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AAMA Newsletter #12

May 2010

A RECENT SELECTION OF MEDIA EDUCATION IDEAS, EVENTS, SOURCES AND RESOURCES

NOTE: This Newsletter does not endorse nor support the views expressed on or in any articles or links in this Newsletter.

Editor: Wayne Blair wblair@planet.eon.net

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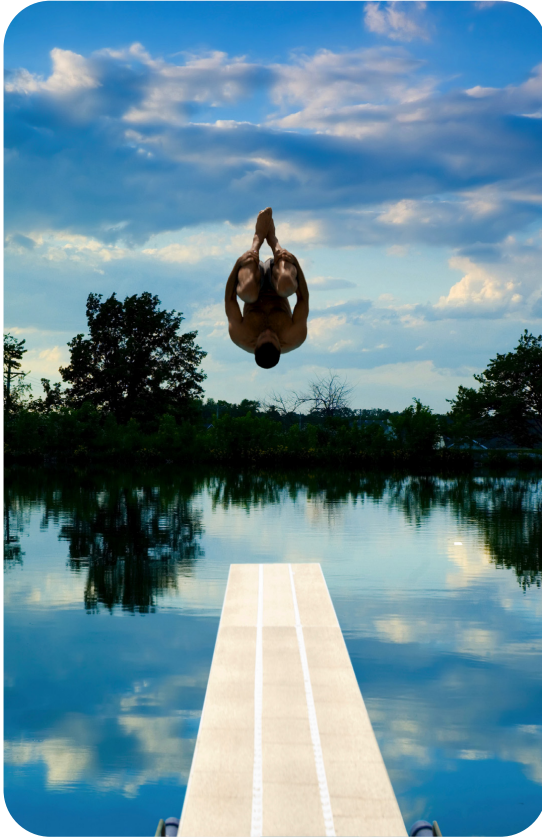
AAMA EXECUTIVE MEETINGS, AGM & NEWS

- **AAMA AGM and Speaker May 2010** — May 11, 2010 — Speaker will be Dr. Philip MacRae, an Executive Staff Officer with the Alberta Teachers' Association. His topic will be.
WEB 3.0: Are You Ready To Dive In ???

For more information, location, registration, etc. see Page 2.

- **Distance Learning Media Literacy Course — *Understanding Media Literacy: Inside Plato's Cave*** — Athabasca University in Alberta will begin offering an online credit course based on the ***Understanding Media Literacy: Inside Plato's Cave*** materials created by Canadian Media Educators. The thirteen modules that make up the online course were written and field tested by members of the Canadian Association of Media Education Organizations (CAMEO). AAMA Past-President Wayne Blair was part of the Development Team for ***Understanding Media Literacy: Inside Plato's Cave***. For more information and links go to page 5.

**ALBERTA ASSOCIATION FOR MEDIA AWARENESS
2010 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**



KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Dr. Philip McRae is an Executive Staff Officer with the Alberta Teachers' Association (A.T.A.) and Adjunct Professor within the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta where he earned his Ph.D.. His research interests are in the area of emerging technologies and education.

6:30 PM
May 11
BARNETT HOUSE
(A.T.A. BLDG.)
11010 - 142 ST.
EDMONTON

WEB 3.0

ARE YOU READY TO DIVE IN?

Technologies are reshaping our classrooms, students and societies at an exponential rate of change. This keynote presentation opens up a discussion around (hyper)personalization in the emerging semantic web (Web 3.0) and the ways in which citizenship, critical thinking and the field of education may be challenged by the echo-chamber effect over the next decade.

Admission \$5 plus current AAMA Membership. (Memberships available at the door.)
For more information, please contact Wayne Blair
Email: wblair@planet.eon.net Phone: 780-944-9667

Date/Location/time: May 11, 2010; Barnett House, 11010 – 142 Street, Edmonton, Alberta

Admission is \$5.00 for members. Annual Memberships are \$20.00 at the door.

To register or for more information, please contact Wayne Blair

E-mail: wblair@planet.eon.net Telephone: 780-944-9667



EVENTS & DATES OF INTEREST

• **May 11, 2010 — AAMA AGM and Speaker** — Speaker will be Dr. Philip MacRae, an Executive Staff Officer with the Alberta Teachers' Association. His topic will be:

WEB 3.0: Are You Ready To Dive In ???

For more information, location, registration, etc. and see Page 2.

