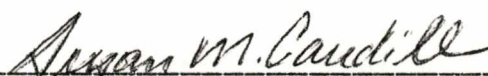


To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Shyrl Linda Plum entitled "Channel One: A Case Study of the Controversial Introduction of Commercially Sponsored Educational Programming." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Communications.



Susan M. Caudill, Major Professor

We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:





Accepted for the Council:



Vice Provost
and Dean of The Graduate School

+

CHANNEL ONE: A CASE STUDY OF THE
CONTROVERSIAL INTRODUCTION OF
COMMERCIALLY SPONSORED EDUCATIONAL
PROGRAMMING

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Science

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Shyrl Linda Plum

May 1991

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DEDICATION
TO MY FATHER

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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I hereby acknowledge with thanks the permission granted by Whittle Communications to reproduce its promotional materials.

The author is especially grateful to her family for their support.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine why Channel One, a commercially sponsored news and information program for teenagers that is produced by Whittle Communications of Knoxville, Tennessee and delivered via satellite to schools nationwide, was developed and to investigate the plan that Whittle Communications used to introduce Channel One to the public. The study also explored the policy-influencing groups that were opposed to Channel One and the reasons for their opposition, and examined the company's response to the adverse publicity generated by the program.

The thesis was based primarily on interviews with Whittle Communications personnel and on reports of the project that appeared in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Knoxville Journal, and The Knoxville News-Sentinel.

The study revealed that, because the company had an inadequate plan for introducing Channel One, vehement opposition by policy-influencing groups coincided with media coverage of the project. It also showed that the tactics used by Whittle Communications to respond to the adverse publicity about Channel One and to accommodate public sentiment toward it were sufficient to make the project profitable for the company and successful for at least the three-year period stipulated in the contracts signed by school administrators and advertisers.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The debate over the quality of American education has raged for years and promises to continue into the 1990s as employers search for qualified applicants to fill positions, school systems devise innovative ways to attract and keep teachers, federal funding for public schools decreases, Student Aptitude Test (SAT) scores decline, and American students lag behind most of their international counterparts.

Recent reductions in federal spending for education have resulted in the curtailment of educational programs and services and in increases in local property and state taxes. The trend toward decentralization of the nation's public schools, which places more control of education at the local level, has shifted the responsibility for school improvement and its concurrent financing from the federal government to local taxpayers.

The introduction of new technology in our public schools is one way of enhancing the educational experience for students, but rising costs and declining budgets prevent many schools from investing in it.

As part of his "thousand points of light" election campaign, then-Vice President Bush challenged the business community to come to the aid of the nation's public schools. Although business-

education partnerships have existed for some time, business leaders are now increasingly underwriting the costs of educational training, materials, equipment, and programs in their states and communities.

In March 1990, following a pilot program that was conducted a year earlier, Knoxville, Tennessee-based Whittle Communications presented its contribution to the national school improvement effort. The Whittle Educational Network offered Channel One, a daily 12-minute news and information television program, and The Classroom Channel, a series of supplemental programs designed to support existing curricula. Both are delivered to schools via satellite. In exchange for students viewing two minutes of commercials contained in each program, each participating school receives new technology in the form of a satellite dish, VCRs, and color video monitors. The Educators' Channel, devoted to the professional development of educators, became available to users in the fall of 1990. Installation and maintenance of the hardware and all three channels are provided at no charge to the schools.

Schools participating in the Whittle Educational Network are encouraged to use the equipment for other educational purposes, such as aggregate viewing of important events and the development of original programming within a school or district. Teachers may use the equipment to receive any programs offered on broadcast or cable television that they wish to include in their curricula. The technology allows educators to witness local, state, or national

meetings or events on the monitors that are available in their classrooms.

Statement of the Problem

Media reports of Whittle Communications' nationwide effort to provide schools with educational programming supported by commercial advertisements focused on the commercial aspects of the project and diverted attention from its virtues. The purpose of this case study is to determine how and why Channel One came into being; to examine Whittle Communications' plan for introducing Channel One to the public; to explore the opposition to Channel One by policy-influencing groups; and to examine Whittle Communications' response to the adverse publicity that was generated by Channel One.

In studying the introduction of Channel One, several questions will be addressed:

- (1) Why was Channel One developed?
- (2) Did Whittle Communications have a targeted, timed action plan for introducing Channel One to the the nation's schools?
- (3) Did Whittle Communications' plan stem from a marketing or a public relations orientation, a mix of the two, or neither?
- (4) How did presenting Channel One to the media before offering it to the schools affect its acceptance by educators?
- (5) What role did policy-influencing groups play in the acceptance of Channel One?

(6) What steps did Whittle Communications take to influence public perception of Channel One?

Whittle Communications' provision of educational programming supported by commercial advertisements is one approach to the problem of getting new technology into the nation's public schools at no cost to the schools. Because other business-education partnerships involving commercially sponsored educational materials will undoubtedly surface in the future, the process by which Channel One gained acceptance by the nation's schools is worthy of evaluation.

Background

Now recognized by the media industry as one of the most successful and innovative companies in the country, Whittle Communications started out as a publishing company founded by five University of Tennessee graduates in 1970. Based in Knoxville, Tennessee, the company was formerly named the 13-30 Corporation to reflect the age of its publications' readers. The company gained prominence in the publishing industry for its philosophy of specialization or tailoring its magazines to a specific concept and audience. It developed controlled-circulation periodicals that are distributed to a well-defined audience and print specials, in which all of the ads contained in a particular issue are purchased by an exclusive advertiser (Cook, 1983).

With the acquisition of Esquire in 1979, the company became the 13-30 Group. In 1983 the magazine celebrated its 50th anniversary and made its first profit in 13 years. This success earned founders Chris Whittle and Phillip Moffitt Adweek honors as magazine entrepreneurs of the year for 1983 (Whittle Communications, 1990k).

The company split in July of 1986, with Moffitt taking Esquire and Whittle converting 13-30 to Whittle Communications, a limited partnership owned by two general partners: Chris Whittle and Associated Newspaper Holdings of London (Whittle Communications, 1990k).

In October 1988, media giant Time, Inc. purchased 50% of Whittle Communications and acquired one half of the interests owned by Chris Whittle, Associated Newspaper Holdings, and the limited partners. Chris Whittle controls all of the company's operations (Whittle Communications, 1990k).

Whittle Communications produces three publications that are targeted to students and distributed to schools nationwide:
Connections, a wall poster that is displayed in more than 5,000 high schools; The Big Picture, a wall poster that is displayed in 7,500 elementary schools; and GO! (Girls Only!), a magazine for junior high school girls (Cook, 1983).

According to Whittle, the company conducted a focus group with teachers in Knoxville on one of its print properties in the fall of 1987. At this meeting, teachers voiced concern about the decline

in students' knowledge of current events and suggested that a program similar to the "Today" show, a morning television program that provides condensed news and entertainment reports, was needed for teen-agers. About a year later the company asked teachers what they thought of a daily news and information program that could be delivered to schools via satellite. It learned that the schools did not have the technology in place to receive it and could not afford to pay for the program. Channel One was then developed to include two minutes of commercials that would pay for the news program; equipment, including a satellite dish, VCRs, and color video monitors for each classroom; service and maintenance of the equipment; and future auxiliary services (Whittle,1990).

Channel One aired in six pilot schools across the country in March 1989. By November 1990 more than 5,700 schools with an audience of 3.8 million students were committed to receive Channel One. Whittle Communications predicts that six and one-half million students will view Channel One by June 1991 (Jarrard, 1990), thereby delivering to its advertisers a specific, highly defined audience that is larger than that of any network program or targeted medium, such as MTV.

The introduction of Channel One to the nation's schools met with opposition from several national organizations representing teachers and administrators, a number of state departments of education that barred its viewing in their schools, and numerous

other groups, including the National Parent Teacher Association and Action for Children's Television (ACT).

The major controversy erupted over the fact that Channel One contained two minutes of commercials. Critics called it a Trojan horse, since the gift of equipment followed a school's commitment to show the programs and the commercial messages to most students. Although a significant portion of the policy-influencing educational community was opposed to Channel One, an independent Roper poll and Gallup polls commissioned by Whittle Communications suggested that parents, nonparents, and students were interested in having Channel One and its commercials shown in their high schools.

The concept of commercially sponsored educational programming evolved from four basic societal developments in the United States:

- (1) Increasingly poor educational performance by the nation's students, which has been widely reported in the media.

- (2) The development of satellite technology and the use of VCRs in the classroom to supplement textbook lessons with broadcast and prerecorded television programs.

- (3) Reduced funding for schools. Reductions in federal funds have caused U.S. school districts to be more reliant on state revenues and local property taxes to pay for their programs and services, causing educational inequities in some areas. Many schools do not have the funds available to invest in new technology.

(4) The rise of business-education partnerships. At one time the extent of local business contributions to education consisted of the provision of co-op job opportunities to vocational and business students, while some major corporations sponsored films used in class. Today it is not unusual for a business to underwrite the cost of educational materials, such as newspapers, or to donate equipment, such as computers. In fact, the government encourages such involvement (Bacon, 1990a).

Channel One is a business-education partnership designed to make a profit for Whittle Communications and to provide news and information to high school and middle school students. It makes it possible for any school, regardless of its level of funding, to use new technology to increase student awareness and discussion of current events. But many school systems are questioning the propriety of requiring their students to view commercials in the classroom.

No shit ÷

Methodology

Primary data for this study were obtained by interviewing six managers at Whittle Communications who were responsible for the development and implementation of Channel One. Media coverage of the introduction of Channel One also was reviewed to formulate questions and to cross check and clarify the information obtained in the interviews. Additionally, documents supplied by Whittle Communications executives concerning Channel One's

implementation and promotion were used in this study. These documents included brochures, press kits, polls, news releases, speeches, and sales support materials.

Interviews with managers at Whittle Communications were facilitated by the company's location in Knoxville and the support offered by those asked to participate in the study. Decision makers involved in the introduction of Channel One who were selected for interviews included Jim Ritts, executive vice president; Dave Southard, vice president, field sales; Tom Ingram, executive vice president, corporate communications; David Jarrard, director of government relations and special projects; Mike McAllister, president, field systems; and Ed Winter, president, Whittle Educational Network. Information that was presented in a broadcast interview with Bill Gubbins, director of new concepts, and shown on public access television in Knoxville, also was included, as were comments made by Chris Whittle in a speech given at a meeting of the local chapter of the National Marketing Association at TVA. Mr. Whittle declined to participate directly in this project.

Questions presented during the personal interviews were derived from an examination of media and trade publications' coverage of Channel One's introduction. This study was limited to the coverage that appeared from January 16, 1989, when the story first broke in the press, to two weeks after the official launch of Channel One on March 5, 1990 in 400 schools. It was during this critical period that most arguments, both pro and con, surfaced. A

thematic analysis was made of the interview transcripts and the results were applied to the appropriate research questions.

Media coverage reviewed for this study included The New York Times, a national agenda-setting newspaper, The Wall Street Journal, a national agenda-setting newspaper in the business community, and The Knoxville News-Sentinel and The Knoxville Journal, newspapers published in Knoxville.

The information obtained from the interviews with Whittle Communications personnel and from the media publications was used to construct a time line of Channel One promotional activity and public response (see Appendix A). This time line was used to illustrate the reaction of various publics to Channel One and to document the strategic changes that were made by Whittle Communications to accommodate public sentiment.

This thesis is divided into six chapters. The introduction places Channel One in perspective in today's educational environment and includes an explanation of the study's methodology. A review of relevant literature is offered in Chapter II. Chapter III explores the reasons for Channel One's creation, how the concept was developed, and Whittle Communications' plan for introducing Channel One to the public. Chapter IV examines the opposition to Channel One and Whittle Communications' response to the adverse publicity generated by the project. Insiders' perceptions of the Channel One campaign are given in Chapter V. The conclusions presented in Chapter VI summarize and interpret the findings.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In marketing news and information broadcast programming to schools, Whittle Communications is unique in that Channel One is the only vehicle that involves commercial sponsors. Although no comparable studies were available, several relevant studies were found helpful in preparing this thesis.

This review covers the literature found in four pertinent and often overlapping areas:

- (1) that which documents the public's perception of declining school performance;
- (2) that which addresses reduced funding for schools;
- (3) that which discusses the use of instructional television and new technology in schools;
- (4) that which illustrates the trend toward an increase in the formation of business-education partnerships.

Public Perception of School Performance

The perception that American schools were failing to properly educate the nation's youth was fueled in 1955 with the publication of Flesch's Why Johnny Can't Read. Flesch rejected the widely used "look and say" system of teaching reading in American public schools in favor of a phonics approach. In 1981 Flesch published Why Johnny

Still Can't Read, which noted that, after twenty-five years, an estimated 85% of schools were still using the "look and say" approach. This book was written to call attention to a problem already well documented by statistics on illiteracy and declining reading achievement. It is but one example of how inducing change in a public institution can be a lengthy and arduous process, even when reforms are perceived to be necessary.

A Nation at Risk (1983) was released by the National Commission on Excellence in Education (NCEE) in response to then-Secretary of Education T.H. Bell's concern about "the widespread public perception that something is seriously remiss in our educational system" (NCEE, 1983, p. 1). The Commission concluded that "the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people" (NCEE, 1983, p. 5). In reporting on the quality of American education, it cited indicators such as high illiteracy rates, declining SAT scores, and business and military expenditures for costly remedial education and training programs.

Citing a 1982 Gallup poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools, the Commission noted that the public believed education to be the major foundation for the future strength of our country, that it is "extremely important" for one's future success, and that it should be the top priority for additional federal funds. It issued recommendations in the areas of content, standards and expectations, time, teaching, leadership, and fiscal support.

In 1987 two best sellers again focused national attention on the state of education in the United States. The Closing of the American Mind by Allan Bloom of the University of Chicago, and Cultural Literacy by E.D. Hirsch of the University of Virginia, engaged the nation in a renewed debate over the quality of American education.

This time reading was not the main issue. Hirsch claimed that the failure of the schools to teach the unifying facts, values, and writings of Western culture had created a generation of cultural illiterates. He cited a 1985 study by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), which found that two-thirds of the seventeen-year-olds tested could not place the Civil War in the correct half century; three-fourths could not identify Walt Whitman or Carl Sandburg; and one-half of the high school seniors could not recognize the names of Winston Churchill or Joseph Stalin.

Hirsch also expressed concern about disadvantaged students who might not get adequate training at home and would need to get it from school. His book contained an appendix of approximately 5,000 items representing Western cultural lore that he recommended every literate American should know.

Bacon (1990b) reported that NAEP test results in 1988, a presidential election year, supported Hirsch's claims. They indicated that high school seniors lacked basic knowledge about U.S. government and history. Only 57% of the nation's twelfth graders knew that presidential candidates are nominated by national

conventions, and only 51% knew that the U.S. Constitution guarantees religious freedom.

Reduced Funding

Reduced funding is another problem faced by the nation's schools that had an impact on the acceptance of Channel One.

Ravitch (1985) asserted that the federal government must play a major role in education by assuring the quality and equality of educational opportunity. She advocated federal policies designed to address local needs; expanded funding of educational research and information in order to keep policymakers, educators, and citizens well informed; and financial assistance for school districts that are inundated by immigrant children.

Bacon (1990a) reported that the National Governors Association had developed national education goals in response to widespread dissatisfaction with the nation's schools, but noted that critics doubted that the Bush administration would produce the funds necessary for their implementation. Of the \$350 billion spent annually on education, federal spending accounted for only about 6%, leaving state and local governments responsible for the balance.

According to the governors, the federal government's main responsibilities are to provide preschool preparation for the disadvantaged through the Head Start program; ensure equal educational opportunities for poor and disabled students; finance

access to higher education; and conduct research programs to measure progress toward the national goals until the year 2000.

Bacon reported that both the White House and the governors supported increased business participation in school improvement programs. He noted that the Business Roundtable, comprised of leaders of more than 200 of the nation's largest corporations, had pledged to work with states to make improvements in their school systems.

Use of Instructional Television (ITV) and New Technology

Because Channel One is shown on classroom televisions and delivered to schools via satellite, an examination of teachers' use of instructional television and new technology aids understanding of the Channel One adoption process.

Kohl's (1966) study assumed that a school superintendent makes the decision to adopt an innovation. He examined the response of 58 superintendents of first class school districts in Oregon during the academic year 1963-64.

Kohl analyzed five independent variables which are often considered in assessing an educational program and which had been postulated by other researchers as indicative of changeability.

These variables were:

- (1) type of grade organization in the high school;
- (2) classification of the high school district;
- (3) percentage of students enrolled in grade twelve;

(4) percentage of graduating seniors receiving some type of post high school education;

(5) per pupil expenditure, including transportation costs and capital improvements.

Use of instructional television was one of the innovations studied.

Results indicated that no significant relationship existed between the adoption of instructional television and organizational pattern, district classification, students receiving post high school education, expenditure per student, and size of the graduating class. Only the size of the graduating class variable was definitely related to a degree greater than chance at the .05 level of confidence. The use of instructional television was the single innovation under study that failed to be related to school size.

Kohl suggested that the use of instructional television was not related to the size of the school because the Oregon schools in the study had to be located within receiving distance of the television station. As a result, many school districts of a size to support the use of instructional television were unable to do so because of poor reception.

Kohl's study found that unified school systems had adopted a higher percentage of each of the innovations, including instructional television, than union high schools. Contrary to Mort's study in 1953 that found per pupil expenditure to be highly predictive of adaptability (Rogers, 1983, p.63), Kohl noted that in the case of each

of the innovations, the median expenditure category had the highest percentage of adoption.

The first in-depth nationwide study of the extent to which television is used in elementary and secondary schools was conducted by Dirr and Pedone (1979). They used the term instructional television (ITV) to refer to any in-school uses of television, either broadcast or recorded, for instructional purposes.

Results indicated that approximately 72% of all teachers had ITV programming available for use with their classes. Of that number, approximately 59% used ITV in 1976-77 and 46% used one or more series regularly. Approximately 15 million students received a regular portion of their instructional program from ITV in 1976-77. Use was proportionally higher in the elementary grades (41%) than in the senior high school grades (21%) or the middle/junior high school grades (24%).

Sources of programming differed by school level. Senior high school teachers reported more reliance on videotape as a source of programs (71%). For all groups, direct off-air reception from local public television stations was reported more often (58%) as a source of programming than videotape (37%), commercial television (26%), and cable television (15%).

Use of ITV was facilitated by the fact that students like ITV, the educational value of the programs, and easy access to reliable equipment. Factors that most often constrained the use of ITV

included the inconvenience of rigid broadcast schedules and lack of availability of appropriate programs.

Television sets were usually available in schools where ITV programming was available, although about two-thirds of those sets were black and white. Ninety percent of the teachers who had access to television sets reported them as available and in generally good repair. Although the sets were usually stored in classrooms in elementary schools, high schools most often stored them in central locations.

Where ITV programming was available, 55% of the teachers had a videotape recorder in their schools. VCRs were used twice as frequently to record off-the-air programs as to play prerecorded programs acquired from local, district, regional, or state videotape libraries. The study found that 81% of school districts with ITV had no policy for replacement of equipment and that someone assumed district-wide responsibility for ITV in 46% of all districts where ITV was available.

Dirr and Pedone's study found that educators had generally favorable attitudes toward ITV. In general, administrators were found to encourage the use of ITV and to leave the final decision to the discretion of the teacher. Teachers, principals, and superintendents agreed that ITV's potential uses were to bring new resources and/or persons to the classroom, to provide different approaches for presenting materials, to present new material, and to reinforce material taught in other lessons. The study found that

teachers with training in the use of ITV were slightly more positive toward ITV and tended to use television more in their classrooms than teachers without training.

The study found that the availability of ITV programming seemed to be related to both wealth and size of the district. More of the very wealthy districts (as measured by per pupil expenditure) tended to have ITV programming available than the very poor districts. It was more likely that ITV would be available in very large districts (25,000 or more students) than in very small districts (fewer than 2,500 students).

Keller and Johnson (1982) examined the utilization of ITV in 200 schools in Maryland. They concluded that the extent of a teacher's use of ITV was largely explained by that teacher's past and present disposition toward the medium. They found ITV users to be those who had used it in the past and who would use it more if conditions were right. Users also tended to see a variety of positive outcomes from integrating the technology with their teaching. Keller and Johnson found that less experienced teachers used ITV more than experienced teachers and that the effect of ITV training did not manifest itself in any of the groups studied.

Jones and Wall (1987) replicated the Johnson and Keller study in order to assess the more current status of ITV utilization in the public schools of Maryland and to compare this usage with the earlier study. They concluded that elementary teachers continued to be the heaviest users and supporters of ITV, but reported positive

attitudes toward the contributions of ITV to the instructional process by teachers at all levels. Few teachers felt that ITV was used too much by other teachers. Positive student outcomes from ITV use reported by teachers included expanded knowledge, expanded vocabulary, and students' follow-up of ideas expressed on ITV. Teachers felt that ITV was useful to all students, not just to those in specialized groups such as high or low ability.

The increased use of television in public schools for instruction has been attributed to new communications technology, attempts to make education more equitable, and widespread use of VCRs (Putka 1989b). The federal Office of Technology Assessment found in 1989 that video courses with a two-way hookup between teacher and students, called distance-learning, were operating or planned in all 50 states. In 1988-89, 350 distance-learning courses were offered in the United States in grades 12 and below via satellite or other telecommunications links.

Putka reported that in spite of four large satellite networks that have targeted schools since 1984, the Public Broadcasting Service's offerings remained the largest source of educational programs in the classroom. Limitations once imposed on its service have been removed by the flexible taping and replaying afforded by VCRs, and PBS has facilitated program use by tailoring delivery to schools and sending more convenient block feeds of entire series. Schools are also using more cable television programs because they involve fewer copyright restrictions than network or PBS programs.

New technology can enhance the educational experience in a number of ways. Administrators, teachers, and staff have become dependent on computers to perform such tasks as storing vital information; tracking attendance; publishing school memos, notes, and newsletters; maintaining inventories of books, equipment, and supplies; communicating via electronic bulletin boards; keeping track of grades; and downloading programs needed by faculty. New technology exposes students to experiences as varied as composing music using a synthesizer connected to a computer; entering reviews of books on a library computer database; teleconferencing with others; videotaping messages for pen pals in other states; producing student programs; and viewing objects under a binocular microscope on a regular television screen (Wile, 1987).

Business-Education Partnerships

Useem (1986) discussed the development of new technology and its limited availability in the nation's public schools. She attributed the decline in the American educational system to a combination of factors, including fiscal austerity, decreasing enrollments, and deteriorating standards of student performance. She advocated increased business participation in education.

Useem declared that although some elements of the public fear that some companies may become too influential in certain aspects of education, the greater danger is found in corporate indifference to

education. She noted that the need for corporate support of education far exceeds the help currently being supplied.

