Anti-Propaganda Propaganda Animation

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A Thesis submitted to the faculty of the
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Thesis Proposal for the Masters of Fine Arts Degree
Anti-Propaganda Propaganda Animation
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Abstract:
This motion graphics project tries to shed light on how a few media conglomerates controls most of the information we get as citizens. This is done to manipulate and control the public. For this project, I picked one of the theories relating to media-society relationship. This theory says that the media has a big influence on society. Here I present the current media-ownership scenario and their motive for information manipulation. Then, I talk about how these companies are able to control the public by controlling the media. At last, I urge the viewers to break the illusion, question every thing you see, find alternative sources, and to think like a human being. You can view the final project here.
Introduction:
We live in a society that is heavily influenced by mass media. In this age, there is too much information being processed by human beings. This information comes through various mediums, and causes an information overload. Part of this ‘information’ is the media’s propaganda pushing what is right and what is wrong for us. There is a business agenda behind these propagandas, after all, each one of the media outlets are controlled by a handful of conglomerates. Media is good at manipulating information, images, beliefs, opinions, etc. Being able to control the media gives you the power to control the minds of the public.

But being human, the smartest species, we should be able to filter the ‘information overload’. We should be able to think for ourselves and decide what is right and what is wrong, without direct influence from the media.

To encourage wary citizens to go beyond what is shown on television, newspapers, radio and the Internet, I propose to create a type of propaganda to see through the already-existing propaganda. The propaganda that I am proposing will attempt to persuade viewers to not take media’s message at face value, but rather use the capability of a human brain to judge what is good or bad.

I used After Effects primarily, and Maya to help viewers realize their potential to use their own knowledge and judgement.
Survey of Literature:

LITERARY RESOURCES:

Josef Muller-Brockmann
Kerry William Purcell
Phaidon Press 2006
Muller-Brockmann is rightly regarded as one of the leaders of the Swiss school of graphic design which had a huge influence on other designers, especially in Europe but also in North America and Kerry Purcell has written, what will probably be considered, the definitive biography. This new book offers readers the ability to approach Müller-Brockmann’s work from several points of view, resulting in an extension of his influence on graphic design beyond his familiar poster work. Illustrated by images of the final designs, sketches, and production drawings from his archive--and with long captions explaining in detail the design structure and the client’s instructions--this extraordinary monograph traces Müller-Brockmann's life from his childhood through early training, rarely seen designs for the theater, famous posters for the Zurich art scene, corporate design work for clients, and, finally his efforts to educate young designers.

Swiss Graphic Design
Richard Hollis
Yale University Press 2000
Swiss graphic design, which is traditionally sparing, is now becoming an international sensation: its designers know how to often take radical creative approaches that are, at the same time, not conceited and give a light impression. The designers’ creative approaches are then realized with expert craftsmanship and an obsession for detail. A further element that has helped the popularity of Swiss design a great deal is that its language of forms, which is often reduced, suits the Internet particularly well. The book also impressively proves how important it is for creative professionals the world over to develop their own local solutions and to be consistent in doing so.

An Introduction to Iconography: Symbols, Allusions and Meaning in the Visual Arts
Roe van Straten
Routledge 1994
The book presents the historical, theoretical, and practical aspects of iconography and ICONCLASS, the comprehensive iconographical indexing system developed by Henri van de Waal. It gives particular emphasis to the history of iconography, personification, allegory, and symbols, and the literary sources that inform iconographic readings, and includes annotated bibliographies of books and journal articles from around the world that are associated with iconographic research.

Motion Graphic Design: Applied History and Aesthetics
Jon Krasner
Focal Press 2008
This book helps to improve the aesthetic and communication qualities of your motion graphics. It also reaches beyond technical craft skills with this multimedia examination of the essential elements of the art, which includes: technique, inspiration and process.
Media and Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication
Richard Campbell
Christopher R. Martin
Bettina Fabos
Bedford/St. Martin's 2009
This book goes beyond the basic facts and presents students with a critical and cultural perspective on the media. It provides a unique five-step process to encourage media literacy and focuses on the reciprocal relationship between the mass media and our shared culture, helping students to become active participants in the media.

Media Control, Second Edition: The Spectacular Achievements of Propaganda
Noam Chomsky
Seven Stories Press 2003
This book looks at American propaganda efforts, from the warmongering of Woodrow Wilson to the creation of popular support for the 1991 military intervention in Kuwait, and reveals how falsification of history, suppression of information, and the promotion of vapid, empty concepts have become standard operating procedure for the leaders of the United States--both Democrats and Republicans--in their efforts to prevent citizens from raising awkward questions about U.S. policy.

