

## HOW TO BE A MINDFUL MEDIA USER

6. Individuals can understand the same media messages differently. If parents, teachers, students and citizens are to learn about media, let's honour, discuss, and debate each other's meanings. Ask: What meaning do you find in the media? What different meanings might other individuals or groups find?

7. Consuming media images demands critical reflection. TV and movies run at 30 frames (still images) per second, whereas the conscious mind can process about 8 frames per second. Therefore, TV and movies tend to keep us from conscious analysis and reflection about individual messages and larger industry contexts. Ask: How does this piece of media make you feel? What does it make you think?



### MAKING YOUR OWN MEDIA PATH!

- Consciously choose the media you engage with.
- Be a critical and active viewer of media messages and images.
- Question what you see (or what you don't see) in the media.
- Add media issues and your own opinions on them to everyday conversation.
- Produce your own media! Tell your story through art, writing, music, or video/film.



A GUIDE FOR THE YOUTH OF BHUTAN

# MEDIA LITERACY



DoIM, MoIC  
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Department of Information and Media (DoIM),  
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## THE MEDIA: EVERYWHERE, ALL THE TIME

Media surrounds us: everywhere we turn, newspapers, radios, magazines, films and TV shows and commercial beam our world back at us. Ours is a medicated world, constantly broadcasting messages, trying to influence how we see ourselves, how we live, and what we buy. It's easy to get lost in a sea of messages and images from the media. Media literacy is about navigating through these messages with the skills of critical thinking.

Critical thinking skills apply everywhere in our lives-- not just in class discussions, papers, and readings. They are handy whether you're reading editorials in the newspapers, watching BBS during the elections, or preparing for school tests. To make sure you are familiar with these techniques of critical thinking, go through the editorial pages of a newspaper and dissect the big issues of the day. You'll be surprised how easy it is.



## HOW TO BE A MINDFUL MEDIA USER

1. Remember that all media images and messages are constructions, or the creations of another human mind. Media messages from TV, films, the Internet, and video games have been carefully crafted with the intent to send a very specific message, and it's important to ask what values this message is trying to send.

2. Question why certain messages are consistently present in mainstream media and why others are absent. For example, TV, video games, and online fare often promote stereotypes-- overly simple and predictable images or a person or group of people. Ask: What stories about the world exist other than those that you see in the media?

3. Look closely at the appearance of media images: the colours, the editing, the camera angles, the appearance of the people, the location, and the sound or type of text. Commercials and multi-media experiences operate primarily at an emotional level and are usually designed to transfer the emotion from one symbol of lifestyle onto another. Symbols, flattery, repetition, fear, humor, powerful words, and sexual images are especially common and effective techniques of media persuasion.

4. Compare media images and portrayals of your surrounding environment with your reality. Make a list of differences so that you are more aware of them.

5. Investigate the source of the media images you encounter. Who owns the network of your favourite television show? Is it a Bhutanese company...or is it Indian or American? What are the commercial (money-making) motives behind this media?

## WHAT ARE MEDIA STEREOTYPES?

Stereotypes generally conform to a pattern of dress and behavior that is easily recognized and understood, but can lead you to form false impressions of the person or group portrayed. A typical male stereotype, for example, is of a "real man" who is adventurous, masterful, intelligent, and strong. The danger, however, is that if seen often, this image can affect the way a viewer perceives men in general. Male stereotyping can narrow one's notion of what men can be and do; it can affect women's and children's expectations of men; it can even shape the views of men and boy on themselves and how they should behave. Stereotypes of women in media show them as weak, dependent on men, and as objects of beauty reliant on a strong male.