Useem also attributed the deteriorating quality of American schooling to a decline in achievement levels from the early 1960s to the early 1980s, a drop in enrollment after the early 1970s, and a reduction in teacher quality and funding levels beginning in the late 1970s. She noted that schools focused attention on managing reduced enrollments and budgets instead of on improving academic curricula. Periodic downturns in revenues and heavier social spending increased the financial burden on the states.

According to Useem, to simply implement the changes recommended by the NCEE's A Nation at Risk (1983), one of many studies conducted by government, business, and educational administrators, would cost between \$14 and \$24 billion annually. Business-education partnerships present an alternative in the absence of adequate federal, state, and local funding.

Levine and Trachtman (1988) presented the results of seven case studies of corporate involvement in public education. They stated that although the needs of the business community and the goals of public education are converging, there are some who view the interference of the business community in the substance of the curriculum as self-serving.

The authors offered a list of lessons learned from their examination of effective business-education partnerships. From this list, the following observations are relevant to this study:

(1) Strategically plan partnerships by stating clearly identified goals that take into account the realities of each situation.

(2) Consensus should not be at the expense of the partners' need to see something in it for themselves.

(3) Policy involvement and programs requiring substantial resources are often done cooperatively with other companies.

(4) Projects requiring substantial intricate involvement across sectors often benefit from a linking organization.

(5) The companies understand the nature and depth of the problems and issues in education.

(6) Effective partnerships take time.

(7) Companies can state why they are involved.

(8) Collaboratives are characterized by awareness, sensitivity, and an effort by the partners to know each other.

(9) Leaders in both sectors are aware of the conflicts that may arise.

(10) Acting together is the only way many companies are willing to deal with controversial issues.

(11) Each corporation has a clear notion of what it has at stake and why quality schooling is important to its central purposes.

Levine and Trachtman found that the teachers, administrators, and business people involved in their case studies were serious about the need to improve the quality of American education and

were actively engaged in finding ways to work together to make effective changes.

According to Whitmore (1988) cultural literacy is not the main issue, because 20% of America's adult population cannot read and even more lack the ability to learn. She advocated the development of meaningful work experiences in conjunction with school curricula that would shift the focus from the teaching environment to the motivation to learn. Whitmore stated that involvement of business leaders and others in the community is critical in order to supply needed role models, mentors, and support systems.

Griffin (1989) advocated abandoning the traditional barriers to school partnerships and establishing joint ventures that put companies and schools into long-term relationships. Joint ventures would stress shared responsibility and investment, along with equal return. Both parties would benefit from the partnership and thereby ensure its survival. Since education is essential to productivity, joint ventures could provide increased enrollment and better relationships with the business world to educational institutions and increased productivity through education to employers.

Muller (1968) warned the public about the danger of allowing big business and big government to exert too much control over the public schools. He noted that both the federal and state governments had become major sources of funds for local school systems. He feared that expensive new technology would cause business and government to join together to create a program that would be

imposed on all school systems and that would have the effect of abolishing local autonomy. He stated that public awareness of this possibility, business competition, and the diversity of the educational systems, governments, and businesses involved would help to guard against such an imposition. Muller suggested that early positive participation on the part of educators in the use of new technologies would help to deter control by government and business.

Molnar (1990) also cautioned educators to beware of corporations bearing gifts for schools. He noted that business became more involved in education in the 1980s, believing that failing schools were a threat to the nation's economy. Business involvement involved tutoring students, advising administrators, training teachers, adopting schools, and donating equipment. Molnar emphasized that the interests of business and education are quite different in that a business is responsible to its owners while the public schools belong to everyone. He also observed that business contributions to schools are mostly tax-deductible and that business people control educational policy making at all levels of educational administration.

Molnar suggested that corporate involvement in education threatens to undermine the power of the state in order to promote private gain. Damage to the educational process can result from emphasizing a business' version of capitalism at the expense of teaching about other economic systems; using materials that

represent the corporate view of issues, such as health and energy in lieu of an objective curriculum; and marketing products and services and promoting brand identification and product loyalty by creating educational associations, such as anti-drug posters that advertise products.

This review has discussed the literature that concerns certain trends in education such as public perception of declining school performance, reduced funding for public school programs and services, positive educator attitudes towards the use of instructional television and new technology, and the formation of business-education partnerships.

Although these trends helped to create an opportune environment for the introduction of Channel One, its acceptance was hindered by media reports of the project's commercial aspects and by policy-influencing groups who opposed the use of commercially sponsored programming in the nation's public schools.

This case study will document the evolution of the business-education partnership known as Channel One from its inception to its launch; evaluate the plan Whittle Communications executed for its introduction; examine the opposition Channel One encountered; and explore Whittle Communications' response to adverse publicity, in gaining acceptance of Channel One.

CHAPTER III

THE ORIGIN OF THE CHANNEL ONE CAMPAIGN

This chapter will explore the reasons why Channel One was created, how the concept was developed, and Whittle Communications' plan for introducing Channel One to the public.

Concept Development

Prior to the inception of Channel One, Whittle Communications conducted focus groups with educators to evaluate the print materials that it distributed to schools. In addition to providing valuable feedback on its current properties, these focus groups also allowed the company to monitor the needs and desires of teachers and to ascertain educational trends. Whittle Communications' director of new concepts Bill Gubbins explained:

We sat down with some groups of teachers, principals, and administrators and talked to them about what their needs were. And one of the things that we heard very quickly was a concern on their part for what they saw as a deterioration in the current events awareness of today's young people. They felt stymied that they had no way of dealing with this and they also felt that this was probably best handled in video rather than in print, because there was already access to news publications and things like that and it just didn't have the impact that they felt it should. So our first pass at something was a weekly current events program, a kind of "Week in Review," that we would do on videotape and send to individual schools (Gubbins, 1990).

The concept of a weekly current events program was presented to teachers from Farragut and Bearden schools in Knoxville at a focus group conducted in the fall of 1987. Ed Winter, president of the Whittle Educational Network, said:

We do research about once a year with teachers. It's kind of for idea development. We went into this discussion with about, I guess there were fifteen or sixteen teachers of junior and senior high school. . . . Bill Gubbins and I were leading this group in this big table discussion and we had Connections, our wall media, up in the room and Big Picture, our elementary school [property], and I was on a mission to develop new ideas in schools as the division president. And we went into that discussion trying to see if junior high school wall media was a good idea. . . . We had just done an issue [of] Connections [that] the teachers had responded to, that had something to do with world news, social issues, political unrest, or whatever, and one of the teachers commented to us that "Maybe what you ought to be thinking about is Connections and television. Maybe a Connections news show." And we were just kind of stunned. Another [teacher] jumped in and said, "Maybe what's needed is a 'Today' show. I just watched the 'Today' show this morning and I learned this, this, and this. Maybe we need a 'Today' show in homeroom." I turned around to Bill Gubbins and I went, "That is a brilliant idea. A 'Today' show for teen-agers in homeroom. That's incredible" (Winter, 1990).

Although the teachers at this meeting and the Whittle personnel were enthusiastic about the idea, the teachers quickly made it known that their schools lacked sufficient equipment to fully utilize such a program.

It was at that point that it dawned on us, and it probably should have a little bit earlier, that schools today across the board, whether they're in cities or in the country, regardless of the socio-economics of the community, really don't have enough televisions, VCRs, and technology to go around. I think that was the key moment when Ed [Winter] and I realized that whatever we were going to do had to include both the software, the programming if you will, as well as the hardware. And the key innovation in the idea is that we supply the schools with the complete package (Gubbins, 1990).

About a week later, Winter presented the concept of a news show for teen-agers to chairman Chris Whittle during a business retreat in Vermont (Winter, 1990).

I said, "Chris, let me throw out a notion," because we separate notion from concept to business plan, and I said, "Let me give you a notion that a teacher gave us." And I could see Chris' eyes go, "A 'Today' show in homerooms," and he went, "That's incredible. That's it." And he said very quickly, "How would we deliver it?" He said, "Well, we could produce a one-hour show [and] mail it in on videotape. [But] just look at the Federal Express charge and everything--we couldn't afford it. Do they have equipment?" And then he said, "What if we gave them the equipment, too?" And he jumped it all the way to "Here's the big idea: if they really need the news and these teachers are right, then if we provided the equipment and that, we'd have a big idea". . . . So we kept playing with the idea and we went back and started doing research with teachers again: one-on-one interviews, focus groups, about [whether it] was a good idea (Winter, 1990).

Within a couple of weeks of the Vermont meeting, a research and development team was assigned to the idea. After spending a year on the project, the company devised a plan to offer a daily news program for teen-agers that would be delivered to schools via

satellite and could be watched each day in classrooms by the students (Whittle, 1990). The research had included travel to schools to examine existing technology, a survey of 500 school superintendents, and dialogue with teachers in Knoxville and other cities (Bond, 1989b, p. A8). It revealed that educators were convinced of the importance of exposing their students to more news and current events information. "Everybody agreed right off the bat, because there was a lot of press at the time about cultural literacy and geography. It was a pretty hot topic" (Winter, 1990).

In October of 1988, Whittle discussed the use of commercially sponsored educational materials in a speech to the East Tennessee Education Association. He discussed the decline in productivity of American workers, the distressing state of our schools, the importance of business-education partnerships, and the need for high-tech teaching aids, such as computers, more current forms of print, and "television that teaches" (Whittle, 1988).

After noting that American businesses spent \$100 billion on television, radio, newspaper, and magazine advertising in 1987, Whittle stated, "But God forbid that we allow the same sponsors to bring equally vital information to our schools" (Whittle, 1988). Foreshadowing the Channel One project, he remarked that some states prohibit school advertising and suggested that advertising dollars could prevent teachers from having to "stand in line to borrow the school's only television" (Whittle, 1988). Whittle referred to this type of business-education partnership as

"enlightened commercialism" and asked that "the country with the world's most impressive communications and entertainment industry use those resources where it counts. In the classroom" (Whittle, 1988).

Whittle received a standing ovation for this speech. Afterwards, it was erroneously reported that Whittle Communications was planning to introduce advertisements in textbooks (Jarrard, 1990).

The company decided to proceed "full speed ahead on [Channel One]" in the fall of 1988 (Gubbins, 1990). Dave Southard, vice president, field sales, noted that even some insiders were skeptical about the project:

My role started in November of '88. We knew Channel One was going on in this building, and we thought it was ridiculous--that as a business you can't do that. It's too expensive. Here we were a \$150 million company, and we needed that much just to buy equipment. So we just sort of looked at it and enjoyed it and smirked a lot. And then I got a call in November saying, "It's time to get some pilot schools for this thing. Would you do that?" So, I went out and got three or four of the six pilot schools (Southard, 1990).

It did not prove to be difficult for Whittle Communications to recruit schools for the pilot test. The company wanted schools that were representative of certain geographical areas of the country and it used its established contacts to recruit some of the participants. Executive vice president Jim Ritts noted that company representatives met with the assistant superintendents of Billerica

High School in Massachusetts and Mumford High School in Detroit to seek advice on the project, and signed both schools in the process (Ritts, 1990).

We knew that we wanted to have regional dispersion, so that we'd get a sense of, were there going to be any real regional biases here? And, also, as we were producing the program, to try to replicate to some degree that you've got a national constituency and so you ought to be producing to that. If, in fact, you do have six different regions of the country covered, you'll truly produce to that mindset. We wanted to have inner city. We wanted to have suburban. We wanted to have smaller community, large community. Those were kind of the goals that we set out for ourselves and, individually, how they were selected came about in a lot of very, very odd ways.

We knew what we wanted but we were not scientific from the standpoint of going, "Okay, let's go through the 19,000 secondary schools in the United States or whatever, and let's target these five districts and these five districts and these, and who do we know here?" and that sort of thing. It was in the natural evolution of the project, as we made contact and [got] reaction to things. We knew people and you started talking and all of a sudden these people were going, "I'd like you to pilot this at my school. I'd like you to try it," which is why we ended up with six out of six, instead of having to go to fifteen or twenty or something like that (Ritts, 1990).

On Monday, January 16, 1989, seven weeks before the Channel One pilot test was scheduled to begin, front page articles with banner headlines announcing the Channel One project appeared in The Knoxville Journal ("Whittle to put TV to test at U.S. schools") and Advertising Age ("New Whittle Shocker"). The Wall Street Journal carried the story in its marketing section on that date ("TV News

Show Could Open School Doors to Advertisers"). The Knoxville Journal article centered on the impact that Channel One could have on Whittle Communications and noted:

What makes this a classic Whittle Communications project is its advertising. As with its printed products, Whittle is offering advertisers a limited audience--teen-agers in school, in this case. It also is limiting the number of advertisers so the featured products have more impact (Bond, 1989a, p. A5).

The Advertising Age article addressed the concerns of sponsors such as pricing, contract length, ratings equivalents, category exclusivity, and unsuitable products (Reilly, 1989a, p. 52). The Wall Street Journal article focused on the controversy the project was likely to generate. It referred to the "captive audience" the program would have and stated, "More important, some education officials believe, Whittle's plan raises serious questions about the propriety of using schools in such a blatantly commercial venture" (Landro, 1989, p. B1). That the story broke in the business press rather than in the education press marked the beginning of Whittle Communications' battle with adverse publicity over its venture into "enlightened commercialism."

Amidst vehement protest from educators and speculation that some sponsors would withdraw their support, the pilot test began on March 6, 1989 in six schools: Central High School in Knoxville, Tennessee; Mumford High School in Detroit, Michigan; Eisenhower Middle School in Kansas City, Kansas; Gahr High School in Cerritos,

California; Billerica Memorial High School in Billerica, Massachusetts; and Withrow High School in Cincinnati, Ohio. The test ran for a period of five weeks and concluded on April 21. Whittle called it "a smash hit" (Whittle, 1990).

At a press conference in New York City on June 8, 1989, Whittle announced the company's plans to make Channel One, as well as two new services, available in 8,000 schools across the nation. The Educational Network would include Channel One, The Classroom Channel, and The Educators' Channel. Programming for The Classroom Channel would be produced by existing public broadcasting programmers in partnership with Whittle Communications, and The Educators' Channel would provide in-service programming for teachers and school officials.

In spite of media coverage that emphasized the commercial aspects of the project, protests from a multitude of educational groups, and a promotional plan that was questionable at best, Channel One made its debut in more than 400 schools nationwide on March 5, 1990.

The Plan

An examination of Whittle Communications' plan for introducing Channel One to the public revealed several flaws that served to alienate the very groups from whom the project needed support. Once the decision had been made to announce Channel One before the pilot test began, several factors affected the outcome,

such as an unanticipated deadline for making the announcement; the establishment of contacts with the business press but not with the education press; underestimation of the importance of the project to policy-influencing groups; and use of a marketing- rather than a public relations-oriented approach. All of these elements served to make the task of persuading schools to accept Channel One that much more difficult.

Insight into the evolution of Whittle Communications' public relations department aids in understanding the constraints under which the company operated in preparing for the announcement of Channel One.

In 1989, Whittle Communications contracted with The Ingram Group of Nashville for a national public relations campaign for Channel One. Whittle Communications eventually established a public relations department in July 1990, four months after Channel One's launch, and installed Tom Ingram as executive vice president of corporate communications (Ingram, 1990).

Four years ago I became a consultant to Chris, from the base of my company in Nashville, which was The Ingram Group, a business consulting firm. That relationship evolved so that two years ago, he asked us to do his national public relations. We were not a public relations company and said "no" to that request, but ended up compromising with him by forming a group of people who were Whittle employees living and working in Nashville and supervised by us, by The Ingram Group, doing Whittle's national public relations. David Jarrard [Whittle Communications' director of government relations and special projects] was part of that group. A year ago,

we all sat down and determined that that was not working very well, because there was confusion about who was reporting to whom and whether that group reported to me in Nashville or whether they really reported to somebody over here, and it didn't work very well.

We agreed at that point to disassemble that group, absorb part of it, the primary piece of which was David, and for my company, The Ingram Group, to assume full and direct responsibilities for Whittle's national public relations. That was about the same time that Channel One was being announced. [Our] relationship with Channel One was that we had discussions about it with Chris in the role of being consultant to him back when it was in its idea stages, and viewed it as a consultant, not intensely involved. The public relations relationship with Whittle obviously changed that a lot. We became intensely involved (Ingram, 1990).

According to Ingram, "there was considerable discussion about whether to let the pilot start and be discovered and then announced or to announce prior to everything" (Ingram, 1990). Before the company had reached a decision, the story had been leaked to the press.

Actually the first party to pick up the story was, in a critical way, The Knoxville Journal [when] Jessie Bond, a reporter there, received word of it. There had been some more generic leaks in the national media prior to that, but the leak that really forced an earlier announcement than hoped for was The Journal (Ingram, 1990).

Jarrard added:

Jessie Bond noticed some televisions going up at Central High School. She came to us and said, "I've got this story about this new project you're working on." We flipped out and said, "Jessie, can you hold it a week?" (Jarrard, 1990).

Ingram said, "We came over here from Nashville and had lunch with her. . . She reluctantly agreed to hold for whatever period of time it was" (Ingram, 1990). Bond's imminent release of the story moved up Whittle Communications' announcement of Channel One by about a month (Ingram, 1990).

We had met before Christmas. [We had a] big meeting at Ingram: Gubbins and Chris and everyone to plan just this thing. We knew that Channel One would be going on the air March 6 in its experimental phase, and we knew the trucks [would] start arriving at schools in February to start installation, so we figured we'd need to make an announcement in mid-February, before the first trucks arrived (Jarrard, 1990).

Ingram explained the rationale behind this schedule:

We were aware . . . that until we had the program to show, we were weaker, and we wanted to get as close as we could to actually having a program in hand and classrooms in which to show it before we announced it. As I recall, the thought with mid-February was that we could announce it, and the following week have the system tested and get reporters into some select schools [to] watch it with students and teachers, so that there would only be a week there between theory and reality (Ingram, 1990).

Jarrard added:

In theory it sounds much different. You think of it as something much different than what it is. . . . And, in fact, it did make some incredible amount of difference in the perception of the program (Jarrard, 1990).

Ingram explained:

The difference it did make, not only did we not have that month to do whatever homework we might have done, but the critics had a month to bang on us and we had nothing to show There wasn't even a prototype we could use (Ingram, 1990).

Ingram described the plan that the company eventually implemented:

[The plan] was to simultaneously, with a number of different media outlets, announce the program. . . . It was a fairly standard, prescient, major, national press announcement of a major property (Ingram, 1990).

Jarrard added:

Since we knew that she [Bond] was preparing to launch her story, we took that opportunity to get our facts together and we went to Ad Age and we went to The Wall Street Journal and we went to The New York Times (Jarrard, 1990). [The Knoxville Journal, Ad Age, and The Wall Street Journal broke the story on January 16, 1989.]

Jarrard noted that USA Today also received the six-page press release entitled, "Whittle Testing National Daily News Program," which included an explanation of the programming and equipment that had been provided to the pilot schools; a statement about the possibility of a national rollout if the test and its evaluation were successful; and notification that the project was being funded by sponsors. It also stated that Channel One had been developed "in response to appeals by America's school systems and teachers for partnerships to achieve bold, new approaches to improve the quality of education," and emphasized the need for additional resources to

help teachers meet the challenge of educating the nation's workforce. The release noted that school authorities could preview the program and that teachers in the pilot schools were free to use the equipment for other educational purposes. A brief company history also was included (Whittle Communications, 1989a).

The company only gave the release to those newspapers at which it had contacts (Ingram, 1990). National publications targeted to educators were not included in the initial press release.

We did think of Education Week in terms of releasing the original story in January, but our problem was we didn't know anybody at Education Week, and the story was such that we couldn't let it leak. We went to Education Week eventually, but it was once the story was out (Jarrard, 1990).

According to Ritts, no action plan for Channel One existed, simply because the pilot was to be the company's test of the project's feasibility. Controversy was not expected until a decision had been made on whether or not the company would proceed with Channel One (Ritts, 1990).

The period after the test is when we would have actually been putting an action plan for dealing with the announcement, the press, etc., together. Instead, we were always behind the story. . . . We were never in front of the story. . . . We weren't helping shape the story. When you are really in front of a story there are three considerations: you're either leading the story, the journalist is leading the story, or your opponents are leading the story. It's one of the three. You very rarely get a call that's purely fact finding. . . . Everybody has a point of view when they

start into a story and what you hope is that the point of view is at least fair, and that you're helping shape at least the beginning point of that point of view. We were never in front of the story in the early days. I'm not completely sure we're in front of the story to this day. I'm not sure that [we] can be once it's become so much a part of the culture. We never got in front of the story to begin with and it's created an enduring problem for us on a national basis, but not on a local basis (Ritts, 1990).

Whittle Communications' plan for announcing Channel One was flawed in another important respect: it underestimated the reaction of policy-influencing groups toward the project. The company had anticipated opposition by education groups and had been warned about its probable occurrence, but it had done little to address those concerns (Ingram, 1990).

We thought it would be a major national story. I [had] been through the Master Teacher Better Schools program with [former Tennessee] Governor Alexander, where we had encountered similar opposition from a lot of the academic community. Part of our discussions with the company at that point, in a consulting role, was "don't underestimate the organizational ability of these groups." I don't mean to suggest this analogy is complete, but it's like telling a kid not to touch a hot stove. They may understand what you're saying, but they've got to touch it once before they really comprehend what you're saying. . . . [The company] heard us, but I don't think it sunk in until we started getting battered around the head. Even with our awareness, even with our sensitivity to it, I think we, or I, underestimated the vengeance of the opposition. I don't think I had any idea it would be as deep or as intense as it was or as quick as it was. They were really trigger happy.

The homework in reaping those associations and trying to either neutralize or at least put them in a wait

and see position went virtually undone. I think that was the important ingredient left out of our plan, but it really had nothing to do with being forced early or not. It just wasn't done very well.

There were some simultaneous conversations we had with different groups and some of those happened and some didn't. Now, what might have happened if we'd been operating on our timetable instead of a forced timetable, is that some of those communications might have been a little more complete and might have armed us a little more with sensitivity about what we were getting into (Ingram, 1990).

Winter noted:

Tom was the one who kept telling us, "Hey, be careful with these groups," because I think he had a lot of experience with teacher bills [legislation] and stuff. He said, "Hey, just be real careful." We ignored some of that. That's just the way we are. Our tendency is to say, "Forget all that. We don't play by anybody's rules." That's the way the company is. We didn't listen a lot. Tom just kept saying, "Hey, I'm telling you, Chris. This is a different arena." And we just went about our merry way (Winter, 1990).

Six weeks before Channel One made its debut in the six pilot schools, the company's attention was focused on technical aspects of the project, such as equipment installation and program production. Reports of the proposed pilot test by The Wall Street Journal and Advertising Age on January 16, 1989 and by The New York Times the next day sparked early opposition to the project.