• **June 14-18; 2010 — World Summit on Media for Children and Youth — “Challenges in Young People’s World of Communication” — Karlstad, Sweden** — The Summit will be held in Karlstad, Sweden and will host 2,000 delegates from 100 countries and feature the world's leading experts on children and media. The event will offer opportunities to network, to be part of debates, to be interactive and to be part of workshops to share your perspective, experience and expertise.

The theme for the 2010 Summit is “Challenges in young people's world of communication.” It will feature:

- Supporting teachers and recreation instructors so they can progress from an outsider position to involvement in the media and information society.
- Providing a scientific basis for media training.
- Giving the decision-makers access to findings from the world of research as a basis for their decisions.
- Giving the media industry increased knowledge of modern research to be used in developing production and distribution.
- Giving decision-makers insight into the role of the media industry and the prerequisites for producing and distributing high-quality content for children and young people.
- Improving the status and availability of media education.
- Increasing children's and young people's involvement in and influence on media content.
- Create and develop an increased dialogue between the media production and content creation, media education and educators, media research and policy-making and children and youth participation in the media.

For more information about the conference go to:

<http://wskarlstad2010.se/ws2010.php>

• **July 2010 — Canada’s Leading Media Educators Team Up with Athabasca University to Create *Understanding Media Literacy: Inside Plato’s Cave* — An online course, available July 2010** — Designed for teachers, parents, and students of communication, this course in media education recognizes that, although mass media has come to dominate many aspects of our society, children have few opportunities to develop media literacy skills in formal settings. A basic assumption of the course is that media literacy helps children to an informed

understanding of the nature of the mass media, its techniques, and effects. More specifically, media literacy increases their understanding and enjoyment of how the media works: how it is organized, how it produces meaning, and how it constructs reality. The course aims to provide the means by which teachers and others can foster media literacy in children so that they can critically analyze and evaluate the form and content of media, create media, communicate using media, and understand its use and purpose.

For more information and registration

<http://salsa.athabascau.ca/cmns/mediaLiteracy.php>

● **July 9, 2010 — 4th Global Conference on Visual Literacies: “Exploring Critical Issues” — Wednesday 7th July 2010 - Friday 9th July 2010, Mansfield College, Oxford. U.K.** — This interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary conference seeks to examine and explore issues surrounding visual literacy in regard to theory and praxis. Perspectives are sought from those engaged in the fields of education, visual arts, fine arts, literature, philosophy, psychology, critical theory and theology. These disciplines are indicative only as papers are welcomed from any area, profession and vocation in which visual literacy plays a part. Sessions/Issues related to any of the following themes are planned:

- * the concept and tools of visual literacy
- * pre-school children and visual literacy
- * visual literacy and cultural identity
- * interpreting elements and examples of visual literacy
- * visual literacy as therapy
- * the liminal elements and facets of visual literacy
- * social and cultural reactions to visual literacy
- * visual literacy in literature
- * visual literacy in television and film
- * visual literacy and the media
- * teaching visual literacy
- * visual literacy as deformed discourse
- * theology and visual literacy - use and/or abuse
- * teleology and visual literacy
- * the history of visual literacy

For further details about the conference please visit:

<http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/at-the-interface/education/visual-literacies/call-for-papers/>

● **July 12–16, 2010 — 4th Media Literacy Summer Institute** — This is an intensive, week-long media literacy course for teachers, support staff, college faculty, and other professionals working with students in an educational setting. Participants receive training in the theory and practice of media literacy, learn applications for digital technology, and work individually with a Project Look Sharp "coach" to develop and implement a media literacy integration project. Hands-on production is Mac-based.

For further details about the Institute please visit:

<http://www.ithaca.edu/looksharp>



ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY STARTS ONLINE MEDIA EDUCATION COURSE — BEGINS JULY 2010

• **Canada's Leading Media Educators Team Up with Athabasca University to Create *Understanding Media Literacy: Inside Plato's Cave* — An online course, available July 2010**
— Finally, an online credit course for teachers, teachers in training, and students interested in communications studies and media education. *Understanding Media Literacy: Inside Plato's Cave* is a breakthrough online three credit course written, tested and endorsed by teachers and delivered in partnership with the Athabasca University in Alberta.

