
Public Citizen

Producers: Harold Boihem,
Chris Emmanouilides
Director: Harold Boihem
Sound Design: Negativland
57 minutes, 1996
Video Rental: $95
Video Sale: $195

FEAR & FAVOR IN THE NEWSROOM

Fear and Favor in the Newsroom demonstrates for the first time on film how ownership of the press by a small corporate elite constricts the free flow of ideas and information on which our democracy depends.

Producer/Director: Beth Sanders
Co-Producer/Writer: Randy Baker
Northwest Passage Productions in association with KTEH, San Jose Public Television
57 minutes, 1996
Video Rental: $75
Video Sale: $195

"A marvelously revealing show and tell about how media censorship really works in America from some of the ablest print and broadcast journalists around. A fine, fierce documentary."
—Mark Hertsgaard
***author,* On Bended Knee**

"Superb! Shows clearly how censorship and subtle self-censorship takes place in the real world. Should be required viewing for all working journalists, all students of journalism and communication, and all citizens concerned about democracy."
—Robert McChesney
University of Wisconsin-Madison

"Strong stuff but all too true. ***Fear and Favor...*** *speaks hard truths about self-censorship in the press. I'm going to use it."*
—Hodding Carter

In the public's eye journalists will do anything for a story - push their way through crowds, bombard officials with hostile questions, even bring down presidents. **Fear and Favor...** shatters this myth by going behind the scenes with an insiders' critique of the press. Executives such as the president of NBC News and the vice chairman of the New York Times, Inc. claim their editorial decisions are made "without fear or favor." But some of the nation's most distinguished journalists - including four Pulitzer Prize winners - document the hidden wreckage of spiked stories, demotions and firings. They reveal how journalists quickly learn to censor themselves rather than agressively pursue stories which might conflict with the interests of their corporate employers.

- Renowned executive editor Bill Kovach resigned from the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* after its owners, Cox Enterprises, objected to aggressive reporting on issues such as racist local lending practices and an alleged bribery scheme involving Atlanta-based Coca Cola.
- NBC News president Michael Gartner killed footage of civilian carnage in Iraq during the Gulf War which undermined U.S. military claims of surgical strikes, then fired the reporter who shot it, six-time Emmy winner Jon Alpert.
- *The New York Times* spiked Polk Award winner Francis Cerra's report of billion dollar cost-overruns at the Shoreham nuclear power plant, told her never to write about Shoreham again, and when she complained, pulled her off her beat.

Fear and Favor... provides essential vocational training for how to negotiate a newsroom with career - and integrity - intact. After seeing this exposé, no one concerned with a free press will ever read a paper or watch TV news again without asking what news the media magnates deemed unfit to print. As Francis Cerra puts it in the film, "I came to understand that freedom of the press is only guaranteed when you own the press. This is something I learned from *The New York Times*."

COLOR ADJUSTMENT

Color Adjustment is the definitive study of racial prejudice and progress in the Television Age. Pathbreaking filmmaker Marlon Riggs (*Ethnic Notions*, *Tongues Untied* and *Black Is, Black Ain't*) traces the uneasy interplay between television and the Civil Rights struggle over the past half century. With clips from *Amos 'n Andy* through *Good Times*, *Roots* and *The Cosby Show*, this Peabody Award-winner artfully chronicles how African Americans were reluctantly "integrated" into America's prime time family.

Writers and producers Norman Lear, Steven Bochco and David Wolper explain how they absorbed deep-seated racial conflicts into the familiar, non-threatening forms of the prime time series which helped Marlon Riggs, Rolle, Diahann Carroll and Tim Reid discuss the impact of their roles on both Black and white audiences. Cultural critics bell hooks, Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Alvin Poussaint show how the most pervasive and popular images of the last five decades can be used to help students examine society's and their own attitudes towards race.