Where did that education story break? It broke in the advertising press and it broke in the business section of The New York Times. Well, if you really want to anger the hierarchy of education, you do two things. One, you

don't come tell them what you're doing before you do it. But we were just in a pilot test, so we had not gone to Washington and talked to the heads of the NASSP [National Association of Secondary School Principals] and the NSBA [National School Boards Association] or the NEA [National Education Association] or the AFT [American Federation of Teachers], etc. It was premature to be going in there. We didn't know what our plan was. We hadn't made any decision. There was no reason to go in advance. The second thing you don't do is, you don't let them read the education story by having it printed in the business press, because where is all the emphasis on that story going to be? The emphasis is going to be on the advertising and business side of the plan, not the education. So, from their perspective, the way they were introduced to a large degree to Channel One was, here come a couple of reporters picking it up first and calling and going, "There's this plan to take advertising into the schools and they're going to bribe the schools with television sets. What do you think of that?" [We] had a lot of fairly angered, very politically astute people on the warpath against [us] before the game even started (Ritts, 1990).

Ingram agreed:

Breaking the story in Ad Age and The New York Times' media columns says something about the focus. I'd much rather have seen us break it with education writers instead of business and advertising writers. A lot of that was forged by the history of this company. The company only had a relationship with those writers because they had been the forum for most of its other properties. [With] the timetable and the lack of preparation, I don't think we were able to incorporate enough other disciplines into the announcement (Ingram, 1990).

Winter concluded:

[The story] broke prematurely as the marketing story. Once it had broken, we decided to go all the way with it, but it was never our intention to break it as a business story. We had two months of planned activities with all the educational groups that we never got to implement, but once it was out there it made it very difficult. In retrospect, it's a great public relations lesson of doing your homework and choosing how you want to be labeled (Winter, 1990).

Whittle Communications' plan for introducing Channel One stemmed more from a marketing orientation than from a public relations orientation, because communicating with advertisers and fulfilling budgetary and production timelines to satisfy elements of its business plan were paramount considerations. The company might have taken more of a public relations approach if, in the project's early stages, it had given as much attention to public relations and focus group studies as it had given to research on classroom demographics and advertiser readiness. Until it had assumed the Channel One project, Whittle Communications had only dealt with single sponsor properties in narrow niches that were not very public. Channel One's broad public interest catapulted the company into the public arena before it was adequately prepared to meet the challenge (Ingram, 1990).

Channel One was created to expand the target audience of students that could be reached by Whittle Communications' educational materials. The company took an idea that had originated with teachers and worked it into a daily news and information program that is delivered via satellite to classrooms all over the

country. In keeping with the formula that made the company's other properties successful, Channel One is supported by advertisers and targeted to a specific audience of middle school and high school students.

Because of the absence of an in-house public relations component and a preoccupation with troubleshooting the logistics of this enormous undertaking, an inadequate plan was developed for announcing the project. Operating under a forced timetable, the company submitted its announcement in news release form to its contacts with the business press, but failed to notify the education press. The company's failure to obtain feedback on the project from policy-influencing groups prior to announcing it resulted in immediate and vehement opposition to Channel One. The fact that the story broke in the business press made it difficult for the company to divert attention from the project's marketing aspects to its educational merits.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHANNEL ONE CAMPAIGN

Articles published by The Knoxville Journal, Advertising Age, and The Wall Street Journal on Jan. 16, 1989, following receipt of Whittle Communications' initial news release, marked the official beginning of the Channel One publicity campaign. These articles, and virtually all that followed, made reference to the controversy over the use of commercially sponsored educational materials in the nation's classrooms that Channel One had created.

This chapter will examine the organizations that opposed Channel One and some of the reasons for their objections. It also will examine the strategies that Whittle Communications used to promote the project and to accommodate public sentiment toward it.

The Opposition

Immediate opposition to Channel One came from spokespersons for two extremely influential organizations who were quoted in the Jan. 16 stories. Bella Rosenberg, a special assistant to president Albert Shanker of the American Federation of Teachers, an organization that represents over 700,000 teachers nationwide (Sharkey, 1989, p. B3), said (quoted by Landro):

The students are literally a captive audience, and it raises some fundamental ethical issues for a public school system that is essentially the steward of public trust (Landro, 1989, p. B1).

Peggy Charren, president and founder of Action for Children's Television (ACT), an aggressive lobbying group that was formed to encourage diversity and to eliminate commercial abuses in programming aimed at younger viewers, said (quoted by Reilly), "It's horrendous. It would be as if the school system were telling students what to go out and buy. Every school system in the country should fight this" (Reilly, 1989a, p.1).

ACT later supplied school systems with anti-Channel One material for use in organizational newsletters and bulletins. In a piece entitled, "Say No To Ads In Schools," ACT gave these reasons for opposing Whittle Communications' plan:

(1) It is inappropriate for students to be the target of commercials in the classroom. Channel One is simply a response to declining TV viewing rates, not to educational deficiencies.

(2) Since one out of every five American children lives at or below the poverty level, school systems should not encourage students to purchase products.

(3) If Whittle Communications' plan succeeds, other entrepreneurs also will attempt to privatize American education at all grade levels.

(4) Government will reduce funding for education if advertisers begin paying for equipment or curriculum.

(5) Sponsors might directly or indirectly control the content of programs.

On Feb. 1 Charren and two other educators spoke out against Channel One in an article that appeared in the education section of The New York Times. Patricia Graham, dean of the Graduate School of Education at Harvard, said (quoted by Carmody):

I guess for me the really important issue is the captive audience. As long as we require children to sit in a classroom until age 16, they ought not be required to watch ads (Carmody, 1989a, p. B6).

Todd Gitlin, the author of several books on the impact of television and a professor of sociology at the University of California, said (quoted by Carmody):

I think it's an appalling idea. When education systems are starved for resources, they will respond to the highest bidder. I don't know what to marvel at more--the arrogance of an industry that thinks it has a right to be everywhere, or people in the education system who would consider the proposal for more than one micro-second" (Carmody, 1989a, p. B6).

Four days before the pilot test was to begin, The Wall Street Journal reported that some sponsors were threatening to pull their ads from the project. Senior vice president of Converse, Inc., Stephen Encarnacao, said (quoted by Lipman), "We think at this stage, there will be more negative associated with [Channel One] than any benefit." He referred to Channel One as "overly intrusive" and declared "enough is enough" (Lipman, 1989a, p. B6). Levi marketing manager Dan Chew said (quoted by Lipman):

We will go through with the test, but we won't make any

definitive plans until we have evaluated all the results--which include not only the effectiveness of the communication, but the attitudes of the public (Lipman, 1989a, p. B6).

The article also reported that "the critics are loud and especially powerful--and the controversy has broken out of the trade and business press and into the public eye." It noted that the National Association of Secondary School Principals, objecting to "force-feeding of commercials," had urged its members to avoid the program, and that ACT was leading a national campaign to "establish 'Whittle-Free' zones across the country" (Lipman, 1989a, p. B6).

Three days prior to the pilot test, The New York Times announced that, in addition to the National Association of Secondary School Principals' opposition to any commercially sponsored programming in schools, president of the National Parent Teacher Association, Manya Unger, had issued a statement that said, "We are opposed to making the availability of that technology contingent upon subjecting a captive audience to the promotion of commercial products" ("P.T.A. opposes," 1989, p. D17).

The day following the pilot's debut, it was reported that the National Education Association had joined the list of Channel One's critics (Carmody, 1989b, p. A16), in addition to some prominent writers who had sent letters to the principals and superintendents of the pilot schools, claiming that "[The] program threatens the integrity and independence of educational institutions" (Lipman, 1989b, p. B7).

Before the pilot's first week was over, a commercial for Levi jeans that had been shown on commercial television was pulled from the program, because school officials in Detroit found it to be sexually suggestive (Associated Press, 1989a, p. A18).

With three weeks left in the test period, The Cincinnati Federation of Teachers labor union filed a grievance over the amount of time taken by Channel One. Classes at Withrow High School, one of the pilot schools, had been shortened by two minutes to create a 12-minute morning period in which students could view the program (Associated Press, 1989b, p. D1).

Less than two weeks after the pilot test had been completed, the National Association of Secondary School Principals' executive director, Scott Tompson, said (quoted by Lipman):

I'd be surprised if Whittle could get more than 500 or 600 schools to participate. It's very easy to overpromise what TV will do. Kids don't retain as much with TV as they do with an ordinary teacher (Lipman, 1989c, p. B6).

Bill Honig, the superintendent of public instruction for California schools, issued a statement on May 25 proclaiming that state schools receiving public funds would not be allowed to show Channel One. Honig said, "Our students' minds are not for sale" (Gerard, 1989, p. D17). The state department of education said it would deny aid to schools that aired Channel One, since the department had interpreted state education codes as barring the use of state funds for the "forced viewing of commercials" ("Whittle school news," 1989, p. B4). That same week, schools in New

Hampshire were advised not to accept Channel One (Simmons, 1989a, p. A1).

An article in The New York Times on June 5 added two educational organizations to the list of those opposed to Channel One: the National School Boards Association and the National Principals Association. It reported that schools showing Channel One in California would be denied the equivalent of two minutes' worth of state education money for each day the program was shown. In reference to the requirement that students view the commercials, Honig said (quoted by Carter), "It's not only immoral, it's illegal." ACT's Charren stated that she expected Channel One to encounter opposition in New York, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Wyoming, and she referred to Channel One's journalism as "Trivial Pursuit News" (Carter, 1989b, p. D14).

On June 7 Massachusetts commissioner of education, Harold Raynolds Jr., announced his intention to speak to every school superintendent, school committee member, and principal in the state to urge them to reject Channel One (Associated Press, 1989c, p. A2). It was reported on June 9 that the American Association of School Administrators and the National Association of State Boards of Education had joined the departments of education of Alabama, Rhode Island, California, Massachusetts, and Wyoming in opposing the project (White, 1989b, p. C6).

On June 16 New York became the first state to impose an outright ban on Channel One, when the New York State Board of

Regents voted unanimously to prohibit commercially sponsored television programs in the state's public schools. According to The Regents, Channel One was in violation of the state constitution's provisions against using school property for private gain, since students are required to view the ads on Channel One (Verhovek, 1989b, p. A1). The decision authorized the State Education Department to take action against schools that accepted commercially sponsored television programs, such as withholding all state aid or dismissing school administrators. New York Education Commissioner, Thomas Sobol, had argued against Channel One, calling the offer of equipment a "Faustian bargain" (Verhovek, 1989b, p. A28). Referring to two full-page ads directed to The Regents that Whittle Communications had placed in The New York Times, a spokesman for The Regents said (quoted by Cox), "Some regents were offended that the ads [made people think that] our legal counsel was raising red herrings on constitutional issues. We took those issues very seriously" (Cox, 1989, p, B5).

At its national convention in Washington, D.C. on July 3, the National Education Association's 8,500 delegates voted by a three-to-one margin to go on record as opposed to Channel One. The motion to oppose had been offered by the New York delegation. A substitute motion that simply called for educators to carefully consider the use of commercials in the classroom, had been offered by the Tennessee delegation and had been defeated (Ricker, 1989b, p. A1).

Even though Cincinnati had had a pilot school in its school district, the Cincinnati Board of Education voted to oppose Channel One on Aug. 28. Superintendent Lee Etta Powell noted that Channel One did not provide significant changes in attendance and said (quoted by Ricker):

Evaluations didn't show [that] students who viewed Channel One scored significantly better than those who didn't watch the program. . . . With programs like this, an ominous picture looms of who determines the curriculum in schools and what forces will be driving it (Ricker, 1989c, p. 1A).

The Arkansas State Board of Education voted on Oct. 9 to prohibit schools from airing Channel One during the five and one-half hours of state-mandated daily classroom instruction. It also asked its attorneys to investigate whether or not the program could be banned (Associated Press, 1989f, p. A3).

Stating that the public controversy over Channel One had played no role in its decision, Levi Strauss and Company, one of the advertisers during Channel One's pilot test, decided not to sponsor the program's nationwide launch. The company said that it planned to continue using more efficient and less costly media vehicles, such as network and cable television (Associated Press, 1989f, p. A3).

About a month before the launch of Channel One, the North Carolina Board of Education voted to prohibit schools from subscribing to it and barred the 30 school systems already under

contract from showing it during the five and one-half hours of mandatory instruction time in each school day (Associated Press, 1990a, p. C5). Two weeks later, a panel of school superintendents requested that the Board reverse its position, in light of a statement by the Administrative Rules Review Commission which said that the Board of Education did not have the statutory authority to prohibit school boards from subscribing to the program. The Ad Hoc Committee to Preserve Academic Freedom and Local Control in North Carolina stated (quoted by Associated Press):

The recent ruling of the state board flies in the face of both local control and academic freedom, and we feel compelled to publicly call on the state board and state superintendent to reverse their position before we take another backward step (Associated Press, 1990b, p. B9).

The panel of superintendents said (quoted by Associated Press), "[The ruling] opens the possibility that the same anti-commercialism logic will be applied against newspapers and magazines routinely assigned to students (Associated Press, 1990b, p. B9).

North Carolina filed the first lawsuit against Whittle Communications over Channel One less than a week before the project's launch. The Thomasville City school district, co-defendant with Whittle Communications in the suit, had defied the board's order and contracted for the program. Superintendent of Thomasville schools, Ronald Singletary, said (quoted by Putka):

The state board has exceeded [its] authority and usurped our authority. We have the right and privilege to enter into contracts and to make curricular decisions on the local level (Putka, 1990, p. B6).

Gwen Gregory, general counsel for the National School Boards Association, noted (quoted by Putka):

There may be some rights that Whittle has, but the obligation to educate is primarily the state's, and in theory the state can dictate pretty much whatever it wants (Putka, 1990, p. B6).

On the Friday preceding Monday's launch, North Carolina Superior Court Judge Donald Stephens ruled that the State Board of Education had had the authority to ban Channel One, but that it had failed to follow proper procedures in imposing its ban. His order dismissed the lawsuit and reversed the State Board of Education's decision that had voided contracts signed prior to Feb. 1 and had prohibited the signing of new contracts after that date. Stephens ruled that the Channel One contracts did not violate public policy or the state constitution (Associated Press, 1990c, p. C5).

Two weeks following the launch, Louisiana Attorney General William Guste ruled that showing Channel One in the state's schools was unconstitutional, because it violated students' rights to a free public education by requiring them to view commercial messages for the "profit and economic gain of a private enterprise" ("Channel One loser," 1990, p.1A).

This section of Chapter IV has documented that media coverage of the commercial aspects of Channel One gave rise to vehement

opposition from national education organizations and several state departments of education that objected to students being required to view commercials contained in the Channel One programs.

Whittle Communications' Response to Adverse Publicity

Whittle Communications primarily waged its Channel One campaign in the pages of the press. The company ran several ad campaigns in The New York Times, submitted news releases, and conducted press conferences to make major announcements.

After the company's initial press release had been published on Jan. 16, 1989, Whittle responded to critics in a lead op-ed piece in The New York Times on March 1. In advocating the formation of business-education partnerships like Channel One as a way for schools to obtain necessary funds for education, he said:

Critics should withhold judgment until they see the program and research results. Otherwise they send a signal to business that bold experiments with the educational community are unwelcome (Whittle, 1989a, p. A25).

The first of five full-page ads addressing the media community and educational and political leaders ran in The New York Times on March 1, 2, 6, 7, and 8 (see Appendix B). The ads coincided with the pilot test and drew attention to the controversy that Channel One had created. The ads were conceived by Grace & Rothschild, a small New York advertising agency, on a deadline that necessitated its reliance on print, since the use of photographs

would have taken too much time. The ads have been described as "striking" and "aggressive" and the campaign has been referred to as "street-fighting, advertising-style." The ads were so prominent that they prompted other media companies to request the agency's services (Rothenberg, 1989, p. D20).

It was reported on March 7 that Whittle executives had met with the executive council of the American Federation of Teachers to answer questions about Channel One. Rosenberg said (quoted by Carmody), "I would say there was overwhelming dismay about the Whittle enterprise" (Carmody, 1989b, p. A16).

An editorial in The New York Times in favor of giving the pilot project a chance stated, "School districts should take the Whittle controversy as a challenge to find further business support" ("Kids and commercials," 1989, III, p. 24). Of six other newspapers that ran editorials during the first week of the pilot test, only The Boston Globe opposed the project (Kleinfield, 1989, III, p. 7).

Two additional full-page ads appeared in The New York Times on March 16 and 17. The first, headlined, "Teenagers aren't the only ones watching Channel One," offered quotes from The New York Times, USA Today, The Detroit News, The Tennessean, and The Boston Herald, recommending that Channel One be given a chance. The second, headlined, "On March 13 we took 10,000 students on a little trip," pictured a space shuttle launch and stated that equipment installed in the Channel One pilot schools had made it possible for students to witness the Discovery space shuttle launch.

In addition to its ad campaign, the company made technical changes in the Channel One program to accommodate teachers and students. Early changes included slowing the rapid pace of the initial programs, displaying maps for a longer period of time to allow students to become familiar with the location of various countries and states, and displaying more words on the screen to reinforce recognition of people and places (Ricker, 1989a, p.1A).

A poll at Billerica Memorial High School found that 92% of the teachers favored the program and would like to have it continued (Ricker, 1989a, p. 1A).

On April 21, following the conclusion of the pilot test, Ted Turner, chairman of Turner Broadcasting Inc., announced at a news conference in Washington, D.C. that his Cable News Network planned to offer a 15-minute commercial-free news program to secondary schools beginning in August. Three major cable operators, Tele-Communications, Inc., Continental Cable, and Jones Intercable, said that they would provide the service to schools at no cost. Turner's original plan was to have included up to two minutes of advertising, but this plan was reportedly dropped after a meeting with educators (Carter, 1989a, p. D23). In addition to consulting with educators during the planning stages, CNN was advised by a number of distinguished educational consultants and developed its CNN Newsroom program in cooperation with the National Association of School Administrators (Kohl, 1989, II, p. 35).

A decision to offer programs in five subject areas to schools by The Discovery Channel, a Landover, Maryland, network owned by four cable operators, was announced in The Wall Street Journal on May 17. Although Discovery did not plan to carry ads, it did plan to seek corporate sponsorships for its programs, which were to begin Sept. 18. It was reported that Discovery had obtained the support of the National School Boards Association, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the American Association of School Administrators. Cable industry officials stated that the move was an attempt to add subscribers and blunt criticism from Congress that the industry wasn't doing enough public service programming (Putka, 1989a, B4).

When California threatened to withhold funds from schools airing Channel One, Whittle said (quoted by Bond):

California represents about 10% of the United States, so for me to say it's unimportant would be incorrect. It's a significant state. We would miss it. But does it cause us irreparable difficulty? No (Bond, 1989c, p. 15A).

Whittle indicated that the company would be "really concerned" if many other states followed California's example, and that, although a definite decision to proceed with Channel One had not been made, the overall effect of the current controversy might be to slow down implementation of Channel One once it was launched (Bond, 1989c, p. 15A).

The results of a Gallup study of attitudes toward Channel One was released on June 1. The poll was expected to have an impact on the school officials responsible for deciding whether or not to use the program (Simmons, 1989a, p. A1). The poll found that 85% of teen-agers, 87% of parents, and 88% of non-parents would be interested in seeing Channel One shown at their local high schools. Respondents who viewed a videotape of the broadcast were more likely than those who were read a description of the show to approve of this type of program. Forty-nine percent of parents who viewed the videotape thought it was an "excellent" idea. Among adults who did not view the program, 57% thought it was an "excellent" or "good" idea, while 20% thought it was a "poor" idea (Gallup Organizations, Inc., 1989).

For the survey, Gallup interviewed 528 teen-agers, 254 parents of teen-agers, and 264 individuals 18 years of age or older who did not have teen-age children. The organization also conducted a random telephone survey of 1,007 adults 18 years of age or older. Respondents were interviewed at shopping malls, where they were shown a Channel One videotape. These modes of data collection provided a baseline comparison between those who had seen the program and those who had only heard about it. Gallup cautioned that the mall surveys could not be generalized to the entire U.S. population because the selection was not truly random (Gallup Organizations, Inc., 1989).

At a press conference in New York City on June 8, 1989, Whittle Communications announced that it was proceeding with its national rollout of Channel One. Based on the results of a study that had been prepared for the company by Elrick and Lavidge Inc. of Tucker, Georgia, that indicated that teachers wanted to receive broadcasts from other networks or institutions, the company said it would provide two commercial-free services in addition to Channel One. One would provide instructional programming for students and one would provide in-service programming for educators and school officials, and both would be produced by existing public broadcasters in partnership with Whittle Communications (White, 1989a, p. A1). Whittle Communications said it would set aside \$500,000 a year to pay for the purchase of programming and would donate five hours a day of satellite time to deliver it (Sharkey, 1989, p. B3).

Based on the responses of educators in the study, the company reported several policy changes. Channel One would no longer be a mandatory part of the curriculum, so school officials could choose which classes would view the program and which classrooms would be wired to receive it. A minimum-enrollment requirement also was dropped, making all U.S. high schools eligible to receive Channel One (White, 1989a, A2). The required minimum number of student viewers dropped to about 70% (Kohl, 1989, II., p. 35).

The results of a group of studies conducted for Whittle Communications by Market Analysts Inc. of Rockville Centre, New

York, also were released at the press conference. They indicated that students who had been exposed to Channel One correctly answered 53% of the questions on multiple-choice tests covering material from Channel One broadcasts and general current events, while students who had not been exposed to the program answered 36% of the questions correctly. The studies also said that nine out of ten teachers felt that it was at least "somewhat appropriate" to advertise on Channel One, since the products were relevant to students and similar advertising was seen in the home (White, 1989a, p. A2).

One indication that the announced revisions could make some members of the educational community more receptive to Channel One came from the American Federation of Teachers' Shanker, who called the new plan "a significant improvement" and said (quoted by Sharkey), "It appears Whittle made a sincere attempt to listen to parents and educators . . . and it took the criticism and counsel seriously" (Sharkey, 1989, p. B3). Shanker, however, stopped short of endorsing the project, stating (quoted by Associated Press):

We are encouraged by the fact that Whittle Communications has taken such extensive steps to address the problems associated with its pilot project.

There are still problems, however--commercial advertising is still on and it is very questionable whether a fast-paced program can truly help students to think more critically and thoughtfully about news events, skills students desperately need (Associated Press, 1989d, p. A3).

With a full-page ad in The New York Times on June 13, Whittle Communications began a lobbying campaign to persuade the New York Board of Regents not to ban Channel One. The Regents were meeting to discuss whether the program would violate a constitutional prohibition against the gift or loan of school property for personal gain. It was reported that executives from Whittle Communications had called each of the 16 Regents and that Whittle had met with Chancellor Martin C. Barell in New York City during the previous week (Verhovek, 1989a, p. B3).