BACKGROUND — Athabasca University in Alberta will offer a credit course based on the *Understanding Media Literacy: Inside Plato's Cave* materials created by Canadian Media Educators. The thirteen modules that make up the online course were written and field tested by members of the Canadian Association of Media Education Organizations (CAMEO). Founded in 1992, CAMEO is an association of Canadian media literacy groups from across Canada. The goal of CAMEO, through its member organizations, is to advocate, promote and develop media literacy in Canada.

Media literacy is a mandated part of the K-12 curriculum across Canada, yet there is very little training available in either undergraduate studies or through professional development. This project is designed to meet that need. Forty teachers from across Canada - Vancouver, London, Toronto, and St. John's — tested out the thirteen modules of the course *Inside*. Their enthusiasm and praise for the online course has been amazing. Their detailed comments — over 700 pages all together — have been about the technical aspects as well as the content and will be extremely helpful in doing the final revisions of the course.

OVERVIEW — Designed for teachers, parents, and students of communication, this course in media education recognizes that, although mass media has come to dominate many aspects of our society, children have few opportunities to develop media literacy skills in formal settings. A basic assumption of the course is that media literacy helps children to an informed understanding of the nature of the mass media, its techniques, and effects. More specifically, media literacy increases their understanding and enjoyment of how the media works: how it is organized, how it produces meaning, and how it constructs reality. The course aims to provide the means by which teachers and others can foster media literacy in children so that they can critically analyze and evaluate the form and content of media, create media, communicate using media, and understand its use and purpose.

OUTLINE

- Unit 1: Introduction to Media Education
- Unit 2: Media Literacy and the Curriculum
- Unit 3: Canadian Popular Culture
- Unit 4: The Art of Persuasion - Advertising, Marketing and Public Relations
- Unit 5: Media and Values
- Unit 6: Media Languages
- Unit 7: The News
- Unit 8: New(er) Technologies

- Unit 9: Ideology and Representation
- Unit 10: Audience
- Unit 11: Movies
- Unit 12: Prime Time Television
- Unit 13: Popular Music

For more information and registration

<http://salsa.athabascau.ca/cmns/mediaLiteracy.php>



MEDIA LITERACY TEACHING RESOURCES

- **Is airbrushing creating unachievable beauty?** — By Stacey Cosens, April 2010. It is a common tool used in the media industry, but certain evidence suggests that airbrushing may have gone too far. We are bombarded with images of the 'perfect body' in every magazine and film – but the question *The Linc's* Style team want to raise is whether this is even possible to achieve without the wonders of Photoshop.

Airbrushing affects more than just the pages of a magazine, studies show. In a recent survey by leading women's magazine *Cosmopolitan*, 60% of over 1000 women surveyed weren't confident with their bodies. With airbrushed photos all over magazines, many women are left feeling inadequate and striving to reach a goal they can never achieve.

Other sources of inadequacy, luscious long hair and eyelashes, are often made from artificial enhancements that we don't notice.

In recent study by *The Sun*, they found more than a quarter of beauty product advertisements are false, with models wearing hair extensions and false eyelashes. This, coupled with airbrushing, makes the models look impossibly beautiful, and that's exactly what it has been proven to be: impossible. Currently, most advertisements do state that the image has been enhanced, but usually in tiny small print at the bottom of the page.

Taking a stand and fighting back does work. Back in December, Twiggy modelled for Olay Definity. The advertisement received over 700 complaints over its use of airbrushing and the advert was banned.

There is still a long way to go however, and it is quite clear that images distorted in this way are directly affecting women's self esteem. The fight isn't over, it seems it has only just begun.

For the complete article and links go to:

<http://thelinc.co.uk/2010/04/is-airbrushing-to-complexion-perfection-creating-unachievable-beauty>

Watch the Dove evolution film and others to see the effects of airbrushing.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYhCn0jf46U>

- **Killing Us Softly 4 (Updated in 2010): Advertising's Image of Women [Trailer]** — In this new, highly anticipated update of her pioneering *Killing Us Softly* series, the first in more than a decade, Jean Kilbourne takes a fresh look at how advertising traffics in distorted and destructive ideals of femininity. The film marshals a range of new print and television

advertisements to lay bare a stunning pattern of damaging gender stereotypes -- images and messages that too often reinforce unrealistic, and unhealthy, perceptions of beauty, perfection, and sexuality. By bringing Kilbourne's groundbreaking analysis up to date, *Killing Us Softly 4* stands to challenge a new generation of students to take advertising seriously, and to think critically about popular culture and its relationship to sexism, eating disorders, and gender violence.