An important ninety minutes of media self-scrutiny.
—Erik Barnouw

Superb and provocative. A rarity. TV history with a bite.
—Time

Original and Thoughtful. Should be seen by anyone involved in the creation of television.
—Variety

ROUCH IN REVERSE

In recent years, ethnographic filmmaking has become the focus of debates over representation, objectivity and bias in the media. In **Rouch in Reverse**, Malian filmmaker and New York University professor Manthia Diawara investigates this issue through the life and work of Jean Rouch, probably the most distinguished living ethnographic filmmaker. Rouch is widely credited as a founder of the *cinema vérité* movement, an inventor of the jump cut and director of over 40 influential ethnographic films.

In this pathbreaking film, Diawara explores an approach he calls "reverse anthropology" to examine the entire ethnographic enterprise from the perspective of its subjects. "I needed to pass through Rouch," he writes, "to render visible new African images and voices, ones that defy stereotype and primitivism." Diawara and Rouch compare their sometimes conflicting interpretations of such legendary, but rarely seen, films as *The Mad Masters*, *Chronicle of a Summer* and *Moi, Un Noir*. **Rouch in Reverse** is must viewing for anyone concerned with the role of race and cultural bias in film and the social sciences.

"Opens a new frontier of scholarly exploration...Transforms the colonizing 'gaze' into the object of its own rancor-free inquiry."
—Sylvia Winter, Stanford University

"A witty and insightful portrait of one of the most controversial figures in film and anthropology as well as a creative meditation on post-colonial representation itself."
—Christopher L. Miller, Yale University

Producer/Director: Manthia Diawara
50 minutes, 1996
Video Rental: $75
Video Sale: $195

MEDIA LITERACY: THE NEW BASIC

Media Literacy: The New Basic has been designed as a media literacy "start-up kit." In addition to this 56 minute public television documentary, the package includes, at no extra charge, a video of a two-hour national teleconference on media literacy featuring U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley as well as a study guide for launching the media literacy movement in your school district, city or state.

Media Literacy: The New Basic introduces one of the fastest growing and most urgently needed movements in American education. In this latest release from the makers of the acclaimed *On Television* series (page 7), teachers, parents, industry insiders and critics argue that media education must become the core curriculum for the Information Age - and show how it can be done. But it is the students themselves, who offer the most impressive proof that media literacy's time has come. As an 11 year old from Brooklyn says, "Viewers are going to see kids who understand TV, who can see right through it."

Narrator John Merrow, an educator and journalist, reminds us that, for better or worse, media have become the primary means by which Americans receive information and ideas. Elementary school kids describe television as "my best friend" and "a member of the family." Clips from teen programming confirm Rutgers professors Benjamin Barber and Robert Kubey's warning that television has become "a rival education system" teaching buying, selling and greed.

Television senior statesmen Walter Cronkite and Hugh Downs believe that understanding how - and why - the media works is essential training for any citizen of the electronic world. All Americans, they predict, will need to know how both to "read *and* write" the media if they are to have equal access to the Information Superhighway.

But what is media literacy? The program shows students practicing its four tenets: access, analysis, evaluation and production of media. Teacher trainer David Considine explains that it's not just learning the grammar and syntax of media, but also deciphering the motivations and assumptions behind them. Teachers demonstrate how media literacy can be integrated across existing curricula, bringing the "old basics" into the multi-media future.

New Jersey English teacher Ellen Krueger uses prime-time series to teach composition and analysis. In a Brooklyn social studies class, students produce a public service announcement on conflict resolution. At an on-going Middletown, NY project, students learn about science, composition, and government by producing a documentary exposing hazardous waste at a local landfill.