Titled "An open letter to the Members of the New York State Board of Regents," the ad described The Educational Network, cited polling results, and lashed out at some members of the education community who "abhor change" and "want to keep innovators away from their turf." The ad concluded:

This week the New York State Board of Regents has many options.

You could elect to support a new idea in a field that sorely needs it.

You could allow local school systems to weigh the benefits of The Educational Network for themselves.

You could postpone action and gather more information on a project the details of which, after all, were announced just last week.

Or you could condemn a program still in its infancy. We believe this course would be tragic and premature (Whittle, 1989b, p. A28).

Another full-page ad appeared on June 14 entitled "Guess how the test of Channel One came out." It noted the results of the polls and the additions and improvements that had been made to the

program in response to the concerns of educators, and it urged opponents to rethink their position. In reference to critics of the commercials, which allow the company to provide equipment, the ad stated:

But what's becoming more and more apparent is that these critics are willing to condemn a generation of students to its current distressing level of awareness for the sake of an abstract principle (Whittle Communications, 1989i, p. D28).

On June 15, Whittle ran another full-page ad entitled, "Another open letter to the Members of the New York State Board of Regents." It stated that Channel One had failed to receive "a fair and complete hearing" from the Education Department staff and it referred to "far-fetched legal interpretations" and "obscure legalities" that the Regents had used to deter the project. The ad clearly stated that an endorsement was not being sought, but an opportunity "to present our case, unscreened by staff opinions and uncolored by hyperbole" (Whittle, 1989c, p. D32) was desired.

An editorial in The New York Times on June 16 concluded:

Whittle's willingness to grant the schools control over how its news show will be used puts the burden on the company to maintain quality. The change of policy, in fact, leaves the company to shoulder all the risk while schools take advantage of the benefits. As long as that is the case, why not let the experiment proceed? ("Let schools choose," 1989, p. A26).

An article in the Sunday June 18 edition of The New York Times stated:

No, advertisements do not belong in the classroom, but information does, and if the price of increasing the amount of information is two minutes a day of commercials, that presents a reasonable choice to school administrators. A deal between a school principal and 'Channel One' need not be Faustian. The job of the principals and teachers will be to make sure that the cost does not go higher--that the commercials do not stretch into more than four 30-second spots, that they are not too vulgar or stupid and that the news content is not watered down (Goodman, 1989, II, p. 27).

Although the National Education Association voted to oppose Channel One early in June, Whittle said (quoted by Simmons):

I thought even though we lost the vote it was actually a victory. Every other kind of national organizational vote hasn't been close. This one, they had to take three votes.

We clearly had a good bit of support on the issue, just based on what people had read.

There's only one vote that counts, the local vote in each city (Simmons, 1989b, p. A4).

Channel One received unexpected support from The Roper Organization Inc. in July, when Roper released the results of an independent survey conducted in April, which had included questions about Channel One ("Independent poll," 1989, p. A3). The survey showed that Americans supported the concept behind Channel One by a solid 5-2 margin. Fifty-seven percent of the respondents said they would support the program if it came up for a local vote and 23% indicated that they would vote against it. Stronger support for the program came from parents (62%) and those with a college education

(61%). The survey noted that three in ten Americans had heard of Channel One and were dramatically more supportive of the concept than those who had not heard of Channel One, "suggesting that support may grow as the issue receives more attention" (Roper Organization, Inc., 1989).

In mid-August, Whittle Communications announced that it had negotiated a \$150 million contract with Philips Consumer Electronics Company to provide 300,000 television sets for schools subscribing to Channel One. Whittle said, "If today doesn't demonstrate our confidence, I don't know what does" (Simmons, 1989c, p. C7).

At the end of August, the company attempted to diffuse opposition to the project by naming a 12-member board of advisers, comprised of government, education, and business leaders, to provide advice and direction for Channel One. Whittle said (quoted by Carter):

There has been an awful lot of debate about the channel, and we had not done all the homework in the political and educational world that we should have done (Carter, 1989c, p. D8).

It was reported that Terrance Bell, former Secretary of Education under President Reagan, would head the board and would be its only paid member. Other members included H. Ross Perot, chairman of Perot Group; Alex Haley, author of Roots; Albert Shanker, president of the American Federation of Teachers; Lamar Alexander, former Governor of Tennessee and president of The University of Tennessee;

Matina Horner, retiring president of Radcliffe College; Frederick W. Smith, chairman of the Federal Express Corporation; James Harvey, author of A Nation At Risk; Janelle Leonard, director of technology training for the Washington public schools; Kenneth Rossano, chairman of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce subcommittee on education; Joseph Scherer, executive director of the National School Public Relations Association; and J. Richard Munro, president of Time Warner Inc. (Carter, 1989c, p. D8).

Whittle said the advisory board had been formed to "demonstrate that many leaders in the field of education agree with our point of view" (Carter, 1989c, p. D8), although Shanker stated:

My being on the board is not an endorsement of the program. I am not encouraging schools to take the program. I don't think the kids watching Channel One learn much about current events. It's very good entertainment but not very good education (Reilly, 1989b, p. B5).

As president of one of America's major teacher unions, with more than 700,000 members, I believe it's important for my organization that I be involved in shaping the program (Simmons, 1989d, p. A1).

If this were a perfect world, all of America's classrooms would be equipped with the latest technologies funded by school boards and other governmental agencies. Unfortunately, such is not the case, and it's unlikely we will get the needed technologies without the participation of companies like Whittle ("Advisors' views mixed," 1989, p. 3A).

The announcement coincided with the start of the marketing campaign for Channel One, as a 70-person sales team officially

began to sign up schools in 20 states (Whittle Communications, 1989j,).

On Sept. 17, Whittle Communications announced that, in the first 90 days of sales, it had secured \$51 million in first-year advertising for Channel One, and that it had a total multi-year commitment of \$149.7 million from Channel One sponsors. The company had achieved more than half of its goal of securing \$90 million in advertising revenue for the project's first year ("Channel One gets," 1989, p. D9). Whittle predicted that revenue from Channel One would exceed that of any cable television network during its first year in business (Associated Press, 1989e, p. 2A). Whittle said (quoted by Harris), "If we stopped (selling ads) today, it would be the most successful TV launch in the last 20 years" (Harris, 1989a, p. A1). Whittle noted that no other state had banned Channel One since New York, and that all of the advertising contracts had been signed after New York's announcement (Harris, 1989a, p. A2).

Early in October, Cynthia K. Samuels, the political producer for NBC network's "Today" morning news program since 1984 and the program's planning producer, was named executive producer of Channel One ("Today official," 1989, p. C17). It was reported that Samuels also would assist in the development of teachers' guides and work closely with Channel One's advisory board (Reilly, 1989c, p. A9D).

At the same time, a group of cable programmers, including the Discovery Channel, the Family Channel, and the Cable News Network,

and cable system operators announced the formation of the Cable Alliance for Education, an association designed to examine the need for and use of cable programming in the nation's schools. Chairman Amos B. Hostetter Jr. said (as quoted by Reilly):

[The cable system operators will] ensure that every senior and junior high school passed by cable will be provided a standard cable (connection) and free basic (cable) service within three years . . . as a working demonstration of the cable industry's commitment to education (Reilly, 1989c, p. A9D).

In a press release dated Oct. 23, Whittle Communications announced the formation of a 21-member Educators' Advisory Board. Editor-in-chief William S. Rukeyser said, "The board members will systematically review the programming and advise us on what we can do to make Channel One most useful in the classroom" (Whittle Communications, 1989k).

Betty Berry, chair of the science department at Central High School in Knoxville and one of the appointees, said that the board's creation "will address one of the criticisms heard about the pilot--that there weren't any classroom teachers involved" (Harris, 1989b, p. B1). Other appointees included Jay Sommer of New Rochelle, New York, National Teacher of the Year in 1982-83 and a contributor to A Nation At Risk; Iris Carl of Houston, Texas, incoming president of the National Council of Teachers of Math; Joseph Feinstein of Los Angeles, California, host and producer of Teen Talk, a program on KHJ-TV in Los Angeles, for which he had won Emmys in the Public

Affairs Series and Youth Series categories; Patrick Daly of Detroit, Michigan, a national vice president of the American Federation of Teachers; Ben Ebersole of Hershey, Pennsylvania, former president of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development; Jane Lichman of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Philadelphia's Teacher of the Year in 1984; Elaine Mosley of Chicago, Illinois, principal and chief administrator of the Corporate/Community Schools of America; Damon Moore of Muncie, Indiana, former president of the Indiana State Teachers' Association; Eunice Askov of State College, Pennsylvania, director of the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at Pennsylvania State College; Anne Ferguson of Coeur D'Alene, Idaho, former Region I president for the Idaho Education Association and founder of TV 271, a student-based television program; Gerald Katz of Washington, D.C., executive director of the National Energy Education Development Project; and teachers and administrators from Texas, Kentucky, Washington, Michigan, South Carolina, Rhode Island, Virginia, Ohio, and California (Whittle Communications, 1989k).

Whittle Communications had signed up 500 schools in 238 districts in 24 states by the end of October. Whittle said (quoted by Reilly), "What we've done in eight weeks shows we won't have enormous difficulties getting to the place we want to be" (Reilly, 1989d, p. B7). About a month later, 1,050 schools in 440 districts in 29 states had signed three-year contracts to receive Channel One (Associated Press, 1989g, p. 2A). Whittle said (quoted by Reilly),

"We are months ahead of plan and haven't even begun to concentrate on major metropolitan areas yet" (Reilly, 1989e, p. B6).

At the same time, Turner reported that more than 4,000 schools were receiving CNN Newsroom, CNN's commercial-free news program that was already in operation and available to schools through local cable systems. It was reported that the National Education Association would distribute posters in support of CNN Newsroom in early December to 81,000 school buildings and 30,000 state and local education leaders. Charren of Action for Children's Television said (quoted by Reilly), "I predict Whittle will fall flat on his face" (Reilly, 1989e, p. B6).

Whittle was named the most influential person in public broadcasting by Current, a trade newspaper of the public broadcasting industry, in its Dec. 11 issue. Editor Richard Barbieri said, "Whittle raises questions about commercialism and how public broadcasting functions in a rapidly changing and increasingly competitive media market" ("Trade newspaper selects," 1989, p. C7).

Declaring their support for CNN Newsroom at a news conference with Turner on Dec. 18, the American Association of School Administrators, the National Parent Teacher Association, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the National Education Association denounced Channel One because of its commercials. The National School Boards Association reaffirmed its support of CNN Newsroom but did not criticize Channel One ("Education groups laud," 1989, p. A3).

At a New York press conference that included a tie-in to reporters around the country (Simmons, 1990a, p. A4), Whittle Communications announced that it had signed more than 2,500 schools in 897 districts in 34 states, representing an audience of 1.7 million teen-agers. Whittle stated, "One year ago a lot of people said that a launch day would never come for our Educational Network and, in fact, some seemed prepared to do anything to stop it" (Whittle Communications, 1990c, p.1).

The company also announced its award of a \$900,000 grant to the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research and Interwest Applied Research to study the impact of The Educational Network on the education of students over a three-year period. The results of two additional Gallup polls that had been commissioned by Whittle Communications also were released (Whittle Communications, 1990c).

The first survey had been based on telephone interviews of 1,500 junior and senior high school students and had been conducted in December 1989 and January 1990. It indicated that television news had been virtually unwatched in the nation's classrooms. According to the survey, only 14 of 1,500 students that had been interviewed, or .009%, said that they had watched a televised news broadcast at school that day (Whittle Communications, 1990b).

A second survey had been based on 250 telephone interviews of junior and senior high school principals and 250 telephone interviews of junior and senior high school teachers in late January

1990. It indicated that 85% of the teachers who had been polled reported that none of the classrooms or locations in which they had taught had been equipped with permanently installed television sets or monitors. Gallup reported that 94% of the teachers who had taught in schools with 1,000 or more students had said that none of their classrooms had been equipped with permanently stationed televisions, compared with 82% of those who had taught in less populated schools. The poll also had found that fewer than 8% of the principals had stated that their schools had permanently stationed television sets wired to a central video broadcasting system available in each of the classrooms. Eighty-nine percent of the principals of schools that comprised grades seven through 12 said that their schools had not been equipped with satellite dishes (Whittle Communications, 1990b).

At the press conference, Whittle accused critics of Channel One of waging a campaign of deliberate "misinformation," and criticized a figure that had appeared in several national publications that claimed that 6,700 schools had signed up with Turner for CNN Newsroom. He said (quoted by Simmons), "We couldn't figure out where all this was coming from. We knew there weren't any television sets out there to watch all this on" (Simmons, 1990a, A4).

Also in February, the company mailed a piece to schools in which it attempted to correct misinformation about the program (see Appendix C). A "very powerful" opening letter written by Bell, a

member of Channel One's council of advisers, accompanied the piece (Southard, 1990).

To attract attention to the results of the Gallup polls and to the official launch of Channel One on March 5, 1990, Whittle Communications ran full-page ads in The New York Times (see Appendix D). The February ads disputed the cable industry's claim that CNN Newsroom was reaching 20% of all high schools and middle schools and emphasized the survey results regarding the lack of television sets available in the nation's classrooms. The March 5 ad, entitled, "Today students across America can see Berlin from their classrooms," announced the premier of the news program and noted some of the subjects that would be covered by Channel One in the future (Whittle Communications, 1990j, p. D12).

Four days prior to the launch of Channel One, Rukeyser noted "lots of changes in nuance and pace" that had been made in the program since the end of the pilot test. These changes included reducing the average number of items in the headline news section, slower-paced writing, tying Pop Quiz and Fast Facts into one of the longer segments and running them next to those segments, coloring or tinting maps to show more distinction between countries, and making smoother transitions from a continent to a country or region (Bond, 1990a, p. A1).

With \$200 million in three-year advertising contracts and 2,900 schools in 900 districts in 34 states signed up to receive it, Channel One made its national debut on March 5 in the 400-plus

schools that had been equipped to receive it. The number of school commitments was nearly three times the company's original goal of 1,000 and represented an audience of 2.1 million students (Whittle Communications, 1990i). In a move timed to counter the launch of Channel One, Action for Children's Television awarded its 1990 Hall of Fame Award to CNN Newsroom. Whittle Educational Network president Ed Winter noted that the current issue was whether local school systems had the freedom to choose to use or not to use Channel One and said (quoted by Simmons), "I think the focus of Channel One is going to move from the 'C-word' of 'commercialism' to 'choice'" (Simmons, 1990b, p. A4). One week after the launch, more than 3,000 schools in 34 states had signed up to receive Channel One (Ricker, 1990, p. 2A).

This portion of Chapter IV has examined the tactics used by Whittle Communications to respond to adverse publicity and to accommodate public sentiment toward Channel One. This was primarily accomplished through ad campaigns it waged in The New York Times in conjunction with the pilot test, the Regents' decision, and publicity about CNN's program. Other tactics included releasing the results of polls indicating public support for Channel One and making program and policy changes that were reportedly based on feedback from educators. The company also added two channels to the Educational Network, created a Board of Advisors and an Educators' Advisory Board, and provided a research grant to study the project's impact over a three-year period.

CHAPTER V

INSIDERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE CHANNEL ONE CAMPAIGN

In preparing this thesis, the author spoke at length with Whittle Communications executives and viewed videotaped presentations by Whittle and Gubbins. In this chapter of the thesis, it is appropriate to expand on the perceptions of company leaders who had been in the front line in the battle over Channel One. Topics such as the company's reaction to the project's opposition and competition, local versus national reaction to Channel One, campaign turning points, the effect of the project on Whittle Communications, and the role of public relations in persuading schools to accept Channel One were discussed.

Reaction to the Opposition

Whittle provided the following statement regarding the immediate and negative reaction that Channel One received from education organizations:

It didn't surprise us that local schools and parents and students were for it. It did surprise us that national educational groups were against it. . . . Virtually every one of those particular groups took their position without ever visiting a school that had Channel One, without actually going into a classroom and saying, "Students, what do you think about this?," without waiting for any research to come back from Channel One. Literally the bulk of those organizations took a

position against Channel One before the first program on Channel One ever aired. Which is a remarkable thing when you consider what Channel One is supposed to do and the potential of what it can bring to students. To give you a sense of the difference in reaction, over 4,000 schools across the United States in 41 states representing over 2.8 million students have already signed up for Channel One. Right now the daily audience of Channel One is greater than ABC, CBS, NBC, and CNN combined. If you take the evening news shows, that's how many students are already watching it. We did 20 different Gallup polls in the key states across the country. Parents are for this three to one and many leading Americans, by the way, very courageous Americans, because once these national groups take positions, it's not easy to be for Channel One on a national basis (Whittle, 1990).

Dave Southard, vice president, field sales, provided insight into one strategy used by the National Education Association in its campaign to oppose Channel One:

The NEA has done a wonderful job of lobbying against us. . . showing up at school board meetings. There's an anti-Channel One book that any NEA representative can pick up and [use] to try to kill us at a school board meeting. I can go to the school board meetings and tell anybody what the representatives are going to say when they get their chance at the podium, because it's always the same, which is frustrating. You always thought in education that you had intelligent people who had their own opinions, and they say the same thing whether I'm in Arkansas or California. It's the same lines. They just read it right out of the communication from the NEA (Southard, 1990).

Executive vice president Jim Ritts stated that the facts never mattered to most of Channel One's opponents:

Fundamentally we had three key opponents . . . Peggy Charren of Action for Children's Television, whose expertise was absolutely not germane to this project whatsoever; Scott Thompson [executive director of the National Association of Secondary School Principals], simply because he was so verbally opposed to it; and then Honig [superintendent of instruction for California public schools] later on, but Honig was not early on because we weren't into the state of California and things like that. He became one of the most visible from a state standpoint. . . . There was a lag period where there was a very strongly worded press release and then no real language ever followed up. It was like, "Okay, we got the headlines, we got the shot we needed, etc. . . . Whereas the New York Board of Regents moved more quickly from public pronouncement to something concrete to deal with. It was Peggy Charren, it was Scott Thompson, because they were . . . at a conference down in New Orleans and, in fact, they were going to come out against the project before they ever saw it. We had two people fly down and meet with them to say, "Hey, at least you ought to know what you're against before you make this pronouncement," which gives you an idea of the atmosphere at that time of "Who are these guys? Why are they doing it?" and "We're against it without even seeing it." So they'd never even seen the program. . . . It looked like facts be damned, it does not matter, just get this project stopped. And those three people, or those three groups, and it wasn't groups, it was individuals. If you track back to us in almost every case there is an individual who is adamantly opposed. And it's one of the things that really bothers you when you step back and look at this project. You see a lot of personal agendas involved. . . . You can put names with virtually every organization who was the champion against us. Scott Thompson was against us. Peggy Charren was actively against us. She had just faced a lot of losses against the Reagan administration and we were a hanging curveball across the plate to put Action for Children's Television back on

a public agenda. . . . It was amazing the amount of misinformation that was being used about this project, and one of the most disconcerting facts of the entire thing was, here you are dealing with education and the facts didn't matter. . . . Really didn't matter. We spent all of our time trying to deal with misconceptions from the very first day. And to this day. . . we still deal with misinformation probably 80% of the time. Some of it is still being actively promulgated by opponents . . . Now that we have been in the marketplace, they are as likely to know something incorrect about you as they are to know something correct about you, so you have to start, instead of from a level playing field, you are starting from, in most cases, a hole (Ritts, 1990).

Tom Ingram, executive vice president, corporate communications, discussed the company's failure to get to know its opposition early in the campaign:

I think the number of so-called educational policy associations or, more appropriately labeled, unions, are turf protectors, and I don't think they really give much of a fig about real educational policy. That's a generalization. There are some exceptions to that. I think we would have run into some opposition from some people who fear televisions in the classroom generally, who fear change in the classroom generally, who fear private enterprise in the classroom generally. We would have run into some of that opposition no matter what we would have done, but I think we should have gone into it with that being our primary attitude. I think we should have spent a lot more time getting to know what the attitude of educational associations and educators and superintendents of schools and principals was likely to be . . . and surprised them a lot less than we did. Our main offense probably was surprising a lot of these people and their trigger reaction was not to substance but to being surprised. . . . My speculation is that they reacted mostly from political bases. . . . Politicians

don't like to be surprised, and particularly by rash, arrogant upstarts, which we were viewed as at times. Our reaction to their reaction was, "Okay, put up your dukes," and they had bigger gloves than we did. If our reaction had been to jump into dialogue with them, it might have softened some of their assaults (Ingram, 1990).

According to Ingram, the opposition of local school districts and educational organizations was not as damaging as that from state school boards and legislatures:

I think the controversy generally has stymied us in a lot of places where local school decision makers tended to stay local school decision makers by avoiding controversy. They smelled controversy around Channel One, whether they had defined it specifically or not, and so they balked, and that has been a problem for us. But I think the only organized opposition that has specifically been a problem for us has been in those places where a state school board or a legislature or a governing or quasi-governing body has passed some specific negative reference to us. I'm not sure that the general opposition of the associations has hurt much. I'm not sure there have been many school boards that said, before they reversed their position, "We're not going to look at this because the national school board is opposed." I think there were a lot of school boards that said, "We're afraid of this because we understand there is controversy." I'm not sure that, directly, the associations have had much impact. Overall and generally the controversy has had a significant impact (Ingram, 1990).

Whittle Educational Network president Ed Winter discussed the nature of the educational establishment and the agendas that emerged:

Now I look back on it and I understand. An institution that doesn't change a lot, a lot of people threatened, and in my perception, an industry that does a masterful job of public relations to cover up some real problems. We walked in as the perfect new enemy. It's like a good politician: attack the other guy's record and get their attention off of you. . . . It's fascinating to see how many public relations agendas came out of nowhere. After two years on this now, I've had enough closed door conversations with people who just said, "I'm in print. I don't believe in television." "I'm against business." People closing the door going, "You guys make too much money" (Winter, 1990).

Whittle believed that the real debate was about change, not about commercials:

One naysayer said it better than I ever could have and she did it on network television, which I loved. She said, "You know, if Channel One succeeds, education in this country will never be the same." I looked at her and I said, "That's precisely the point, ma'am." And I hope that is the way it turns out.

According to Ritts, obtaining endorsements from organizations was not a priority:

Everybody would love to have endorsement. That isn't what we would have ever sought, though. What we would have sought was for the national constituency to not take a negative opinion against this; rather, fact find, understand what we're about and then allow your local constituents to make the decisions that are appropriate for their community. . . . The reality is large organizations [like the American Federation of Teachers] taking positive positions of projects that are highly controversial potentially, wildly experimental from their viewpoints, they don't take a lot of positive viewpoints on that. They

tend to take a wait and see attitude. . . . The goal would not have been to go in and expect to get seven alphabet organizations to endorse. . . . Perfect world, that's what you'd love. . . . I remember we [Ritts and Charren] were on a radio talk show. . . . She was going through this whole litany--here are all the groups that have denounced it--and even though her list wasn't 100% accurate, it didn't matter. Finally, after she finished that, the moderator said, "Any response?" I said, "Would I like to have the endorsement of five or six of them?" I said, "Yes." But if you gave me a choice between having 4,000 schools be a part of my network or having those endorsements, I'll take the 4,000 schools in local communities every time" (Ritts, 1990).