Jean Kilbourne, Ed.D. is internationally recognized for her groundbreaking work on the image of women in advertising and for her critical studies of alcohol and tobacco advertising. In the late 1960s she began her exploration of the connection between advertising and several public health issues, including violence against women, eating disorders, and addiction, and launched a movement to promote media literacy as a way to prevent these problems. A radical and original idea at the time, this approach is now mainstream and an integral part of most prevention programs. Her films, lectures and television appearances have been seen by millions of people throughout the world. Kilbourne was named by *The New York Times Magazine* as one of the three most popular speakers on college campuses. She is the creator of the renowned *Killing Us Softly: Advertising's Image of Women* film series and the author of the award-winning book *Can't Buy My Love: How Advertising Changes the Way We Think and Feel* and co-author of *So Sexy So Soon: The New Sexualized Childhood and What Parents Can Do to Protect Their Kids*.

For more information and more related videos and links go to:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PTImho_RovY

Available on DVD - April 2010

<http://www.mediaed.org>

- **New Test Measures Students' Digital Literacy** — By Maya T. Prabhu, Apr 2, 2010 — Employers are looking for candidates who can navigate, critically evaluate, and make sense of the wealth of information available through digital media—and now educators have a new way to determine a student's baseline digital literacy with a certification exam that measures the test-taker's ability to assess information, think critically, and perform a range of real-world tasks.

The test, *iCritical Thinking* Certification, created by the Educational Testing Service and Certiport, reveals whether or not a person is able to combine technical skills with experiences and knowledge.

Today's students need to be able to think critically and effectively solve problems while using technology, Certiport explains—going beyond simply searching for information. They also must evaluate the legitimacy of the information, put it in context, and then apply problem-solving and decision-making skills.

“The test and certification program is designed to help employers [and educators] know that a student is ready for the workforce or for academia,” said Quinn Sutton, Certiport's senior vice president.

Designed for students with at least a 10th grade reading level, *iCritical Thinking* allows students to demonstrate the ability to think critically within technology-enabled academic and workplace environments. About an hour in length, the test features 14 tasks based on real-world scenarios such as extracting information from a database, drawing conclusions

from a spreadsheet, or composing an eMail based on findings—tasks students would be expected to do in the 21st-century workplace.

Employers are looking for candidates who can navigate, critically evaluate, and make sense of the wealth of information available through digital media—and now educators have a new way to determine a student's baseline digital literacy...

For the entire article and links go to:

<http://www.eschoolnews.com/2010/04/02/new-test-measures-students-digital-literacy>

• **How Do News Stories Get Buried Or Disseminated Widely? — Eg., Teardrop Memorial? —**

By Henry Johns (AAMA Executive member) — When I received an email about the building of the Russian Teardrop Memorial in New York, I was a bit skeptical since I had heard nothing about such an important event.

I immediately went to Snopes to check whether it was correct and found out that it was. Today I googled Teardrop Memorial and found many other links to the event: The best I found are:

<http://www.911monument.com/> , <http://www.nowpublic.com/world/where-was-msm-coverage-tear-drop-memorial>,

and

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Q58lLwDyk0>.

There are also many other websites which also offer information on this event which you may find if you also google “Teardrop Memorial.”

Please excuse my language but “Where the &\$#@* were the media when this event took place?!!!!!!” This exercise in American-Russian solidarity against terrorism surely marks a turning point in history! I would have expected the sod turning, construction, and dedication of a monument of the size of and across from the Statue of Liberty to be front page news in newspapers and the lead story on TV and Radio. Instead, it has been ignored by the mainstream media. Was it because the events were good news instead of bad news? Was it because President Putin and the Russians should not receive any credit for good intentions towards the West? Or was it because ex President Clinton was the main speaker at the dedication? Or was American-Russian solidarity against terrorism to be suppressed? Or was there some other reason? Here in 2005 was the best news since 9/11 and the mainstream media simply ignored it!

Fortunately, the monument is made of stone and a durable teardrop of durable nickel covered material. It will far outlast the paper of newspapers and magazines and the electromagnetic waves of radio, TV, and computer information. The monument will serve as a reminder of a time when the U.S.A. (the West) and Russia came together to fight the terrorist threats which try to destabilize our societies. Situated as it is across from the Statue of Liberty, it will stand as a reminder that the world will not tolerate minorities trying to change our societies by violence or threats of violence.