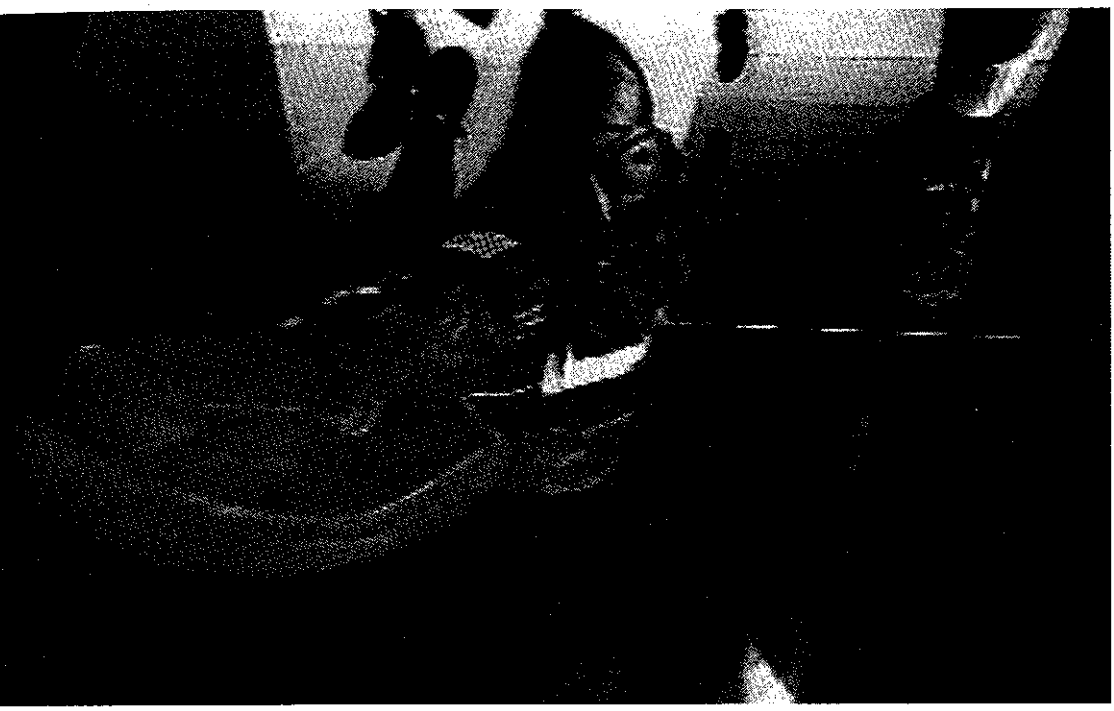
In **Media Literacy: The New Basic**, educators and advocates like Renee Hobbs, Kathryn Montgomery and Elizabeth Thoman share their experiences organizing grassroots media education campaigns for school districts. D. D. Downs tells how she brought together a coalition of New Mexico teachers, government leaders and media professionals to win a state-wide commitment to media literacy. In concluding, John Merrow challenges the viewer, "Are you going to participate in programming the media or are you going to let the media program you?"

Producer: The On Television Project at Rutgers University
Director/Writer: Mary Megee
Media Literacy Movement Start-Up Kit: 56 minute videocassette, plus 2-hour teleconference video and study guide
Video Rental: $95
Video Sale: $195

Available 11-15-96

ON TELEVISION

On Television is one of the most ambitious media education projects every undertaken, a proposed 13-part series exploring the impact of television across virtually every aspect of American life.



The fourth part, **Media Literacy: The New Basic**, has just been completed (page 6) and we are taking this occasion to re-release all three previous segments as a single selection - at half their original price!

On-Television: Teach the Children (1992) explores the effect of the nation's most ubiquitous technology - television - on its most important resource - our children. It was designed to help parents, teachers and students analyze the "curriculum" TV teaches children for more hours than they spend in school. Scholars and activists, including Peggy Charen, George Gerbner and Jerome and Dorothy Singer explore the research linking television to more aggressive behavior and lessened cognitive ability in children. Vice-president Al Gore concludes: "We're strip-mining our children's minds and we're doing it for commercial profit, without any concern for the consequences on them or our society."