Perhaps Southard captured the essence of opposition groups best. When asked about ACT's current anti-Channel One activity, he replied, "We don't see Peggy [Charren] much. She hates the Ninja Turtles now, so she's sort of left us alone" (Southard, 1990).

Reaction to Turner

Whittle gave this response to a question about the threat that Turner's CNN Newsline posed to Channel One:

Turner's a non-event. A lot of people believe that Turner is a competitor to Channel One. The fact is that the cable industry is under attack in Washington. It's under the threat of being regulated in various and sundry ways, or deregulated, however you want to look at it. They are looking for ways to wear white hats, and one of the ways they decided was to offer a commercial-free version of Channel One. What they failed to point out is that no one can watch it and the reason is that they don't give the schools any equipment (Whittle, 1990).

Southard said the real problem is that school districts think they have a choice:

He [Turner] just confuses things for us. . . . What happens is a district thinks they have a choice and they don't understand that there's a big difference. I think editorially we're far superior, but that's subjective and that's hard to prove unless you show them both programs. Schools think, "Well, the local cable company will wire us." Cable companies will only bring one wire to the media center and that's it. It just slows us down. But at the state level it hurts because the state really thinks there is a choice (Southard, 1990).

Ritts noted that schools subscribing to Channel One are encouraged to use the equipment to receive other educational programs, including CNN Newsline:

We tell them, if you see a need inside the school that [CNN Newsline] will help fulfill, maybe it's a second news source or whatever, take it and use it. . . . Turner hasn't done anything wrong, and Chris has been very open about that. We go, "Okay, I'm not going to question your motives for why you do it, but you produce a pretty nice 15-minute news program. CNN's one of the best newsgathering operations in the world. You ought to be able to produce a pretty good news program". . . . In some cases that coverage might supplement or complement what we're doing. . . . The fundamental offer from the cable alliance is, "This program's been made available by CNN Newsroom, and we've encouraged the local cable operator to run the hookup to your front door." Those aren't the words they use but, we'll run it to your front door and that's it. If you want to, you can record it. If you want to, you can edit it. If you want to, a teacher can use it on that mythical equipment they have, etc. If I'm the school principal or superintendent, why wouldn't I

take that offer? . . . I don't have to do anything. It's a totally one-way deal. If I've got two televisions inside my school, why wouldn't I want my cable at least connected to those two television sets I have there? When they would talk about they had signed 5,000 schools, we'd go, "Why haven't they signed 18,000? Who would say no to this?" (Ritts, 1990).

Local Reaction to Channel One

Contrary to national media reports, Channel One received a lot of support at the local level. Ritts explained:

If you went across the entire country, everywhere there has been a presentation and a discussion, you'll see the same debate, but you'll see something interesting going on, which is the other side of the story gets told. In the local community you get the debate on the op-ed page: this is why we shouldn't, this is why we should, etc. You read the accounts of the school board meeting and the teachers have been polled and all that. Five out of six out of ten times we win that vote on the local basis. We have 4,500-4,600 schools signed. Last spring Scott Thompson said, "These guys will never get off the ground." Then he said, "They'll never sign 400 schools or 800 schools or whatever." We laughingly said, "Now that we have 3,000 schools, Scott, are you going to say we're not going to sign 4,000? When we sign 4,000, are you going to say that we are not going to sign 5,000? What's the shooting scale here?" (Ritts, 1990).

Whittle noted:

I think [the opposition] decided that they were going to lose this at the local level and their current strategy is not to decide this in the classroom. They're going to try to decide it in the courtroom, because they believe they're going to lose it on an educational

ground, so they're going to try to win it on a legal basis. We are now facing various and sundry legislative and legal challenges across the country in Channel One. We are winning the bulk of those and we are primarily winning it because local schools are really coming out very strongly for us. The opposition's strategy is to take the decision away from local schools and say to local schools, "You're really not qualified to make this decision. Someone else should make it for you." That runs right in the face of what is the trend in American education and they're not finding a whole lot of support for that (Whittle, 1990).

Turning Points in the Campaign

Winter identified positive reaction to the pilot test as one of the key turning points in the campaign:

The real turning point on this, beyond what I viewed as an incredible amount of academic discussion from people who had never seen the product, was when we went on the air and the press quit sticking microphones in our face and stuck them in the students' faces. This thing should have fallen flat on its face on a very predictable crescendo, which is evil business out to corrupt our schools, fluff, shoddy journalism, and students are going to go, "This is ridiculous. I shouldn't have to sit through this." What happened was, as soon as the product hit the air, our two years of development --it showed. Teachers and students started going, "Hey, this is pretty good." It forced the press to go to that story and they started writing and interviewing students. That shifted the story dramatically (Winter, 1990).

According to Winter, strategic changes proposed by Ingram marked another turning point in the campaign:

Sometimes you have to know what business you're in. Tom said to Chris and me, "Hey, forget the business proposition. You are in a political campaign. There are going to be votes city by city. This is a political campaign. You have been labeled as a candidate." Once we viewed it as a political campaign, everything changed. It was, "Forget reality, you're dealing with perceptions. Forget the reality. Yeah, you do have a great show, but this is politics. The world of public education and decisions in schools is political. You've got to start acting like a political candidate." Our strategy changed dramatically. We had never done that. That's not what we do. If you look at our history, we have been very, very quiet. We did no public relations. None. All of a sudden wage a full-fledged political campaign? It was scary but very exciting. We literally stopped and went, "This is a campaign. It's going to be waged in the press with sound bites. You have got to get out on the stump. You have got to get on 'Nightline.' You have got to get your story out there," rather than us sitting back and going, "Hey, we'll stand by the quality of our work." Without Ingram bringing that to our attention, I'm not sure we would have been nearly as active, because we were neophytes (Winter, 1990).

Ingram stated that one of the major turning points occurred when the New York Board of Regents voted to ban Channel One:

At that point we did a couple of things. We took them on. Some of those strategies were not very well exercised or effective. We boxed them in in some cases. I think we particularly boxed in New York. The second thing we did was develop a governmental relations component to the program and we began to develop a network of lobbyists nationwide to help us fight the political issues. At that point we began having some meaningful dialogue with some groups (Ingram, 1990).

The Effect of the Controversy on the Company

McAllister believed that the company should have kept a lower profile:

We decide to do something, we go do it. We didn't have any test of this. We went out there, we got our heads blown away by a bunch of people in the political world. Our whole strategy up to that had been lay low, lay low, don't promote Whittle. I still think we should have done that here. We promoted a lot of our own grief. If we'd said, "No comment. No comment. No comment. No comment," we'd have still gotten hammered by some, but we'd have been better off. . . . I will never not say that (McAllister, 1990).

Ingram discussed the positive impact of the controversy on the company:

Overall, the profile and the reputation of the company has been enhanced by the controversy, by people unrelated to education and Channel One, but who, for other reasons, are important to this company. . . . One of the missions given us when we took the responsibility of Whittle's public relations was that it's very important to this company and its key people to have access to key people in other companies in America, so that we can put our ideas in front of them and have them make their marketing decisions about us. Channel One raised the profile of the company so high and so dramatically and so quickly that there are very few doors in American business that aren't open to Chris or Alan Greenberg [vice chairman] or Ed Winter or anybody else from this company (Ingram, 1990).

Winter noted:

It's probably better to be perceived as a big

company with big ideas, even though controversial, than a quiet growing company. The degree in which we're trying to grow--bigger is better. What Channel One clearly did was take us out of the arena of specialty print--cute, little, funky media company--to what a lot of people view as visionaries who bribe people who are doing big things--big things that scare people. If you look at our growth objectives, it was better that this happened (Winter, 1990).

Southard expressed how the controversy had affected his personal sales efforts:

We wouldn't do it if we didn't get the money, but it becomes a personal thing, because we make presentation after presentation. You stand at the podium for three and a half hours until midnight and the cameras are rolling and everything else . . . it's a personal thing that "I'm going to get this district whether you like it or not." And [everybody that works on it] feels that way (Southard, 1990).

Mike McAllister, president, field systems, added:

What you find out is, you can actually get excited about this project. I don't get excited about selling waiting room television to doctors. I don't think I'm doing good for the world. You can actually get out there and this is good. I believe this is educational (McAllister, 1990).

Ritts summed up the controversy's effect on the company this way:

Could our lives have been easier? Yeah, but I don't know what the outcome would have been if I'd started the other way. If I'd started the other way, we might have heard so many bad things that we might have gone, "Oh, God. This isn't do-able" (Ritts, 1990).

The Role of Public Relations in the Campaign

According to Ingram, the public relations campaign evolved in three stages:

Our first role was to get the program out there in its most positive light, which we did with the test. . . . The second was damage control. We were up against a lot of attacks, a lot of misinformation, a lot of incomplete reporting, and we had to scurry to round out those stories and correct misinformation, etc. . . . Only recently did we have a constituency out there that's large enough to be meaningful. Now that we've got that constituency, we move into the next stage, which is what I'm most excited about. That's using that constituency now to tell our story and turn the talk around on Channel One. That's where we are now. Our role is to turn the talk and establish the editorial and educational credibility of the program and put business, marketing, and [the] commercials issues aside. . . . We don't make any apologies about them. We don't mind talking about them, but the real story in here is what this can mean to education. What it means to this country's mission, to education (Ingram, 1990).

Ritts summed up the overall effect of the company's lack of public relations activity in this way:

To this day, one of the really frustrating parts about this is the enduring nature of first impressions presented through media. That is why I continue to say that I don't know that we're ever going to be out in front of this story (Ritts, 1990).

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS

In evaluating and interpreting the findings of this study, it is helpful to review the original thesis questions. The primary purpose of this study was to determine why Channel One was developed and to investigate the plan that Whittle Communications used to introduce the project. The study also examined the policy-influencing groups that were opposed to Channel One and the reasons for their opposition and explored the company's response to the adverse publicity that Channel One generated.

The specific research questions that guided this study were: Why was Channel One developed? Did the company have a targeted, timed action plan for introducing Channel One to the nation's schools? Did the company's plan stem from a marketing or a public relations orientation, a mix of the two, or neither? How did presenting Channel One to the media before offering it to the schools affect its acceptance by educators? What role did policy-influencing groups play in the acceptance of Channel One? What steps did the company take to influence public perception of Channel One?

Whittle Communications had already achieved prominence in the publishing industry for the practice of tailoring its products to a specific concept and audience. It had supplied more than 10,000 schools nationwide with educational publications for several years

and had established contacts and product credibility with those clients. In typical Whittle Communications style, the company targeted a lucrative teen audience, identified a real need for news and information programming in the schools, and created a product that could deliver the teen audience to advertisers, thus providing profit and growth for the company.

Channel One was conceived by teachers in response to their request for news and information programming that could be used in the classroom. In creating a program designed to enhance the cultural literacy skills of students, the company capitalized on a deficiency that had been widely documented in the media.

Whittle Communications did not have a targeted, timed action plan for introducing Channel One because the company lacked an established in-house public relations component to handle its execution. Also, a reporter's knowledge of the project forced the company to announce Channel One a month earlier than it had anticipated. As a result of its lack of planning, the company exclusively supplied news releases to publications at which it had contacts and failed to discuss Channel One with policy-influencing groups, which had the effect of excluding the education community from knowledge of and participation in the early stages of the project. As a result, virtually every national education organization opposed Channel One, and their protests succeeded in slowing down its implementation.

What is particularly reprehensible is the fact that the company had failed to heed the advice of its public relations consultant, who had underscored the need to work with these groups to avoid Channel One's being labeled as a business, rather than as an educational, enterprise (see "The Plan" section of Chapter III). Most of the organizations had taken their positions against Channel One before they had seen the program or had received any official information about it. If the company had supplied at least a news release to these organizations, some of the misinformation that resulted from the initial announcement might have been averted or at least reduced. Whether the organizations' negative reaction to Channel One resulted from surprise, a fear of television, change, and/or business involvement in the classroom, or sincere concern that the viewing of commercials was a first step toward commercializing education, the effect of their opposition was to keep the issue of a captive student audience for commercials in the forefront of media coverage of Channel One.

The company perceived that negative references to Channel One by state boards of education and state legislatures were more harmful to the project than the opposition it received from national education groups. The company developed a network of lobbyists in response to actions such as California's decision to withhold funds for schools that showed the program, New York's outright ban of the program, and North Carolina's lawsuit against Whittle Communications. The trend toward decentralization of the nation's

public schools worked in the company's favor because most of the states gave local boards of education the power to decide whether or not the program was appropriate for their schools. Channel One's current success, as measured by the three-year contract commitments that the company has secured from schools and advertisers, suggests that the broad support of national organizations was not crucial in the short term.

The support that Channel One received at the local level can be attributed to factors such as the general awareness created by the local media in reporting the pros and cons of the project, the greater understanding that local boards possessed of a school district's curricular and financial needs, and the personal contacts and positive reputation that the company already had established in schools across the country.

The company's preoccupation with obtaining and installing equipment and with producing the programming, coupled with its lack of experience in the national public arena, caused its promotional efforts to have a marketing, rather than a public relations, orientation. The campaign took on more of a public relations orientation after the pilot test was concluded and before the national rollout was announced, when the company released the results of the first Gallup poll indicating public support for Channel One and announced policy revisions that no longer made the program a mandatory part of a school's curriculum.

When Channel One was formally launched in 400 schools on

March 5, 1990, Whittle Communications had obtained \$200 million in three-year advertising contracts and had signed 2,900 schools in 900 districts in 34 states. The success of Channel One at this point can be attributed to strategies that the company employed to combat adverse publicity and to accommodate public sentiment toward Channel One. Specific tactics included running major ad campaigns in The New York Times; commissioning Gallup polls; making program and policy changes that incorporated feedback from educators; forming the Whittle Educational Network by adding The Classroom Channel and The Educators' Channel services; creating a Board of Advisors and an Educators' Advisory Board; and awarding a \$900,000 research grant to the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research and Interwest Applied Research to study Channel One's impact over a three-year period.

One of the most effective tactics the company used to gain support for Channel One was to create a constituency by commissioning Gallup polls that pointed to public support for Channel One. The polls also established that a large majority of students did not view news in school, and they disclosed the extent of the lack of technology in the nation's classrooms. The addition of The Educators' Channel gave teachers and school officials a stake in the project by providing a service that was targeted to their needs and desires. By adding The Classroom Channel, Whittle Communications forged a partnership with public broadcasters who already were well established in the nation's classrooms as

providers of the largest source of educational programming. The company's underwriting of \$500,000 worth of program production a year and its donation of satellite time further solidified this partnership. Whittle Communications created another constituency by forming its Board of Advisors and its Educators' Advisory Board, which created the perception that Channel One had the cooperation, support, and involvement of educators, administrators, government officials, and business leaders all over the country. By funding research of Channel One's impact over a three-year period, the company gave the program credibility and demonstrated its commitment to providing a quality educational product.

The controversy failed to prevent Channel One from being installed in enough schools and from obtaining the support of enough advertisers to make a profit for Whittle Communications for the first three years, and it actually helped to raise the profile and reputation of the company to a level of national recognition. The real test of the project's success will occur in three years, when schools and advertisers will have to decide whether or not to renew their Channel One contracts. The success of Channel One in the long term will depend on several factors, such as whether or not the programming has met the needs and expectations of students, teachers, and school administrators and whether or not they have become dependent upon the technology.

The long-term success of Channel One also will be determined by the desire of advertisers to extend their contracts beyond the

initial three-year period. At the time of renewal, advertisers will consider Channel One's ability to reach the teen market, the cost of the contract, and the public's attitude toward Channel One. The project's long-term success also will depend on the results of future research to determine whether or not the program has had an impact on the cultural literacy skills and current events awareness of its student viewers.

Lacking a public relations plan for introducing Channel One, the company used public relations to respond to adverse publicity about the project. If it had employed public relations efforts early in the planning stages of Channel One, such as involving the policy-influencing members of education groups in the development of the project to obtain different points of view, Channel One might have met with less resistance from these groups. To facilitate the long-term success of the project, the company should recognize that Channel One can only benefit from the support of education groups. It should regularly convene its Board of Advisors and Educators' Advisory Board to review Channel One's goals and it should provide for and welcome systematic feedback from schools using the service.

In interviewing the executives whose comments comprise a large part of this case study, the author noted similarity between a number of their responses. Because these executives have given numerous speeches on the subject of Channel One, it is possible that the author got a well-rehearsed account of the company's view of

the events that surrounded the introduction of Channel One instead of the whole truth. The information contained in this thesis was based on their perceptions, and any inherent bias against the opposition should be taken into consideration. Independent verification and cross checking of the data was prevented by organizational constraints.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

A CHRONOLOGY OF THE CAMPAIGN

1987

Company talks
to educators

JANUARY 1989

Story breaks in:
The Knoxville News-Sentinel
The Wall Street Journal
Advertising Age
The New York Times

ACT opposed
AFT opposed

MARCH 1989

New York Times editorial (pro)
Whittle meets with AFT
Pilot Test (3/6-4/21)
New York Times ads (3/1,2,6,7,8,16,17)
New York Times op-ed piece

Converse and Levi Strauss
monitoring
NASSP opposed
National PTA opposed
NEA opposed
Writers protest
Levi Strauss ad pulled

APRIL 1989

Cincinnati Federation of
Teachers files grievance
CNN program announced

MAY 1989

Discovery Channel
announces program
California to deny aid

JUNE 1989

New York Times Regents ad (6/13,15)
AFT softens
Rollout announced
The Educators' Channel
The Classroom Channel
Policy changes
Pilot test results
Gallup poll shows support

New Hampshire opposed
NSBA opposed
NPA opposed
AASA opposed
NASBE opposed
Massachusetts opposed
Alabama opposed
Rhode Island opposed
Wyoming opposed
New York ban

JULY 1989

Roper poll support

NEA vote

AUGUST 1989

Board of Advisers
Sales begin
Philips contract

Cincinnati opposed

SEPTEMBER 1989

\$150 million in ads sold

OCTOBER 1989

500 schools signed
Educators' Advisory Board
Samuels named executive producer

Cable Alliance formed
Arkansas opposed
Levi Strauss says no to ads

NOVEMBER 1989

1,050 schools signed

NEA posters
CNN has 4,000 schools

DECEMBER 1989

Whittle named most influential
person in public broadcasting

AASA denounces Channel One and supports CNN
National PTA "
NASSP "
NEA "
NSBA supports CNN

FEBRUARY 1990

New York Times ads (2/20,22,23,26,28)
2,500 schools
\$900,000 grant
Gallup results (news and equipment)

North Carolina ban

MARCH 1990

3,000+ schools
\$200 million in ads sold
New York Times ad 3/5
Channel One's official launch

North Carolina files lawsuit
ACT award to CNN

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE ADS (MARCH 1989)

THE NEW YORK TIMES
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 1989

"Dinner's ready!"

For too many students, this is the 6:00 news.

Teenagers have more on their minds than world news. And it shows. In a recent television special, high school students confidently reported that Chernobyl was Cher's full name. That the Avastropi thymers was a Russian gymnast. And that the District of Columbia was a country in Latin America. It's not far to ask the overburdened teachers in our underfunded schools to solve this problem alone. Obviously a news program that teenagers will watch would help. In fact, educators, children's advocates, and legislators have been calling for such a program for at least a decade. But the networks haven't supported it. Neither has the government. And in the face of the mounting deficit, government funding is even more unlikely. The need for this kind of program, however, remains great. It's precisely this need that Channel One is able to meet.



Through a partnership with private enterprise, our 12-minute news program for high school students will be tested in six pilot schools around the country. Because they don't have the equipment to receive this program, we're providing \$50,000 worth of technology to each school so that the show can be aired in every classroom. And if Channel One tests well, we're prepared to provide a quarter of a billion dollars' worth of equipment to high schools across America. What's made this possible is sponsorship. Needless to say, we won't run commercials unsuitable to a high school audience. Or any that teens don't already see at home. In spite of this, there are still critics who decry the presence of commercials in schools. But to us, the argument comes down to one very simple reality: if there aren't a few commercial interruptions, there won't be a program to interrupt at all.

THE NEW YORK TIMES
THURSDAY, MARCH 2, 1989

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1	20	39
2	21	40
3	22	41
4	23	42
5	24	43
6	25	44
7	26	45
8	27	46
9	28	47
10	29	48
11	30	49
12	31	50
13	32	51
14	33	52
15	34	53
16	35	54
17	36	55
18	37	56
19	38	57

Here's a list of everyone willing to donate \$250,000,000 to schools.

No one can afford it
including us.
And it's becoming apparent that government can no longer
equip schools on its own.
There are students today doing chemistry experiments over pop-
corn poppers. Because there aren't enough Bunsen burners.
And textbooks in use right now that predict man will one day land
on the moon.
It seems obvious to us that it's time to explore new, innovative
approaches to the funding of education.
And that's what we believe we've done with Channel One.
We're testing the sorely needed news program for high school
students in six pilot schools around the country. And since the schools
don't have the equipment to receive it, we've provided each one with
approximately \$50,000 worth of video technology.
If Channel One tests well, we're prepared to provide the program
every day of the school year to schools across America. Along
with a quarter-billion dollars' worth of equipment.
And needless to say, this equipment can bring more than

Channel One into classrooms. Once it's there, it can be put to endless
other educational uses.
All this has been made possible in the only way it could be made
possible—by running commercials on Channel One.
They won't be unsuitable for a high school audience. In fact, they
won't be commercials that students don't already see at home.
In spite of this, there are critics who would deprive students of both
Channel One and the equipment we're installing, rather than expose
them to two additional minutes of commercials a day.
Does that make sense when, on an average day in one major city
alone, 5,700 students sit in classrooms without even a teacher?
Can anyone seriously argue that 120 seconds of commercials
aren't a reasonable trade-off for the stimulation this news program and
the equipment would provide?
In an ideal world, perhaps we wouldn't have to choose between a
commercially funded news program or no news program at all.
But in the real world that's the only choice we have.
Unless there are some names for that list up there that we
don't know about.



A Division of United Communications

THE NEW YORK TIMES
MONDAY, MARCH 6, 1989

**You're holding
what may be the
single best place to
hide something
from a teenager.**

It's unlikely that many teenagers are reading this or any other newspaper.

Or watching the news on TV.

Or listening to it on radio.

Which helps explain why high school students have confidently reported that Chernobyl is Cher's full name.

And that the District of Columbia is a Central American country.

It's unfair to ask the overburdened teachers in our underfunded schools to solve this problem alone.