It is also a reminder that, as we once united to get rid of Hitler and his gang of cohorts, we will once again unite to get rid of the terrorists who seek to force their will on us. It is a fitting memorial to 9/11 and a generous gift for which we should thank the Russians! (And that includes Canadians of whom I am one.)

● **Internet Link Case To Go Before Supreme Court of Canada** — April 2, 2010 — Can posting a link to someone else's website constitute defamation? The Supreme Court of Canada has agreed to hear the case of a former Green Party campaign manager who says it does.

An internet law specialist says it's an important case that everyone involved in the web will be watching closely. The top court on Thursday granted Wayne Crookes leave to appeal a British Columbia ruling that went against him in 2008. He had argued that when a Canadian website posted links to two U.S. websites that featured defamatory statements, it was the same as publishing defamatory material itself. The website did not reproduce any of the disputed material, nor did it make any comment.

Is a hyperlink publication? Justice Stephen Kelleher of the B.C. Supreme Court dismissed the case, saying the links were like a footnote or a reference to a website in a newsletter. "I conclude there has been no publication," he wrote.

Crookes had launched several libel actions against members of the Green Party of Canada, Google, Myspace.com and Wikipedia. David Fewer, director of the Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic at the University of Ottawa, said the lower courts got the decision right and there's concern about the high court taking the case. "If they're doing it to give a pretty clear validation of the decision at trial and the court of appeal . . . kind of wanting to progress the law, then it's probably a good thing." But a decision overturning the lower courts in favour of Crookes could cast a chill on the web, he said.

For the complete article and links go to:

<http://www.cbc.ca/technology/story/2010/04/02/supreme-libel-links.html>



SOCIAL MEDIA IN SCHOOLS

● **Why Social Media Curriculum is Critical in Schools - 140 Character Conference — By Lisa Nielsen** — I am presenting at The 140 Characters Conference in New York City on April 20th. This event is the largest worldwide gathering of people interested in the effects of the real-time Internet on business, education, and “we” the people. Some of the other speakers include Ann Curry, NBC News (@AnnCurry), Chris Lehmann, Principal of the Science Leadership Academy, (@chrislehmann), Donny Deutsch (@Donny_Deutsch), Ivanka Trump (@IvankaTrump), and MC Hammer (@MCHammer).

I will be a part of the Twitter and Education panel and joined by @mbteach, @kjarret, @shellterrell with @parentella moderating. Specifically I'll be discussing:

1) Teaching Kids how to manage their Digital Footprint 2) Why social media curriculum is critical in schools 3) Technology usage to enhance collaboration and development

In anticipation of the conference I'm writing about each topic. You can read what I wrote about Teaching Kids to Manage their Digital Footprint here. For this post I am addressing:

Why Social Media Curriculum is Critical in Schools — Unfortunately, too many of the places where students go online to interact with one another have policy-imposed walls between teacher and student. Not only have many schools enacted policies restricting teacher/student interaction, because most schools have banned most sites students use to communicate they do their best to prevent students from using these tools to communicate

in an educational setting. It is unfortunate that in the 21st century many schools have deemed adolescent socialization among each other or with their teachers as inappropriate.

This is the pervasive outlook despite the fact that educators are fully aware that:

1. A healthy part of adolescent development includes socialization and
2. Research from those like the National School Board Association indicate that most students use social media to discuss educational topics and other studies (like this one from the CCSE) indicate students who are using social media to discuss schoolwork perform better.

Across the nation, most schools have banned students from accessing authentic communication hardware or software, positioning school as a place where socialization is kept to a minimum, learning is teacher directed, and conversations are teacher, rather than student, driven and/or maintained. This of course does little to prepare students from effectively navigating the online environments they have access to and should be prepared to navigate outside of school. Looking the other way however is not addressing the purple elephant in the room.

The social media curriculum is occurring with or without involvement of adults. The huge disconnect from the world outside of schools and requirement imposed on students to power down upon entry into school has left many students literally bored out of their minds, and we've conveniently labeled many such students who thrive on communication, stimulation, multi-tasking and action, as afflicted attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Interestingly these same students have no problem focusing or giving attention when empowered to do so in their own worlds and environments.

The other important piece to this equation is educating parents, guardians, families. They can also be invited to these online learning spaces. Additionally, caregivers must be taught how to engage in the online learning environments in which their children participate. It is unacceptable for caregivers to allow students to participate in these environments without supervision. Just as care givers would not let their children into real-world environments without a responsible adult present, they should not let their children exist in online worlds without them. But the adults need some support in how to do this and really what is and what is not acceptable behavior online.