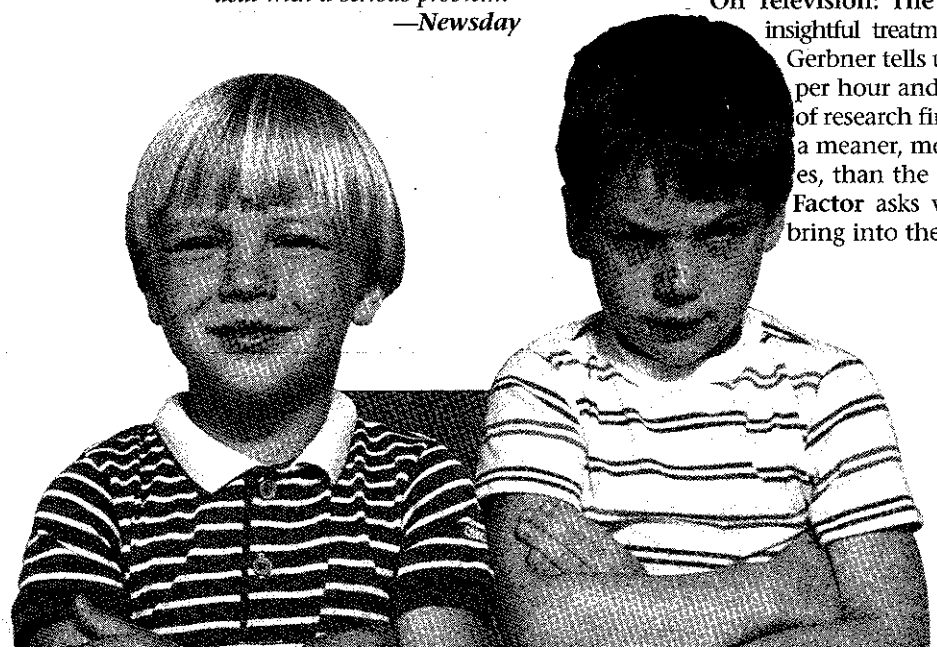
"On Television *lays out the issues clearly and strongly...*"
—Bill Moyers

"A comprehensive presentation useful to citizens and professionals concerned with improving children's television."
—Aletha Huston, University of Texas

"Not only frames the debate but shows how viewers can participate...A serious effort to deal with a serious problem."
—Newsday

On Television: Public Trust or Private Property (1988) traces current conflicts over the social impact of television back over fifty years of U.S. telecommunications policy debate, beginning with the 1934 Communications Act. Former FCC Commissioner Mark Fowler and the heads of CBS, NBC and ABC all assert that "the public interest is what interests the public." Media reformers Henry Geller, Ralph Nader and Fred Friendly counter that the airwaves are a valuable public resource which must be used for more than selling soapflakes. These competing claims are examined through several landmark case studies including the successful 1963 license challenge of a racist Jackson, Mississippi station and a 1984 test of the Fairness Doctrine over a Syracuse, New York station's coverage of a nuclear power controversy.

On Television: The Violence Factor (1984) remains the most balanced and insightful treatment of the impact of television violence on society. George Gerbner tells us that prime time programming averages eight hostile acts per hour and children's shows four times as many. He reviews 30 years of research finding that "heavy users" of television perceive the world as a meaner, more dangerous place, requiring more authoritarian responses, than the norm. Rather than recommend censorship, **The Violence Factor** asks viewers to be more selective about the experiences they bring into their living rooms each night via television.



Producer: On Television Limited
Director: Mary Megee
three cassettes, 57 minutes each, not available separately
(A Teacher's Guide to *Teach the Children* is included with all purchases at no charge)
Video Rental: $95
Video Sale: $195

The core video collection for journalism, media literacy and mass communications

TO ORDER:
RESOLUTION INC. / CALIFORNIA NEWSREEL
149 Ninth Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 621-6196

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit # 11246
San Francisco, CA