What's needed is a bold, innovative way to present the news so that it actually appeals to teenagers.

Channel One was designed to meet that need.

Conceived by teachers and created by journalists, this 12-minute news program for high school students will be tested in six pilot schools nationwide.

And because these schools lack the equipment to air it, we're providing each with \$50,000 worth of video technology.

Which can then be put to a variety of other educational uses.

If Channel One tests well, we're prepared to provide a quarter of a billion dollars' worth of equipment to high schools across the country.

Needless to say, this takes money that the government doesn't have.

It's precisely this lack of funding that for nearly a decade now has frustrated educators, children's advocates, and legislators in their efforts to get a news program for teenagers on the air.

There's only one possible way that Channel One could be made possible. And that's by running commercials on it.

We understand that our critics are concerned about this.

But there won't be any commercials that are unsuitable for a high school audience. And there won't be any that students don't already see at home.

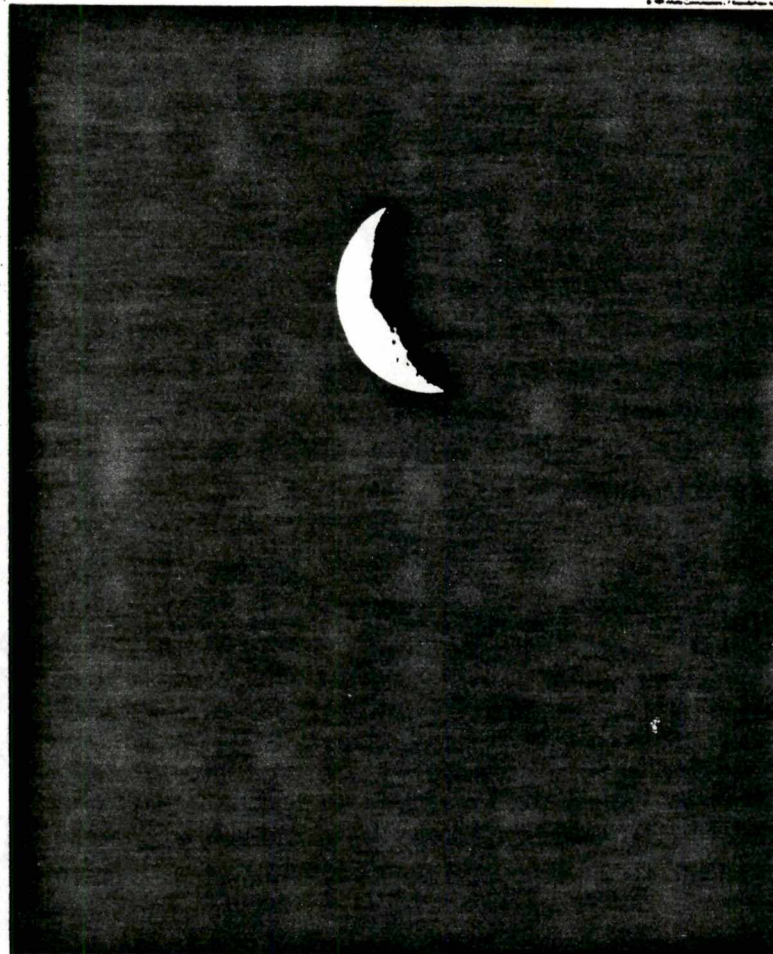
There is one difference, however.

Unlike the other commercials teenagers see, ours make an important news program possible.



A Division of Media Communications

THE NEW YORK TIMES
TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 1989



According to many high school textbooks, man will land here one day.

If we were living in the past, many of the textbooks in our schools would be right up to date.
And the amount of money that our government spends on each student per year would be more than sufficient for a proper education.
If we were living in the past.
But it's not 1959.
Today our country underfunds and underequips our schools and our teachers.
Our textbooks are often antiquated.
Some students are even performing chemistry experiments over popcorn poppers. Because there aren't enough Bunsen burners.
Clearly, schools are in desperate need of new materials.
But that takes money. And given a deficit of more than \$100 billion, it's very unlikely to come from government funds.
What's needed are new, innovative ways to fund education. That's one thing Channel One can accomplish.
Our 12-minute news program for high school students will be

tested in six schools nationwide. And because these schools lack the equipment to air it, we're providing each with \$50,000 worth of video technology, which can then be put to a multitude of other educational uses.

If Channel One tests well, we're prepared to provide the program every day of the school year to high schools across the country, along with a quarter of a billion dollars' worth of equipment.
This is made possible in the only way it could be made possible—by running commercials on Channel One.

Needless to say, that has been of some concern to some people. On the other hand, Channel One is all too likely the only source of valuable news for many of our teenagers. And the only feasible way our schools could possibly acquire the modern technology we're offering to be quite honest, critics who claim they're only thinking of our students leave us somewhat puzzled.
Because after all, if commercials don't fund our news program, it'll be students who really end up paying the price.



A Division of The New York Times Company

1. Jesse Jackson is an outfielder
on a major-league baseball team.

(T) F

2. Geraldine Ferraro is a
talk-show host.

(T) F

3. A silicon chip is a new kind
of snack food.

(T) F

Kids today have all the answers.

The responses above are all true—they were readily given by actual high school students.

Along with the rather interesting notion that Chernobyl was Cher's full name.

And that the District of Columbia was a Central American country. Not having the right answers to these questions is just the tip of the iceberg, though.

The larger question is how we can inform students of the world around them, in a way that stimulates and promotes questions and discussion. Even more important, however, is getting students in the habit of staying informed.

It's unfair to expect overburdened teachers in our underfunded schools to solve this problem alone.

Channel One was designed to help. Conceived by teachers and created by journalists, this 12-minute news program for high school students is being tested in six pilot schools nationwide. And because these schools lack the equipment to air it, we're providing each with \$50,000 worth of video technology. Which can then be put to a multitude of other educational uses.

If Channel One tests well, we're prepared to provide a quarter of a billion dollars' worth of equipment to high schools

across the country.

This takes money.

And there are no multiple choices here.

The government doesn't have the funds, not with a deficit of more than \$100 billion.

The only feasible way Channel One could be made possible is through sponsorship. Specifically, by running commercials during our news program.

Needless to say, these commercials will be suitable for a high school audience.

And there won't be any that students don't already see at home.

If society allows advertising to bring sitcoms, rock concerts, and sporting events to high schoolers, why refuse it for important educational programming?

It would appear that some critics feel that schools should be isolated from the real world.

But we feel that schools should prepare students for it, particularly since Channel One viewers are of the age where the real world is lying just beyond graduation.

And it's critical that they enter it knowing more than they do now: true or false?



A Division of America Communications

APPENDIX C

SAMPLE DIRECT MAIL PIECE

CHANNEL ONE: THE MYTHS AND THE FACTS

MYTH 1 Teens don't need Channel One because they can watch the evening news or read the newspaper at home.

FACT: Although some teenagers watch the news or read the newspaper, the majority do neither. And even those who do often don't retain it because they don't see its relevance to their lives.

A recent Gallup poll showed that nearly seven in 10 parents feel that junior and senior high school students should know more about current events. A recent report by education experts showed that students can't place some historical events in the correct half century, or the U.S. in the correct hemisphere. And a recent study by the National Geographic Society showed that nearly half of the adults surveyed didn't know that apartheid is the official government policy in South Africa, that Contras and Sandinistas have been battling in Nicaragua, or that Arabs and Jews are in conflict in Israel.

Clearly, Channel One will be a valuable resource for America's students.

MYTH 2 Channel One does not have a credible journalistic organization capable of providing world-wide news coverage.

FACT: Channel One is produced by the only news-gathering and reporting staff that is devoted exclusively to the production of news and information for teenagers. Channel One's 50-person staff includes producers and directors who have come from CBS News, ABC News, and NBC News, as well as other major news organizations. Collectively, the staff hold 15 Emmy's and numerous other awards for news production. Visnews, one of the largest news-gathering operations in the world, also provides the staff with a daily news feed.

The Executive Producer is Emmy Award winner Cynthia Samuels, who came to Channel One after nine years with NBC News where she was senior planning producer of the "Today" show. In 1987, she was the senior producer of NBC News' "Main Street", a monthly news hour for teenagers. In addition, she is the author of It's A Free Country: A Young Person's Guide to Politics and Elections.

Whittle Communications' Editor in Chief is William S. Rukeyser, who worked at Time Inc. for 21 years, 14 of which were spent as managing editor — first at Money and subsequently at Fortune. He also worked at The Wall Street Journal and was a daily commentator for the CBS radio stations.

MYTH 3 Channel One's news programming will be slanted and biased.

FACT: Channel One's news programming will be slanted. But in one way only — to increase the relevance of major domestic and international events to a teenager's life. Several factors ensure the daily delivery of a program driven by fact, not opinion: the journalistic integrity of the program producers; the review and guidance of the 22-member Advisory Board of Educators; the program review in 8,000 schools each morning prior to airing; and, the in-class review by 300,000 teachers on a daily basis. The ultimate assurance of high quality, unbiased programming is the fact that individual schools control the daily airing of Channel One.

MYTH
4

Channel One has no educational value. Its MTV-like approach is nothing more than an attempt to teach social studies by 90-second sound bites.

FACT: Channel One was created in response to the urgent challenges facing America's schools. Its educational goal is to heighten teens' awareness of and interest in events that shape our world. The concept was inspired by discussions with educators across the nation — educators who were concerned about the difficulty of making the outside world seem relevant and comprehensible to teenage students. Channel One's design and content have been shaped by a 22-member Advisory Board of Educators which also assists in the development of monthly faculty guides to help classroom teachers fully utilize this valuable resource.

Over 10,000 students participated in last spring's pilot program. Preliminary research conducted during the pilot indicates that students who view Channel One demonstrate enhanced awareness, knowledge and understanding of major current events compared to those who don't. To confirm this, a major three-year tracking study designed to assess Channel One's contribution to student learning and its fit with the needs and demands of America's classrooms will be conducted by independent researchers highly re-spected in the field of education: Dr. Jerome Johnston of The University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research and Dr. Evelyn Brzezinski of Interest Applied Research.

MYTH
5

Whittle Communications is a marketing and advertising company that only pretends to care about education.

FACT: Whittle Communications is a media company that has served students and teachers with quality publications for over 20 years. Whittle currently publishes periodicals read by more than ten million students on over twenty thousand campuses — from elementary schools to colleges — and works with over 100 educational advisors to ensure that these publications offer the greatest benefit to both students and teachers. The company has won numerous awards for excellence in educational publishing from the Education Press Association of America. Moreover, the company has created the largest minority journalism scholarship program at the University of Tennessee and the company's chairman, Chris Whittle, has endowed a scholarship program at the University of Tennessee which will provide twenty full scholarships for each year's class.

MYTH
6

Parents believe that Channel One is a bad idea.

FACT: Precisely the opposite is true. A Gallup poll conducted among parents in 22 states across the nation shows that, on average, when parents of teenagers are introduced to the idea of a news program with commercials in school, 75% of them believe it to be appropriate for their child's school. A Roper poll confirmed what Gallup found: by a 5-to-2 margin. American parents are in favor of Channel One. And in another Gallup poll where parents were actually shown a Channel One program, 86% found it a good idea for high schools. Parents of teenagers obviously recognize the potential benefits of the Channel One program.

MYTH
7

Channel One's equipment is designed solely for showing its own daily 12-minute program and cannot be used for anything else.

FACT: The technology package installed within each participating school includes a fixed Ku-band satellite receiving dish, one VCR for recording and playing the Channel One daily news program, a second VCR for recording and playing programming on The Classroom Channel and The Educators' Channel as well as playing any other programming available to the school, an average of 35 television sets for classrooms and the internal wiring of the entire system. All of this equipment

is available for use by the school for broadcasting any programming which is not directly competitive with Channel One. Additionally, a school with a master antenna, second satellite dish, or cable service may connect into the system, thereby providing individual classrooms with access to programming from those sources. Moreover, each classroom set is conveniently installed with easy access to connections for the use of a VCR, video disc player, computer, camcorder, etc.

MYTH 8 CNN Newsroom offers the same thing as Channel One, but is better because it is "commercial free".

FACT: Although CNN Newsroom offers solid educational programming, it is clearly very different from Channel One. Channel One provides many resources that CNN Newsroom does not:

- **Equipment:** Unfortunately, only one in ten classrooms is currently equipped with a television set. Channel One provides the necessary technology to bring the news and other educational programming into every classroom in a school. Nationwide, Channel One will provide 8,000 satellite receiving dishes, 18,000 VCR's and 300,000 television sets. In contrast, CNN offers no equipment.
- **Teen-specific news programming:** Channel One is produced solely from a teenager's perspective with the goal of making current events relevant to a teenager's life.
- **Free faculty guide:** Each teacher will receive monthly at no cost a guide to the five-part series featured each week on Channel One. In the pilot, these series covered topics such as the environment, careers in the 1990's, Soviet teenagers, life in Japan, and the year 2001.
- **Additional programming:** In addition to Channel One, the Whittle Educational Network provides The Classroom Channel, which offers over 250 noncommercial enrichment programs each school year selected independently by Pacific Mountain Network, and The Educators' Channel, which will provide valuable programs on teaching techniques, classroom strategies, and trends in education beginning in the fall of 1990.

MYTH 9 Advertising on Channel One will be for products and services that are totally inappropriate for teens and the school environment.

FACT: Channel One specifically excludes advertising for numerous products and services, including alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, feminine hygiene products and contraceptives. Additionally, all advertising will be strictly controlled by stringent standards and practice guidelines developed in conjunction with and approved by educators. All commercials appearing on Channel One will be reviewed in advance by a panel of educators. And finally, every day the program can be previewed by school representatives before it is aired.

MYTH 10 Channel One's two minutes of commercials are just the beginning.

FACT: There will never be more than two minutes of commercials in Channel One — never. Channel One is bound by a contract with each participating school that categorically states that Channel One "will include not more than two minutes of commercial content." Moreover, those two minutes of commercials fund a wealth of educational resources:

- The daily Channel One news and information program
- The Classroom Channel, operated by Pacific Mountain Network under a \$4.3 million grant from Whittle Communications
- The Educators' Channel

- A free monthly guide for every teacher in every Channel One school
- A technology package that gives participating schools not only the ability to view all the programming provided by Whittle Communications, but also access to all equipment for any use the school may choose.

**MYTH
11**

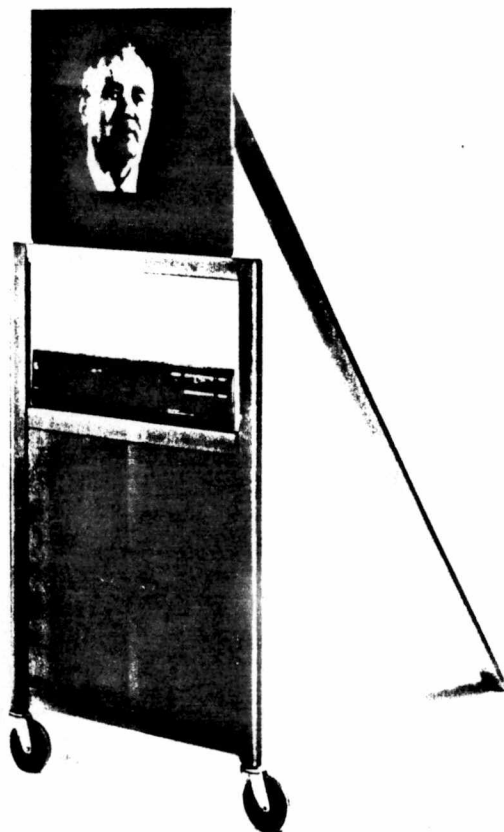
Channel One has designed a "Big Brother" plan to covertly audit every classroom participating in the program.

FACT: Channel One will have an audit system to sample the universe of participating classrooms. Only with prior permission of each school, five television sets in 250 of the 8,000 schools in the program will be equipped with a computer chip to electronically gather and report information as to whether the television was on or off, what the volume level was, and that the Channel One program was shown. This audit system serves two purposes: to make sure that both the satellite transmission and the in-school equipment are functioning properly and to confirm to Channel One advertisers that the program is indeed reaching schools. That's it.

APPENDIX D

SAMPLE ADS (FEBRUARY 1990)

THE NEW YORK TIMES
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1990



Come with us behind the scenes of the cable industry's school news show.

Shortly after we introduced Channel One, our news program for high school students, the cable industry announced a news show of its own. To be produced by CNN and shown in schools on equipment that was supposed to be donated by local cable operators. Some critics endorsed the cable show because, unlike Channel One, it promised to magically bring the news to students without exposing them to commercials.

The trouble is, it's not exposing them to news either.

The cable industry's claim that the show is already reaching students in 20% of all high schools and middle schools is a gross misrepresentation.

According to three separate waves of research conducted by one of the country's most respected polling companies, on any given day only 0.9% of all students nationwide see any news show in school.

And even fewer see the cable industry's show.
To put it bluntly, the industry's news program is reaching



A drawing of *Wolffia* *capitata* (left)

virtually no students

But then, how can it?

Right now a vast majority of teachers say that absolutely none of their classrooms has a permanently installed TV.

If there's one thing necessary to bring a television news program into schools, it's televisions.

And what the cable industry is supplying is all smoke and no screens.

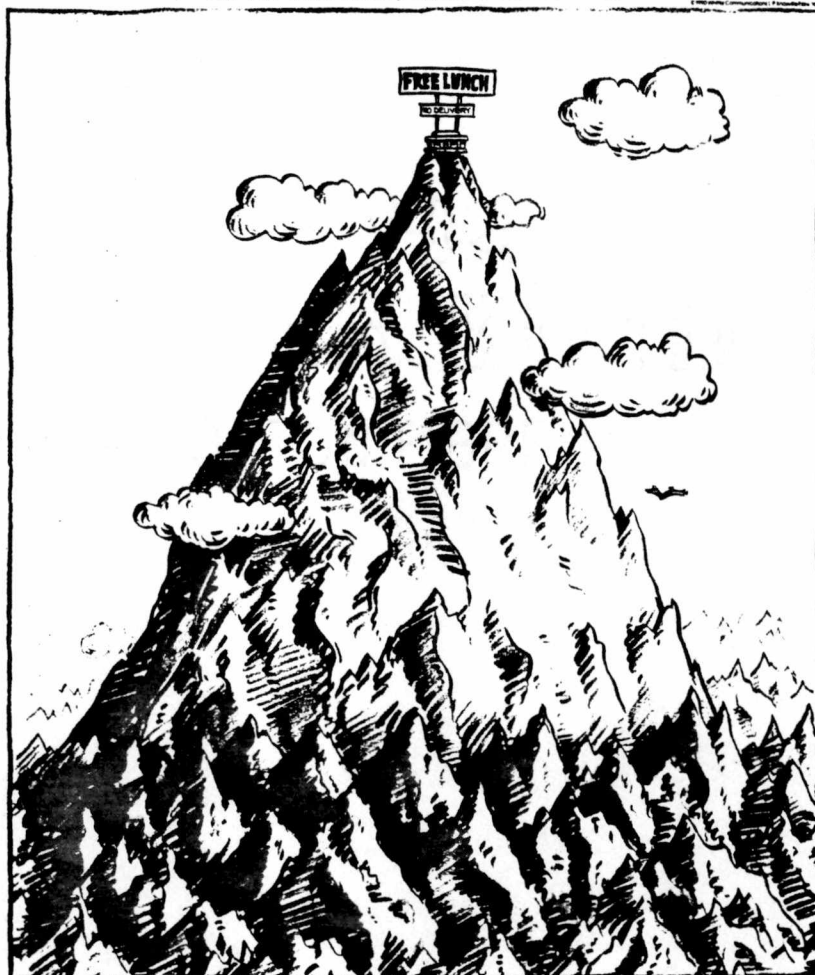
What's more, if the cable operators have yet to provide the hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of equipment required, why does anyone think they're any more likely to do it in the future?

What's particularly alarming about all this is that it's not simply misleading, it's dangerous.

Because as long as some people accept the rhetoric of the cable

industry, they won't grapple with the critical question of how to actually bring news and technology into our schools.

And unless adults become better informed, our students never will.



Shouldn't its supporters take a closer look at the cable industry's school news show?

A little over a year ago we announced plans for Channel One, a news program for high school students.

Not long after that, the cable industry announced that it too would provide students with a news show.

The show was to be produced by CNN. It was supposed to be shown in schools on equipment donated by local cable operators.

And unlike Channel One, it wouldn't have commercials. Some people thought that was great news.

The trouble is, the cable show has turned out to be no news. The industry's claim that it's already reaching students in 20% of all high schools and middle schools is a gross misrepresentation.

After three separate waves of research, one of the country's most respected polling organizations reported that only 0.9% of students nationwide see any news show in school on any given day.

And virtually none see the cable industry's show.

What's wrong? What's wrong is that you can't show students a television

news show when they don't have a television to watch it on.

And in spite of the cable industry's pledge, a vast majority of teachers still report that absolutely none of their classrooms has a permanently installed TV.

If all this amounted to was a broken promise, it would be bad enough.

What makes it worse is that students are being hurt by an industry encouraging schools to cling to an impossible hope.

Because as long as some people accept the cable industry's rhetoric, they won't grapple with the critical problem of how to actually bring news and technology into America's schools.

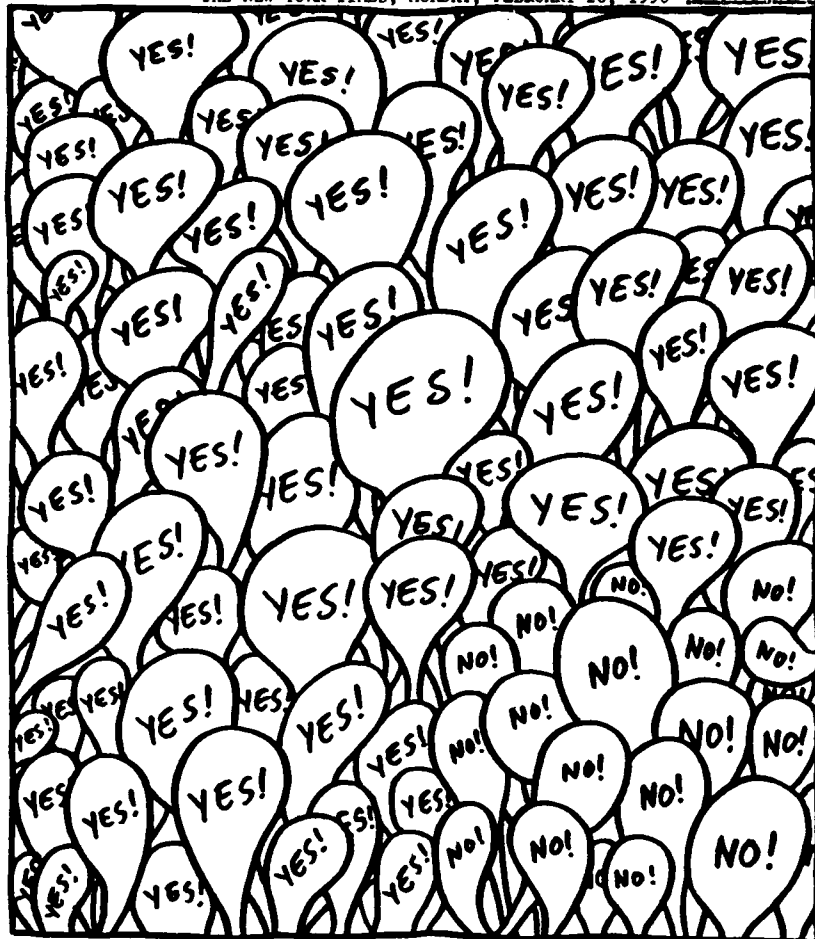
On March 5, we'll begin to address this problem in the first wave of the 2,500 schools that have already signed up for Channel One.