For the full article and links go to:

<http://www.techlearning.com/blogs/28630>



MEDIA RESEARCH, OPINION & SPECULATION

● **Girls Abandon Dolls For Web-Based Toys** — By Lini S. Kadaba, March, 2010 — Paige Gabriele loved her dolls - once. At age 8, however, the Swarthmore girl has largely abandoned them. Even Barbie gets slim face time, and the single American Girl doll, a gift from her grandmother, sits pretty on her bureau - untouched.

Playing with dolls "gets boring after a while," said Paige as she passed by the well-stocked aisles full of Barbie, Moxie Girlz, Liv, and other fashion dolls at the Target in Springfield Mall. She was more interested in a basketball, and gushed about social Web sites such as

moshimonsters.com, where she nurtures pet monsters.

It used to be that dolls held girls' interest at least through elementary school. But these days, girls are dropping such playthings at ever younger ages, largely replacing the childhood mainstay with technology-driven activities, even as the toy industry battles to attract the coveted market with new products.

According to the NPD Group, U.S. doll sales have declined by nearly 20 percent since 2005 - and older girls are the least likely to have such toys. In 2009, 18 percent of dolls sold went to girls 9 and older, but 37 percent landed in the hands of 3- to 5-year-olds, the "sweet spot" ages, said Anita Frazier, NPD toys and video games industry analyst. Jeff Holtzman, third-generation head of dollmaker Goldberger Co., based in [Manhattan](#), said his business used to make dolls for children from birth to 12. Nowadays, Goldberger focuses on children under 3 years old. "By the time they hit 4 or 5, they want a cell phone," Holtzman said. "We're replacing dolls sooner."

One reason is that older children have more options, said Frazier. "With more choice comes time fragmentation," she said. But ditching doll play says just as much about the erosion of childhood - as well as imagination and attention spans, argue some - as it does about the multitude of gadgets and activities that vie for children's spare time.

Lindsey Peppel, 12, of Phoenixville hasn't played with the fashionable figures for a while, instead favoring online sites, including Barbie.com, and Barbie video games (when she's not reading books). "I don't think I'm good at making up imaginary things," she said. "I didn't know what to do with dolls."

Consumer psychologist Kit Yarrow, who chairs the psychology department at Golden Gate University and wrote the book *Gen BuY*, agrees that children nowadays need lots of stimulation to keep their interest. But she said, that's not necessarily a negative. "Maybe," she argued, "this is preparation for exactly what they need when they grow up. The world these kids are going to be adults in is more souped up." Others, though, say loss of doll play is a sign of the [Microsoft](#) speed at which children mature. "Girls don't play with dolls as much or for as long anymore because they are being socialized by media culture to grow up faster," said Patricia Leavy, an associate professor of sociology at Stonehill College in Easton, Mass., who has witnessed a lack of interest in dolls in her own 9-year-old daughter. After all, 5 is the new 10, and 10 is the new 15.

This summer, [Mattel](#) will come out with Barbie Video Girl, essentially a doll that's a video camera. She has an LCD screen in her back and a camera lens in her locket, and a USB cable enables girls to edit and share video clips taken from Barbie's point of view. Last fall, Fisher-Price/Mattel introduced Dora Links, a grown-up Dora the Explorer that connects through its USB cable to the computer, enabling a girl to make online changes to her Dora avatar that result - like magic - in actual changes to the physical doll's hair length and color of her eyes, lips, earrings, and more. The product was expressly intended to keep older girls interested in Dora. "We were losing girls," said Gina Sirard, vice president of marketing at Mattel. "By 3 1/2, maybe 4, they were out of the door."

According to Sirard, the doll with the long hair and stylish clothes - that tween look - has succeeded. NPD data, she said, show the Dora franchise now extends from age 2 to 6 plus. "We even get 7-year-olds," she said with delight. "They are very connected to that Internet. It would behoove manufacturers to tap into that."

Danielle Mauger's youngest daughter is already well-entrenched in online play. Although Mauger's 14-year-old still played with dolls when she was 8, her youngest, Kelsey, is that age now and "has zero interest in dolls" anymore, said the North Wales woman. Instead, the child likes her iPod (acquired from her sister) and Club Penguin, where penguin avatars travel a virtual world and friends meet to chat online. "She will call up her girlfriend," Mauger said, "and the two of them end up on the phone giggling while they're . . . on the computer."