And a year from now we'll be reaching six million students in over 7,000 schools across the country.

So maybe it's time for the cable show's supporters to confront the fact that, as the old saying goes, there's no such thing as a free school news program.



A Division of Warner Communications



The no's have it.

Hold it!
Isn't the majority supposed to rule?
Apparently not.
At least not in a few unfortunate states when it comes to the question of Channel One, our news program for high school students. Thousands of middle schools and high schools in America want the program.
So do 87% of the parents who've seen it.
On top of that, governors across the country have endorsed the idea of keeping local school boards responsible for local schools.
But a handful of people in the educational bureaucracy still seem to think the only votes that count are theirs.
They've not only criticized the commercials required to fund Channel One, they've tried to strip local school boards of the right to have any say in the matter.
All of this, of course, couldn't come of a worse time.
The U.S. currently ranks last or close to last in virtually every comparison of student competence within the industrialized world.
We have students in this country who think that the gross national product is "the worst product a company makes."

And for too many who can't find their own continent on a map.
Not to mention their own country.
We also have a 27% dropout rate.
Can anyone seriously argue that the United States can afford to turn its back on important innovation and carry on with education as usual?
We're producing a program that can put America's students in touch with the world.
We're even providing the hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of equipment necessary to bring that program into classrooms.
In fact, we've already begun doing this in the 2,700 schools that have signed up for Channel One. And roughly 8,000 schools will have subscribed by the end of the year.
In spite of the opposition our critics have tried to mount.
It's time for those critics to respect the right of local boards, schools, principals, teachers, and parents to make their own decisions about Channel One.
After all, even Gorbachev came to see the advantages of decentralization over bureaucratic, dictatorial, long-distance decision-making.
And ironically, we're the country that showed him that.



A Division of World Communications

THE NEW YORK TIMES
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1990

STAY OUT OF THIS.

What your kids see in school is none of your business.

Any problems with that?
We think there are. But in a few states, certain people within the educational bureaucracy don't.
At least not when it comes to Channel One, our news program for high school students. They're trying to deny local school boards the right to make their own decisions about the program.
Even though governors across the country have endorsed the notion of local school boards remaining responsible for local schools.
Even though 2,700 middle and high schools have already signed up for Channel One and a total of 8,000 will have subscribed by the end of the year.
And even though 87% of parents across the country who've seen Channel One want it for their teenagers.
Nevertheless our critics still think their opinion is the only one that counts. And the timing couldn't be worse.
The U.S. comes last or close to last in virtually every comparison of student competence among the industrialized nations.

Some students even think Jesse Jackson is an outfielder on a major-league baseball team.
And others couldn't find the United States on a map.
Given all this, can we as a country really afford to ignore important innovations in education?
When you consider the fact that about four million of these same students become eligible to vote every year, the situation gets even more alarming. Especially since some of them haven't heard the news in years.
Which is exactly why we're providing it.
Plus hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of video equipment so that it can be seen in classrooms.
We're able to fund all this through commercial sponsorship.
And while we realize that's a problem for some people, we obviously respect their right to criticize Channel One. We just wish they'd respect other people's right to make up their own minds.
After all, the school boards of this country aren't children.



A Division of Tele-Communications

APPENDIX E

SAMPLE PROMOTIONAL BROCHURE

THE WHITTLE EDUCATIONAL NETWORK

Your introduction to the
many services of the Whittle
Educational Network and their
uses in the classroom

WELCOME TO THE WHITTLE EDUCATIONAL NETWORK, a comprehensive package of programming and equipment designed to provide teachers with innovative tools to help meet the learning needs of today's students. ☞

The Network includes three channels, all delivered to secondary schools through



"The maps in the Channel One program are really good, and we found a way to expand them and teach geography."

Jim Peters
Social Studies Teacher
Eisenhower Middle School
Kansas City, Kansas

satellite: **Channel One**, a daily 12-minute news-and-information program; the **Classroom Channel**, a series of programs designed as a supplemental teaching tool to support existing curricula; and the **Educators' Channel**, a program service dedicated to the professional development of today's educator. ☞ The Whittle

Educational Network is available to your school at no cost and is operated by Whittle Communications

L.P., of Knoxville, Tennessee, an educational publisher for 20 years.

The network is supported by corporate sponsorship. Each 12-minute **Channel One** program includes four 30-second commercials.



"The equipment was really valuable. Now we videotape speakers so that the whole student body can see them."

Robin Oden
Principal
Mumford High School
Detroit, Michigan

☞ In order to receive and show Whittle Educational

Network programming, each school is given video equipment free of charge. This equipment includes a satellite dish, two videocassette recorders, and color television sets. Free maintenance of equipment is provided. ☞ Here is your introduction to the many services of the Whittle Educational Network.



"Channel One gave all of my students a shared experience."

Toni Ware
English Teacher
Cabrillo High School
Cerritos, California

THE WHITTLE EDUCATIONAL NETWORK: AN OVERVIEW

Through hundreds of hours of programming a year, the Network furnishes timely and useful information to enhance education and keep students informed and involved. The concept for the Whittle Educational Network grew out of discussions with teachers and administrators about the daily challenges they face, their goals for the future, and the tools they'll need to meet those goals. What you receive in your classroom is the product of several years of study and development. To ensure that these high standards are maintained, a Council of Advisers—composed of education, business, and government leaders and headed by former U.S. secretary of education Terrel H. Bell—oversees the Network's activities. (A complete list of the Council of Advisers appears on the back page.)

WHAT IS CHANNEL ONE?

Channel One is the core element of the Whittle Educational Network.

Channel One is a 12-minute daily news-and-information program carefully designed to make the news relevant to the concerns and studies of teenagers. It offers students a regular opportunity to digest the events of the day and to connect the significance of those events to their own lives.

Schools have discretionary power in deciding when to show *Channel One* during the day. Principals have an opportunity to view each program before airing it. If they deem a particular program inappropriate, they may opt not to air *Channel One* that day.



WHAT IS THE CLASSROOM CHANNEL?

The Classroom Channel is an independent, noncommercial educational program service developed by Pacific Mountain Network.

The Classroom Channel is designed as an enrichment tool. Pacific Mountain Network, a nonprofit agency owned and operated by 43 public television stations, annually supplies 250 programs. Guides listing the individual transmission dates and a short description of each program are sent quarterly to your school's media specialist or librarian.



WHAT IS THE EDUCATORS' CHANNEL?

The Educators' Channel is a program service dedicated to the professional development of today's educator.

Beginning in the fall of 1990, the Educators' Channel will provide valuable programs on teaching techniques, classroom strategies, and updates on current trends **THE EDUCATORS' CHANNEL** and research.

How I Used Channel One in My School

"We bought motivational videotapes, and we broadcast how-to-study and self-discipline programs and antidrug messages. These programs have really helped our students."

Robin Oden
Principal
Mumford High School
Detroit, Michigan

All comments are from teachers whose schools participated in the Channel One pilot test.



HOW IS THE WHITTLE EDUCATIONAL NETWORK BROADCAST TO SCHOOLS?

Using state-of-the-art production facilities and a staff of more than 50 full-time communications professionals, the Whittle Educational Network provides a variety of educational programming to your school. Here is how Channel One is delivered:



1 PROGRAM PRODUCTION.

Every day, *Channel One* is produced in studios in New York City. *Channel One* world and national news footage comes from its own crews and VIS News, a joint venture of NBC, Reuters, and the British Broadcasting Corporation.

2 BROADCAST BY SATELLITE.

The completed *Channel One* broadcast—featuring late-breaking news—is transmitted to schools by satellite before dawn every day.

3 RECEPTION BY SATELLITE DISH.

The school receives the *Channel One* signal using a roof- or side-mounted, nonpenetrating, aluminum satellite dish.

4 TAPING AND PREVIEW.

The *Channel One* broadcast is automatically recorded on videotape in the principal's office, library, or other location of the school's choice. Recording occurs daily before 6 a.m. Eastern Time to allow the principal or a designated representative ample time to preview the broadcast before it is shown.

5 DISTRIBUTION TO CLASSROOMS.

Whittle provides 19-inch televisions throughout your school as well as the internal wiring to transmit all programming.

TAPING AND PREVIEW OF OTHER NETWORK PROGRAMS

Programs for the Classroom Channel and the Educators' Channel are recorded and played on a second VCR, which can also play programming from other sources.



How I Used Channel One in My School

"When I was leading class discussions, I could make a comparison to something from Channel One and know that all of my students could identify and discuss the reference."

Toni Ware
English Teacher
Cabrillo High School
Cerritos, California

CHANNEL ONE: AN OVERVIEW

CHANNEL ONE'S EDUCATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

The Channel One production staff works with an advisory board of 22 experienced educators. The board contributes guidance and perspective as well as programming ideas and detailed assistance in the creation of the Channel One Teachers' Guide.



John Arevalo
San Antonio, Texas
Arevalo is a history teacher at Harlandale High School in San Antonio.



Betty Berry
Knoxville, Tennessee
Berry chairs the science department at Central High School in Knoxville.



Iris Carl
Houston, Texas
Carl is the incoming president of the National Council of Teachers of Math.



Patrick Daly
Detroit, Michigan
Daly is a national vice-president of the American Federation of Teachers and a history teacher at Henry Ford Community College in Detroit.



Ben Ebersole
Hershey, Pennsylvania
Ebersole is the assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction for the Hershey Public School System.



Joseph Feinstein
Los Angeles, California
Feinstein is a reading specialist in Los Angeles who has taught high school for 32 years.



Anne Luncsford Ferguson
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
Ferguson is a teacher for the Coeur d'Alene school district and founder of TV271, a student-run television program.



Joel Fink
Louisville, Kentucky
Fink is a guidance counselor at South Oldham High School in Crestwood. He was the State Teacher of the Year in 1986.



Joseph Nguyen-Trung Hieu
Chicago, Illinois
Hieu is a faculty member in the National College of Education's Asian Bilingual Teacher Training Program.



Elizabeth Lambert Johns
Alexandria, Virginia
Johns chairs the Division of Social Sciences at Northern Virginia Community College.



Susan Kaplan
Providence, Rhode Island
Kaplan is an English teacher at Classical High School in Providence.



Gerard Katz
Washington, D.C.
Katz is the executive director of the National Energy Education Development Project.



N. B. Martin
Visalia, California
Martin is a noted historian, lecturer, and professor emeritus at the College of the Sequoias.



Richard McCarron
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
McCarron is director of Secondary School Curriculum Instruction for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.



Damon Moore
Muncie, Indiana
Moore is a biology and chemistry teacher in the Muncie School System.



Elaine Mosley
Chicago, Illinois
Mosley is the chief administrator of the Corporate/Community Schools of America, a privately funded Chicago inner-city school.



Jane Oates-Lichman
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Oates-Lichman is a special-education teacher at Stetson Junior High School in Philadelphia.



Robin Oden
Detroit, Michigan
Oden is the principal of Mumford High School in Detroit.



Pat Scales
Greenville, South Carolina
Scales is a librarian at Greenville Middle School and teaches at Furman University and the University of South Carolina.



Tom Sedgwick
Tacoma, Washington
Sedgwick is a mathematics teacher at Lincoln High School in Tacoma.



Jay Sommer
New Rochelle, New York
Sommer is a foreign-language teacher and a former National Teacher of the Year.



Terry Wyatt
Toledo, Ohio
Wyatt is a physics teacher at DeVilbiss High School in Toledo.

How I Used Channel One in My Classroom

"Almost all of our social-studies teachers found that Channel One worked its way into the curriculum. The program fit well with students at all levels of ability."

Jim Peters
Social-Studies Teacher
Eisenhower Middle School
Kansas City, Kansas



THE FIVE EDUCATIONAL GOALS

Channel One's programming is designed to address five specific educational goals:

1. TO ENHANCE CULTURAL LITERACY. Recent studies have shown that America's young people are deficient in their knowledge of world culture compared with their peers in other nations. *Channel One* helps teachers address the problem daily by offering students news-and-information programming.

2. TO PROMOTE CRITICAL THINKING. Through careful reporting and in-depth analysis, *Channel One* aims to explore the moral, social, and political issues of our day.

3. TO PROVIDE A COMMON LANGUAGE AND SHARED EXPERIENCE. Each day, *Channel One* brings students across the country together. Issues of common concern are presented to young people of widely varying backgrounds.

4. TO PROVIDE RELEVANCE AND MOTIVATION. *Channel One* makes current events relevant by showing the direct connection between global news events and the everyday lives of its viewers. Once this connection is understood, young people may be motivated to care about current events and seek further information about the issues of the day.

5. TO STRENGTHEN CHARACTER AND BUILD A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY. By presenting role models students can relate to and respect—political leaders, athletes, scholars, and the like—*Channel One* reinforces the positive values that schools and teachers strive to develop in students.



How I Used Channel One in My Classroom

"Channel One changed the conversations and the thoughts of our students. I even received phone calls from parents who told me how dinner conversations had changed and how pleased they were that their children were becoming informed about current events."

Nadine Barreto
Principal
Gabriela High School
Cerritos, California

THE EDITOR IN CHIEF AND THE EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

The Channel One news team is led by noted journalists William S. Rukeyser and Cynthia Samuels.



WILLIAM S. RUKEYSER

Rukeyser is editor in chief of Whittle Communications. Prior to joining Whittle, Rukeyser spent 21 years at Time Inc., where he was managing editor of *Money* and *Fortune*.

"Channel One mobilizes unmatched resources to bring the world into your classroom every day. The standards are rigorous and enforced by a large staff of award-winning broadcast journalists who have rapid access to the world's best news footage and electronic maps and graphics. Only Channel One reports every story from a teenage perspective and adds the context and background necessary to link news events to students' lives and studies. It's a breakthrough that excites students and helps teachers teach."



CYNTHIA SAMUELS

Samuels is the executive producer of *Channel One*. She was associated with NBC's *Today Show* for nine years, including stints as political producer and, most recently, as planning producer. In 1987 she was senior producer of NBC's *Main Street*, an acclaimed monthly news program aimed at teenagers.

"Welcome to Channel One. It is our hope that we can be a passport to the outside world for your students. Through our reports they will learn that world events happen not just to adults, but also to people their own age."

"According to the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate, only 29 percent of our 18- to 24-year-olds bothered to vote in 1988. Students don't feel they have a stake in their own futures. Channel One's goal is to change their minds."

CHANNEL ONE: AN OVERVIEW

THE PROGRAM: MINUTE BY MINUTE

The Channel One format was developed to provide daily news and information that engages students and helps teachers spark discussion. Here is a diagnostic evaluation of each major segment's goals as well as specific examples of how the segments are executed.

THE CHALLENGE: Young people are not as aware of current events as many educators believe they should be.

THE SOLUTION: "Up Front," 2 1/2 minutes
"Up Front," the opening section of each Channel One broadcast, features news stories from around the United States and the world.



Examples: Mikhail Gorbachev visits Cuba; Alaska suffers the nation's worst oil spill in history

ONE MINUTE OF SPONSORSHIP MESSAGES

THE CHALLENGE: Teenagers do not see the significance of many news stories because they do not perceive any relevance between those events and their own lives.

THE SOLUTION: "News Focus," 1 1/2 minutes
"News Focus" explores one of the day's "Up Front" stories in greater depth by showing students how it affects their peers.



Examples: Cuban teenagers discuss life in their country; Amerasian teenagers talk about their plight

THE CHALLENGE: Teenagers appear to lack the in-depth knowledge about and understanding of the broad issues that underlie each day's news coverage.

THE SOLUTION: "World Class," 3 1/2 minutes
"World Class" is a five-part series that covers a single topic in depth each week. Each day's segment covers one aspect of the topic.



Examples: The environment; careers in the '90s

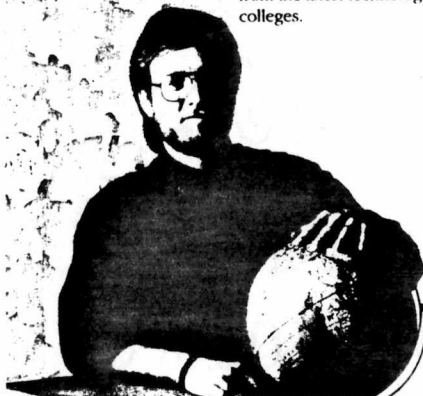
ONE MINUTE OF SPONSORSHIP MESSAGES

THE CHALLENGE: Students need knowledge about a variety of topics not directly covered in the school curriculum but of importance in their lives.

THE SOLUTION: "Special Feature," 2 1/2 minutes
"Special Feature" covers topics from sports to science, from managing money to getting a job, from the latest technological advances to the best colleges.



Examples: A legally blind teenage basketball player overcomes his impairment; Amnesty International fights human-rights abuse



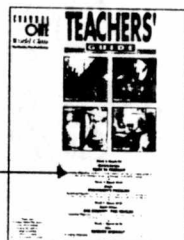
How I Used Channel One in My Classroom

"Almost daily Channel One helped me to take things out of the textbook and have students visualize them. That was invaluable to me."

Gordon Sisk
Social Studies Teacher
Central High School
Knoxville, Tennessee

THE TEACHERS' GUIDE

Channel One supplies teachers with a monthly programming and discussion guide to assist them in using the weekly five-part "World Class" series in their classrooms. The guide previews each week's series and features activity and discussion suggestions, a brief listing of relevant resources, and a short glossary of terms used in the series. It is meant to be used at the discretion of the individual teacher.



LEARNING OBJECTIVE: The learning goal that Channel One hopes students will achieve in that week's series.



CALENDAR: The Channel One Teachers' Guide features a two-page "month-at-a-glance" calendar with daily summaries for that month's "World Class" series programming. The calendar is meant to be posted in classrooms for easy reference.



RESOURCES: A listing of suggested support materials for further analysis of the subject.

RELATED ACTIVITIES: Suggestions for in-class discussions, projects, and activities that tie the "World Class" series to various curriculum disciplines.

DISCUSSION SUGGESTION: A suggestion for stimulating student interaction and debate about the day's "World Class" segment.

GLOSSARY: The spelling and definition of some of the key words and phrases in each five-part series.



"WORLD CLASS" PREVIEW: Learning objectives for upcoming "World Class" series programming.

CLASSROOM CHANNEL HIGHLIGHTS: Selected offerings from the month's Classroom Channel broadcasts. A complete guide is sent to your school's media specialist or librarian.



How I Used Channel One in My Classroom

"What I enjoyed was that students really became much more keyed into current events. The topics covered became regular parts of student journals and also wound up in student conversations more often. Sometimes I heard students talking about the day's news at lunch or between classes."

Dawn McDuffie
English Teacher
Mumford High School
Detroit, Michigan

COUNCIL OF ADVISERS FOR THE WHITTLE EDUCATIONAL NETWORK

The Council of Advisers is made up of education, business, and government leaders who provide overall advice and counsel for the Whittle Educational Network.



Terrel H. Bell (chairman)
Bell served as U.S. commissioner of education (1974-1976) and U.S. secretary of education (1981-1985).



Lamar Alexander
Alexander is president of the University of Tennessee and is a member of the president's Education Policy Advisory Committee.



Alex Haley
Haley is a Pulitzer Prize-winning writer and author of the bestseller *Roots*.



James Harvey
Harvey is a former senior staff member of the National Institute of Education and is the author of *American Potential: The Human Dimension*.



Martina Horner
Horner is a member of the Council for Aid to Education and a former president of Radcliffe College.



Jenelle Leonard
Leonard is the director of the Computer Literacy Training Laboratory for the District of Columbia public schools.



J. Richard Munro
Munro is co-chairman and co-chief executive officer of Time Warner Inc.



H. Ross Perot
Perot is the founder of Electronic Data Systems and the former head of the Texas select committee on public education.



Kenneth Rossano
Rossano is a member of the Education, Employment, and Training Committee for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.



Joseph Scherer
Scherer is the executive director of the National School Public Relations Association.



Albert Shanker
Shanker is president of the American Federation of Teachers and a past president of the United Federation of Teachers.



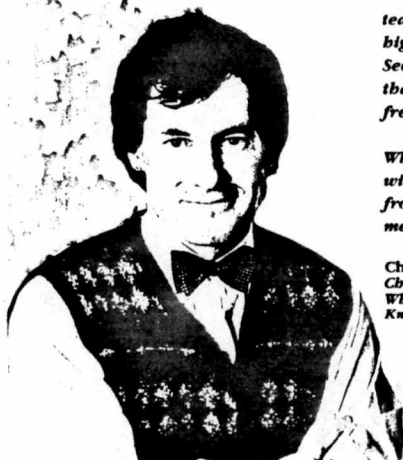
Frederick W. Smith
Smith is chairman and president of Federal Express and serves on the boards of directors of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and E. W. Scripps Company.

"The challenges facing today's secondary school teachers have never been greater. Educators must prepare students to enter a world full of technology, yet their own schools often lack basic technological resources. They must teach students to understand a world that is rapidly changing, yet their own teaching materials are often outdated.

"At Whittle Communications, we are committed to helping teachers and schools meet these challenges. First, we are providing high-quality programming that meets a variety of educational needs. Second, we are providing technology to schools at no cost—technology that they can use and build on while leaving their own scarce resources free for other educational purposes.

"We are pleased that your school has chosen to be part of the Whittle Educational Network. We've spent hundreds of hours talking with teachers to create this system and would certainly like to hear from you directly if you have any comments that will help us better meet your needs."

Chris Whittle
Chairman
Whittle Communications
Knoxville, Tennessee



Teacher photographs: Blake Little; Chart: Dale Glasgow; Cynthia Korman; Sylvia Plachy; Albert Shanker: Larry Harris; Black Star; Chris Whittle: Jean Pagliaro

Please direct questions or comments about the Whittle Educational Network to Customer Service, 505 Market St., Knoxville, Tenn. 37902, or call toll-free

800-445-2619

APPENDIX F

SAMPLE TEACHERS' GUIDE

**CHANNEL
ONE**
World Class
The Weekly Five-Part Series

TEACHERS' GUIDE



Week 1: March 5-9

Eastern Europe:

RUSH TO FREEDOM

Learning Objective: To help students understand the profound political and social changes occurring throughout Eastern Europe.

Week 2: March 12-16

Drugs:

EVERYBODY'S PROBLEM

Learning Objective: To help students recognize the far-reaching social and economic effects of our nation's drug and alcohol problems.

Week 3: March 19-23

South Africa:

ONE COUNTRY, TWO WORLDS

Learning Objective: To help students understand the South African system of racial segregation known as apartheid.

Week 4: March 26-30

Jobs:

SUMMER WORKOUT

Learning Objective: To help students assess the local summer job market and gain insight into the wide variety of available work options.

Please note:
Although Channel One makes every effort to keep these guides current, all programming is subject to change as news developments warrant.

Post in your classroom for quick reference

CHANNEL ONE

World Class
The Weekly Five-Part Series

MA

MONDAY
PART ONE

5

Eastern Europe:

RUSH TO FREEDOM

Learning Objective: To help students understand the profound political and social changes occurring throughout Eastern Europe.

Executive Producer's Note

"The revolution in Berlin is a metaphor for everything that has happened in Eastern Europe. This week we'll show, through visits to young people on both sides of the Wall, that this abstract event happened to real people. We'll also offer a historical view and look into the future."

—Cynthia Samuels



FALL OF THE WALL

The post-World War II division of Europe into East and West created many problems. Citizens of those countries behind the Iron Curtain were stripped of individual freedoms.

12

Drugs:

EVERYBODY'S PROBLEM

Learning Objective: To help students recognize the far-reaching social and economic effects of our nation's drug and alcohol problems.

Executive Producer's Note

"No issue facing us today has received more attention than drug abuse. The premise of this series is that, beyond the addict and the dealer, drug trafficking and drug abuse touch all lives and have an impact on all parts of society."

—C. S.

THE DIRTY WAR

The illicit drug market includes more than just seller and user. Who else is affected?

19

South Africa:

ONE COUNTRY, TWO WORLDS

Learning Objective: To help students understand the South African system of racial segregation known as apartheid.

Executive Producer's Note

"Racial segregation in South Africa is a much-discussed topic these days—one that has far-reaching effects beyond the confines of Soweto and Cape Town. We'll offer some perspective on the history of South Africa and show the reality of life in South Africa by visiting teenagers of both races."

—C. S.

IN BLACK AND WHITE

Legally enforced racial discrimination in South Africa has existed for centuries. Increased criticism from inside and outside the country, however, is forcing its government to take another look at its policy of apartheid.

26

Jobs:

SUMMER WORKOUT

Learning Objective: To help students assess the local summer job market and gain insight into the wide variety of available work options.

Executive Producer's Note

"Even a simple movie date can break the bank these days. We're going to try to show teenagers ways that they can find summer work, job ideas that they might not have considered, and the laws and regulations that govern the employment of minors."

—C. S.

WHEEL OF FORTUNE

There are many ways to track down summer employment. Preparation and knowledge about where to look can save time and effort.

Eastern Europe:

RUSH TO
FREEDOM

Learning Objective: To help students understand the profound political and social changes occurring throughout Eastern Europe.

As the decade began, the world watched Eastern Europeans demand an end to Communism. The most symbolic event may have been the breaching of the Berlin Wall. This series will examine the developments in Eastern Europe by focusing on the recent changes in East and West Germany.

RESOURCES

For more information, refer to these materials.

Books

The Nations Behind the Iron Curtain by Henry Bogdan (Pro Libertate Publishing, 1988)
A chronicle of political life in the Communist bloc.

The Berlin Wall: Kennedy, Khrushchev, and a Showdown in the Heart of Europe by Norman Gelb (Simon & Schuster, 1988)

An explanation of the events that led to the construction of the Berlin Wall.

Magazines

"Freedom!" (cover story). *Time*, November 20, 1989, pp. 24-33

An in-depth look at the fall of the Berlin Wall.

GLOSSARY

Berlin Wall:

A 28-mile wall erected in 1961 by the East German government to separate East and West Berlin. The Wall was later reinforced by concrete, steel, and barbed wire.

Cold War:

A term for the hostile post-World War II relations between the Western powers, led by the United States, and the Communist bloc, led by the Soviet Union.

MONDAY

March

5

PART ONE:

FALL OF THE WALL

The post-World War II division of Europe into East and West created many problems.

Discussion suggestion: Dramatic reforms have taken place recently in several Eastern European countries. What reasons might your students give for these sweeping changes?

TUESDAY

March

6

PART TWO:

AT WHAT PRICE?

For many in East Germany, escape was the only answer.

Discussion suggestion: East and West Germans share a language, culture, and history. Ask your students how East German teenagers felt, knowing that their opportunities were limited compared with those of their Western cousins.

WEDNESDAY

March

7

PART THREE:

THE EAST

East Germans lived a guarded existence in the shadow of the Wall.

Discussion suggestion: In the past, East German citizens risked punishment for speaking out against their government. How would your students feel if our government forbade them to voice their opinions?

THURSDAY

March

8

PART FOUR:

THE WEST

Life in West Germany closely resembles life in our country.

Discussion suggestion: The incidence of drug abuse and crimes committed by teenagers is considerably higher in West Germany than in East Germany. Ask your students to discuss this troubling phenomenon.

FRIDAY

March

9

PART FIVE:

NEW BEGINNINGS

Other Eastern European countries are also struggling with new freedoms.

Discussion suggestion: To rebuild their economies, many of these countries may seek American financial aid. Should the United States give money to them—even if it means cutting defense spending or social programs at home?

RELATED ACTIVITIES:



SOCIAL STUDIES/GOVERNMENT

Ask students to write down and discuss the three rights or freedoms they would have missed most by living in East Germany before the recent reforms.



SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY

Ask students to discuss the role the news media played in the East German upheaval. Would changes there and in other parts of Eastern Europe have come more slowly if the rest of the world had not been aware of the uprisings?



MATH/ECONOMICS

The population of East Germany is 17 million. Roughly 250,000 of its citizens left the country by the end of 1989. What percentage of the East German population emigrated?



HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY

Have students research the events that led to the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961.



ENGLISH/LITERATURE

Discuss with your students what it might have been like for dissident writers such as Alexander Solzhenitsyn and Vaclav Havel to live under the rule of Communist orthodoxy. Do your students think that freedom of expression is a privilege or a birthright?

Drugs:

EVERYBODY'S
PROBLEM

Learning Objective: To help students recognize the far-reaching social and economic effects of our nation's drug and alcohol problems.

The impact of our nation's substance-abuse problems is devastating. This series will go beyond the plain facts about substance abuse and analyze the drug economy as it affects those on both sides of the law: the drug dealers, traffickers, and money launderers as well as the political, medical, and law-enforcement officials fighting to stem the deadly tide.

RESOURCES

For more information, refer to these materials.

Books

The Cocaine Kids by Terry Williams
(Addison-Wesley, 1989)
The inside story of a teenage drug ring.

Everything You Need to Know About Drug Abuse
by Jacqueline A. Ball (Rosen Publishing Group, 1988)
Facts and information about street drugs and their effects upon the user.

Fifty-Seven Reasons Not to Do Drugs by M. M. Kirsch
(CompCare, 1987)
A look at addiction.

GLOSSARY

Drug addiction:
A form of physical and psychological dependence characterized by an overwhelming need to consume drugs.

Illegal drug:
A usually addictive substance that the government has banned.

Withdrawal symptoms:
Physical and psychological side effects associated with a chronic user's giving up drugs or alcohol.

RELATED ACTIVITIES:



SOCIAL STUDIES/GOVERNMENT

Drug abusers often lead lives of crime to pay for their habits. Some people believe crime would diminish if drugs were legalized. Discuss the pros and cons of the legalization of such drugs as marijuana and cocaine.



SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY

Fetal alcohol syndrome—characterized by deformities and mental deficiency caused by maternal alcoholism—affects thousands of babies. Do your students know the physiological damage that alcohol abuse can cause unborn babies?



MATH/ECONOMICS

The drug economy works according to the laws of supply and demand. Have your students discuss the drug market as it relates to the workings of capitalism.



HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY

Drug abuse and addiction are not new. From ancient Greece to Victorian England, substance abuse has been a fact of life. Why do students think that people have turned to drugs?



ENGLISH/LITERATURE

Ask students to discuss the role that peer pressure plays in drug abuse. For further reference, suggest that your students read *Addicted: Kids Talking About Drugs in Their Own Words* (Tom Doherty Associates, 1989).

MONDAY

March

12

PART ONE:

THE DIRTY WAR

The illicit drug market includes more than just seller and user.

Discussion suggestion: Organizations such as the Partnership for a Drug-Free America work to control the damage caused by the drug market. What can your students do to make their school a drug-free zone?

TUESDAY

March

13

PART TWO:

ON THE FRONT LINES

Fighting drugs in schools often requires creative measures.

Discussion suggestion: Many students know about illicit drug activity but say nothing to teachers or parents. Why do these students remain silent?

WEDNESDAY

March

14

PART THREE:

LIFE AND DEATH AT THE SOURCE

Medellin, Colombia, is home to the notorious Colombian drug lords.

Discussion suggestion: Drugs are a fundamental part of the Central and South American economies. How would your students feel if their parents derived their income from an illegal product? Is this a moral issue?

THURSDAY

March

15

PART FOUR:

DEADLY DEPENDENCE

CAT scans can offer dramatic evidence of the damage drugs inflict on the body.

Discussion suggestion: Students frequently say that they are numb to the many messages that claim drugs can kill. Do they know, however, the specific damage that drugs such as marijuana and cocaine can cause?

FRIDAY

March

16

PART FIVE:

GETTING HIGH, GETTING HELP

There are not enough prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation programs.

Discussion suggestion: Group homes, private centers, and one-on-one counseling services are just a few of the options available to those who need help. Do your students know about the treatment options available in your community?

South Africa:

ONE COUNTRY,
TWO WORLDS

Learning Objective: To help students understand the South African system of racial segregation known as apartheid.

Since the first European settlements were established in South Africa in 1652, the country's black majority has lived under the dominance of a white minority. Increased criticism from inside and outside South Africa, however, is forcing the country's government to take another look at its policies of apartheid.

RESOURCES

For more information, refer to these materials.

Books

Apartheid: A History by Brian Lapping
(George Braziller, 1987)

A short introduction to the development of race relations in South Africa.

Kaffir Boy: The True Story of a Black Youth's Coming of Age in Apartheid South Africa by Mark Mathabane
(Macmillan, 1986)

The autobiography of a poor black boy who grew up in South Africa.

Somehow We Survive edited by Sterling Plumpp
(Thunder's Mouth, 1982)

Poems and other writings by South Africans.

RELATED ACTIVITIES:



SOCIAL STUDIES/GOVERNMENT

Have students discuss how the South African government is changing to end apartheid. Ask your students to compare its actions to those taken last year by the governments of several Eastern European countries. Why has each country's government responded differently?



SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY

South Africa produces most of the world's gem diamonds and gold, has large coal reserves, and is rich in uranium, iron ore, and other minerals. Have your class research the processes by which these natural resources are formed.



MATH/ECONOMICS

The population of South Africa is 35,625,000. Sixty-eight percent of the population is black, and 18 percent is white. Have your students calculate the number of people in each racial group.



HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY

Ask your students why they believe racism exists. Do they feel that racism is innate or learned?



ENGLISH/LITERATURE

Ask your students to read a poem or short story by an anti-apartheid writer, such as Victor Mollou or Bessie Head. Ask them to discuss the devices and phrases the author uses to express the injustices of racism and apartheid.

MONDAY

March

19

PART ONE:

IN BLACK AND WHITE

Legally enforced racial discrimination in South Africa has existed for centuries.

Discussion suggestion: Ask your students to compare the treatment of blacks in South Africa today with that of blacks in the United States during the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

TUESDAY

March

20

PART TWO:

SO CLOSE, SO FAR APART

Visits with a black teenager and a white teenager illustrate two worlds.

Discussion suggestion: What freedoms do your students feel all people should have? Ask them under what circumstances, if any, someone should be denied those freedoms.

WEDNESDAY

March

21

PART THREE:

BITTER LEGACY

Apartheid has created generations of undereducated black youths.

Discussion suggestion: Ask your students what suggestions they might have toward ending apartheid in South Africa. Do they feel violence is a necessary part of the struggle?

THURSDAY

March

22

PART FOUR:

INCHING TOWARD CHANGE

Young South Africans—both black and white—are beginning a move toward a new way of life.

Discussion suggestion: Ask your students why they think the South African government has been reluctant to end apartheid—even in the face of international criticism.

FRIDAY

March

23

PART FIVE:

TOUGH CHOICES

Will the South African government change its segregation policies?

Discussion suggestion: Ask your students to discuss whether sanctions against South Africa will help stop apartheid or will simply hurt black workers there. Must people change themselves or can change be forced upon them by other countries?

Jobs:

SUMMER
WORKOUT

Learning Objective: To help students assess the local summer job market and gain insight into the wide variety of available work options.

The summer job market can be confusing to young people. Part-time work in America has undergone fundamental changes during the last few years. This series will help students learn where to look for summer jobs, where to find jobs that require special talents, and how to become teenage entrepreneurs

RESOURCES

For more information, refer to these materials.

Books

Peterson's Summer Opportunities for Kids and Teenagers, 1990 edited by Terry Schneider (Peterson's Guides, 1989)
A sourcebook for summer activities.

Summer Employment Directory 1990 by Pat Beusterien (Writer's Digest Books, 1989)
A resource guide for students.

What Color Is Your Parachute? 1990 by Richard N. Bolles (Ten Speed Press, 1990)
A practical manual for job-hunters.

GLOSSARY

Minimum wage:

The least an American worker can be paid legally. As of April 1, the minimum wage will be \$3.80 per hour.

Resume:

A summary of a person's qualifications for a position.

Social Security tax:

An equal contribution by both employer and employee to old-age and other government insurance funds. The employee's contribution is deducted from his or her pay.

MONDAY

March

26

PART ONE:

WHEEL OF FORTUNE

There are many ways to track down summer employment.

Discussion suggestion: Being honest about his or her skills can help a young person find a satisfying job. Ask your students to discuss potential summer job opportunities. Are your students' job wishes compatible with their skills?

TUESDAY

March

27

PART TWO:

SECRETS OF MY SUCCESS

Getting ready for an interview requires a mature approach.

Discussion suggestion: Many students who apply for summer jobs will be interviewed for the first time. How should they prepare?

WEDNESDAY

March

28

PART THREE:

BURNING TO LEARN

Some teenagers work to gain valuable experience for the future.

Discussion suggestion: Volunteer organizations are in constant need of help — although they often cannot pay. Ask your class to list the volunteer organizations in your area. Would anyone be willing to donate his or her time this summer?

THURSDAY

March

29

PART FOUR:

WHIZ KIDS

Students with special skills can find fascinating summer jobs.

Discussion suggestion: Have your students research job opportunities in your area. What types of jobs are available for students with special skills?

FRIDAY

March

30

PART FIVE:

YOU'RE THE BOSS

A teenager with a sound money-making idea is not too young to be the boss.

Discussion suggestion: Financial success doesn't depend on your age — it depends on your ideas. Do your students have any great business plans? Discuss the pros and cons of their money-making ideas.

RELATED ACTIVITIES:



SOCIAL STUDIES/GOVERNMENT

Many students work at volunteer or paid staff positions for government agencies during the summer. Discuss possible government job opportunities with your class.



SCIENCE/TECHNOLOGY

Discuss opportunities for summer employment in the science fields. The options might range from volunteering at an area hospital to assisting at a local animal clinic.



MATH/ECONOMICS

Students who work during the summer must pay Social Security taxes. Have your students determine how much they would have to pay if they earned \$4 an hour (the Social Security tax is 7.65 percent of the first \$51,300 earned).



HISTORY/GEOGRAPHY

Laws regulating child and teenage labor have not always existed. Do your students believe these laws are needed?



ENGLISH/LITERATURE

Ask students to make a list of the information they would include in a resume and cover letter.

Please note: Although Channel One makes every effort to keep these guides current, all programming is subject to change as news developments warrant.

RCH 1990

TUESDAY
PART TWO

WEDNESDAY
PART THREE

THURSDAY
PART FOUR

FRIDAY
PART FIVE

6	7	8	9
AT WHAT PRICE? For many in East Germany, escape was the only answer. How did these individuals get over the Wall... and was it worth it?	THE EAST East Germans lived a guarded existence in the shadow of the Wall. What was life like for an East German teenager? Will life be different in the future?	THE WEST Life in West Germany closely resembles life in our country. Yet there are differences. How are teenagers in West Germany different from their East German counterparts?	NEW BEGINNINGS Other Eastern European countries are also struggling with new freedoms. What changes can we expect in the next few years in such nations as Poland, Hungary, Romania, and Czechoslovakia?
13	14	15	16
ON THE FRONT LINES Fighting drugs in schools often requires creative measures. Many believe the most effective way to stop drugs in a high school is to send in an undercover agent. How does such an operation work?	LIFE AND DEATH AT THE SOURCE Medellin, Colombia, is home to the notorious Colombian drug lords. Teenage Colombians must learn to survive in a country whose government is barely able to keep order as it faces down the power of the drug cartels.	DEADLY DEPENDENCE CAT scans can offer dramatic evidence of the damage drugs inflict on the body. Is such visual evidence enough to scare people off drugs?	GETTING HIGH, GETTING HELP There are not enough prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation programs. Those who need help the most are often the least likely to get it.
20	21	22	23
SO CLOSE, SO FAR APART Visits with a black teenager and a white teenager illustrate two worlds. Their schools, their neighborhoods, and their social lives are completely different.	BITTER LEGACY Apartheid has created generations of undereducated black youths. What does this mean for the future of South Africa?	INCHING TOWARD CHANGE Young South Africans—both black and white—are beginning a move toward a new way of life. Indeed, many white South Africans are now seeking equal rights for their black counterparts.	TOUGH CHOICES Will the South African government change its segregation policies? Will South Africa ever be thought of as an integrated land?
27	28	29	30
SECRETS OF MY SUCCESS Getting ready for an interview requires a mature approach. What are the best ways to prepare for an interview?	BURNING TO LEARN Some teenagers work to gain valuable experience for the future. In the long run, building a great resume may outweigh the monetary rewards of a higher-paying summer job.	WHIZ KIDS Students with special skills can find fascinating summer jobs to develop their talents. Positions at fast-food restaurants, clothing stores, and the local grocery are just part of the job menu for teenagers. The options also include work for students with skills in drama, sports, computers, and other areas.	YOU'RE THE BOSS A teenager with a sound money-making idea is not too young to be the boss. Many students across the country have turned ideas and determination into successful businesses. How do new businesses get started?

World Class
PREVIEW

APRIL 1990

2-6

9-13

16-20

23-27

**Vietnam:
HEALING
THE WOUNDS**

Learning Objective: To help students better understand why America was involved in the Vietnam War and why that war continues to have an impact on our society.

**Sports:
KEEPING SCORE**

Learning Objective: To help students examine the importance our culture places on sports.

**Earth Day Celebration:
EARTH ALERT**

Learning Objective: To help students become more aware of the world's growing environmental problems and offer insight into what students can do to work toward solutions.

**Learning Disabilities:
SLOW START,
STRONG FINISH**

Learning Objective: To help students recognize the many neurological barriers to learning and how to overcome them.

MARCH 1990

Highlights of THE CLASSROOM CHANNEL

The Classroom Channel, part of the Whittle Educational Network, will provide your school annually with more than 250 noncommercial video programs to enhance your classroom activities. The Classroom Channel is designed primarily as an enrichment tool to be used by teachers as a supplement to existing curricula or as a cornerstone for new studies.

**THE CONSTITUTION:
FOR ADULTS ONLY?**
Air date: 3/6

Do teenagers have civil rights? This NBC News production asks this question while focusing on a high school that bans a school dance. The U.S. Constitution comes to life as students explore the limits of their own constitutional protections.

HOMEBOYS
Air date: 3/14

Gang members often face limited alternatives: prison or death. This Dewey-Obenchain Productions program features interviews with youths who have paid dearly for the right to wear gang colors.

RAPPIN' ABOUT AIDS
Air date: 3/16

Teenagers are at risk as AIDS spreads throughout America. This Kirsten Hinsdale and Linda Walker-Sadler production features high school and middle school students who channel their anxieties into rap songs that tackle the threat with wit and wisdom.

**STAND AND BE COUNTED:
REACTING TO RACISM**
Air date: 3/20

Originally shown as part of the NBC after-school series *Main Street*, this program studies racial violence in New York and Philadelphia. How can teenagers help prevent racial incidents in our schools?

FROM APOLLO TO THE STARS
Air date: 3/27

Astronauts recapture the sensation of traveling 17,000 miles an hour above the earth in this Worthwhile Productions program that coincides with 1989's 20th anniversary of the first moonwalk.



The Classroom Channel is a service of Pacific Mountain Network, a nonprofit agency owned and operated by 43 public television stations. This service is made possible by a grant from Whittle Communications. Please direct questions or comments regarding The Classroom Channel to Pacific Mountain Network, P.O. Box 280369, Lakewood, Colo. 80228 or call 303-980-1411 between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. Mountain Standard Time.

HOW TO USE THE CLASSROOM CHANNEL

Programs are sent via satellite and can be recorded. Guides

listing the individual

transmission dates and

a short description of

each program are sent

quarterly to your school's

media specialist or librarian.

Notify him or her of your interest

in specific programs.

Please direct questions or comments regarding *Channel One* to Customer Service, 505 Market St., Knoxville, Tenn. 37902, or call toll-free **800-445-2619**.

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VITA

Shyrl Linda Plum was born in Darby, Pennsylvania on June 8, 1952 to Luise and Richard R. Plum. She attended public schools in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania and Middletown, New Jersey and graduated from Middletown Township High School in 1970. The following fall she entered Montclair State College in Upper Montclair, New Jersey, and graduated cum laude in 1975 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English, a minor in speech arts and dramatics, and New Jersey teacher certification in both areas. While at Montclair State College, she performed with the dance club and the MSC dance company and was a member of Kappa Delta Pi, an honor society in education.

The author has been a health educator for the City of Asbury Park (NJ) Health Department (1978-1981); a teacher in Middletown Township, Maplewood, and Wall Township (NJ) public schools (1975-78; 1982-84); and the Newspaper in Education (NIE) coordinator for The Asbury Park (NJ) Press (1982-1989).

In September 1989 she entered The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, where she worked as an account executive for WUTK-AM. She received a Master of Science degree in Communications with a major in broadcasting in May 1991.

Ms. Plum is employed by WKCH-TV, Knoxville.