Psychologist Robert Epstein thinks the migration online can be just as good, even better, than reality. The virtual world, he argues, is "highly interactive and allows for infinite possibilities." That includes doll play. "It's still girly stuff," said the author of the forthcoming book *Teen 2.0* and a visiting scholar at the University of California at San Diego.

<http://www.philly.com/inquirer/magazine/89579552.html>

● **Feds Plan Major Consultation to Help Canadians Catch Up to Digital Wave** — By Jennifer Ditchburn — (Submitted by Henry Johns AAMA Executive) Canadians might love their Blackberries, their eBay shopping and their PVRs, but businesses in this country haven't embraced the new digital world as much as other competitive nations. That worries the Conservative government, which has been advised repeatedly that technological-take up is directly linked to productivity and prosperity. The Tories plan to launch a major consultation to address the problem.

Industry Minister Tony Clement told The Canadian Press that he'll soon be announcing a discussion paper on the so-called "Digital Economy Strategy," and asking anybody who has a point of view to fire it off to Ottawa - through Facebook, email or Canada Post. "To me, it's also a broader context of not only our economic life online, but also our social and political life online," Clement said in an interview.

Clement will be joined by Heritage Minister James Moore for a look at improving digital content, and by Human Resources Minister Diane Finley, who will examine how well Canadians are trained at using and creating new technologies. An advisory panel will help Clement analyse the feedback the government receives.

The Council of Canadian Academies Expert Panel on Business Innovation last year noted that the average investment in information and communications technology per worker in Canada was only 60 per cent that of the American worker. Those who have advised the government in the past, such as the Information Technology Association of Canada (ITAC), say the Conservatives must examine how every sector of the Canadian economy can better use digital technology. That would include every industry from automotive to mining.

"Our success is going to have to be based on being better at the more sophisticated things, being more innovative," said ITAC President Bernard Courtois. "We see it in our industry as some of our run of the mill knowledge jobs can be easily transferred away, but we still have people come and invest here because they have places where people have the top skills, where the best things can be done. That's true for our whole economy."

For the complete article and links go to:

http://www.google.com/hostednews/canadianpress/article/ALeqM5ju63LdYyI7rAgg_9RD8neyQ7wCeA

● **The Weaponization of Classical Music** — By Brendan O'Neill, March 2010 — Britain has become the Willy Wonka of social control, churning out increasingly creepy, bizarre and fantastic methods for policing the populace. But its weaponization of classical music – where Mozart, Beethoven and other greats have been turned into tools of state repression – marks a new low.

Britain is already the king of closed-circuit TV. An estimated 20 per cent of the world's CCTV cameras are in the U.K., a remarkable achievement for an island that occupies only 0.2 per cent of the world's inhabitable land mass.

A few years ago, some local authorities introduced the Mosquito, a gadget that emits a noise that sounds like a faint buzz to people over 20 but that is so high-pitched, so piercing and so unbearable to the delicate eardrums of under-20s that they can't remain in earshot. Police in the west of England recently started using super-bright halogen lights to temporarily blind misbehaving youngsters. From helicopters, the cops beam the spotlights at youths drinking or loitering in parks, in the hope they'll become so bamboozled they'll stagger home. And Liverpool police recently boasted about making Britain's first arrest by unmanned flying drone.

Now it's classical music. Once taught to young people as a way of elevating their minds and souls, it's being mined for its potential as a deterrent against bad behaviour. In January, it was revealed that West Park School, in Derby in the midlands of England, was “subjecting” (its words) badly behaved children to Mozart and others. Children are forced to endure two hours of classical music both as a relaxant (the headmaster claims it calms them) and as a deterrent against future bad behaviour. Apparently, the number of disruptive pupils has fallen by 60 per cent since the detentions were introduced.

The county of Tyne and Wear in the north of England was one of the first parts of the U.K. to weaponize classical music. In the early 2000s, the local railway company decided to do something about the “problem” of “youths hanging around” its train stations. The young people were “not getting up to criminal activities,” admitted Tyne and Wear Metro, but they were “swearing, smoking at stations and harassing passengers.” So the company unleashed “blasts of Mozart and Vivaldi.” Apparently, it was a success. The youths fled.

The weaponization of classical music speaks volumes about the British elite's authoritarianism and cultural backwardness. They're so desperate to control youth – but from a distance, without actually having to engage them – that they'll film their every move, fire high-pitched noises in their ears, shine lights in their eyes and bombard them with Mozart. And they have so little faith in young people's intellectual abilities, in their capacity and their willingness to engage with humanity's highest forms of art, that they imagine Beethoven and Mozart and others will be repugnant to young ears. Of course, this becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. The dangerous message being sent to young people is clear: You are scum. Classical music is not a wonder of the human world, it's a repellent against mildly anti-social behaviour.

For the complete article and links go to:

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/opinions/the-weaponization-of-classical-music/article1491761>



AAMA NEWSLETTER & MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

• AAMA Executive Board Contacts for — 2009 – 2010:

- **President** Rod Gustafson, Journalist/Media Analyst (Calgary)
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- **Vice-President** Kerry Bennett, Journalist/Media Analyst (Calgary)
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- **Past President** Wayne Blair, Teacher/media/Tech. Consultant (Edmonton)
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- **Secretary/Treasurer** Henry Johns, Teacher/Librarian (Retired) (Edmonton)
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- **Director-At-Large** Nicholas Spillios, Media/Film Consultant (Edmonton)
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• **CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS — Message From AAMA President Rod Gustafson —** For two decades AAMA has stood as the province of Alberta's official society dedicated to the promotion of media literacy and awareness. Throughout this time, members of AAMA's executive have presented countless workshops and presentations to educators, school administrators, parents, university students and children. We have been instrumental in providing input on new copyright legislations with the hopes of keeping media as accessible as possible for teachers to use in the classroom. We acted in an advisory role with Alberta Education in the integrating on media literacy across the Alberta K-12 school curriculum. We have worked with the Alberta Film Classification board in helping to optimize movie ratings in the province of Alberta. We have invited speakers and made them available to our membership each year at our Annual General Meeting and at other events like Canada's Annual National Media Awareness Week in November.

In spite of all these efforts, **AAMA as an association has a serious problem.** We need new people to step up and give just a few hours this year toward volunteering in an executive position on our board. The current executive members have generously given of their time -- some for well over ten years. But due to a variety of professional and personal issues, many of the current executive (myself included) cannot continue in their present positions.

To continue, AAMA must look toward finding a few new people who are excited and interested in media literacy and awareness and determined to keep this important association alive.

While all positions on our board will be open for nominations, currently our president and vice-president along with additional board member positions will be vacant. Minimal expectations from board members are approximately six meetings each year. (Currently we often use inexpensive teleconferencing software to save travel time and expenses.)

In the midst of this, we are continuing to work to grow AAMA and provide new services to our members. This year we have started a second newsletter aimed at the interests of parents and members who are not necessarily professional educators. This newsletter

compliments our long-standing AAMA newsletter that is more directed toward the educational community. We also are constructing a completely new AAMA website that will replace our current site at AAMA.ca. The site will offer a variety of links to resources, access to past newsletters, contributions by members of our executive and other interested parties and the opportunity for all readers to respond and involve themselves in the discussion.

To reap the benefits and continue with these new resources, your help is required! In May 2010, we will be holding our Annual General Meeting. As always, we encourage all of our members and interested parties to attend. But this year we are asking each of you to consider accepting an executive position on our board. **Without new individuals willing to volunteer to maintain AAMA, we may have no choice but to discontinue this important organization.**

I hope many of you will seriously consider this request. On behalf of the AAMA executive, I sincerely thank you for your time and consideration.

Rod Gustafson
AAMA President

P.S. Anyone currently interested in putting forward their name toward a position on the AAMA executive, please email our Nomination Chair, Nicholas Spillios at nikosharik@gmail.com.

- **The AAMA Newsletter** is sent to all AAMA Members as a service and source of recent AAMA Executive news, and a selection of media education ideas, events, sources and resources. In addition, the Newsletter is a service to all Albertans, past AAMA Newsletters are available free about four to five months after initial distribution to members. Previous Newsletters are archived on the AAMA Website — <http://www.aama.ca>.

NOTE: This Newsletter does not endorse nor support the views expressed on or in any articles or links in this Newsletter.

Please pass AAMA Newsletters on to others who may be interested in information on media literacy/education/awareness AND JOINING AAMA.

Join AAMA and the media awareness/literacy/education conversation, discussion, and action — join, support and contribute to the programs and work of the Alberta Association for Media Awareness (AAMA).

For information and/or membership and/or Newsletter contributions, please contact Wayne Blair, Editor of the AAMA Newsletter at:

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