Losing the News: The Future of the News That Feeds Democracy
Alex S. Jones
Oxford University Press 2009
This book argues that the demise of the newspaper industry is corroding the iron core of information that is at the center of a functioning democracy. It insists what is passed off as news is actually entertainment. Investigating through a history of the media that touches on such technological improvements as the Gutenberg press and the telegraph, Jones focuses on the Internet and the damage he believes it has wrought on print newspapers. Weaving in the story of his own family's small newspaper in Tennessee, Jones presents an insider's look at an industry in turmoil, calling plaintively for a serious examination of what a nation loses when its newspapers fold.

Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media
Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky
Pantheon, 2002
This book is an analysis of the ways in which individuals and organizations of the media are influenced to shape the social agendas of knowledge and, therefore, belief. Contrary to the popular conception of members of the press as hard-bitten realists doggedly pursuing unpopular truths, Herman and Chomsky prove conclusively that the free-market economics model of media leads inevitably to normative and narrow reporting.
The New Media Monopoly
Ben H. Bagdikian
Beacon Press, 2004
The New Media Monopoly will provide a roadmap to understanding how we got here and where we need to go to make matters better. This book provides insight to our understanding of the dangers of corporate consolidation to democracy and the marketplace of ideas.

The Design of Dissent: Socially and Politically Driven Graphics
Milton Glaser, Mirko Illic, Tony Kushner
Rockport Publishers, 2006
This book is filled with powerful images that are beautiful, but sometimes difficult to look at. The images come from number of countries and address a wide variety of issues with text that briefly explains the issue and the work itself. It’s so captivating because you can quickly get the information you need and then concentrate on the work.

The Psychology of Media and Politics
George Comstock
Academic Press, 2005
This book is about how individuals make political decisions and form impressions of politicians and policies, with a strong emphasis on the role of the mass media in those processes.

Media Psychology
David Giles
Routledge, 2003
In this book, Giles investigates the effect of the 21st century media on human behaviour. He also argues that psychologist have overlooked the influence of the media on human behavior in the past century, however in today’s world it is being more prevalent that it is much more than a minor nuisance.

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES:

Swiss International Air
June 2009
http://motionographer.com/theater/swiss-international-air/
This ad for Swiss International Air shows the different thoughts in a human being, and how it affects the persons world and the world as a whole. I like how it brings together the human and human emotions to create a better world.

Catch Me If You Can
Kuntzel+Deygas, 2002
http://www.artofthetitle.com/designer/kuntzel-deygas
This title sequence is very creative in its class. It shows simple movement and animations, yet has the potential to convey the whole story of the movie in less than 3 minutes. It is really creative how the director use different unusual elements where the characters hide, how they transition from one place to another. It also uses simple contours of a human.
Strange than Fiction (end sequence)
MK12 studio, 2006
http://www.artofthetitle.com/title/stranger-than-fiction/
This end sequence uses interesting transitions between the scenes, how some elements appear on screen, colorful visual style and an interesting way of revealing the cast names.

Intelligent Design
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hSZPDYriJ3s&feature=related
This thesis motion graphics animation is a critical statement towards the Pseudoscience “Intelligent Design” from a Graphic-Designers point of view. Again, it combines different elements and smoothly makes it work around the narration.

PRIMARY RESOURCES:

Prof. David Neumann, Professor, Department of Communications
Rochester Institute of Technology
Prof Neumann gave valuable insight into the different theories relating to the relationship media and society, and helped me narrow it down.

The Daily Show with Jon Stewart
Comedy Central
This shows is a humorous look at how today’s news media fails to show what is really important to us, the citizens. He brings up different issues that shows how the viewers can be brainwashed by news channel for their own propaganda and bottomline.

VISUAL RESOURCES:

European Amateur Boxing Championships
Jean Jucien Ongraro, 1961
This poster conveys the message with the simplest of shapes. I would like to use the simplicity of the design in my thesis.
http://www.flickr.com/photos/20745656@N00/265492732/

Du sport, des jeux et de la joie pour tous!
Unknown, 1975
This poster uses minimalist color palettes and shapes to create a visually interesting poster
http://www.flickr.com/photos/20745656@N00/270515163/
Process:

My MFA thesis was created as propaganda, using motion graphics that incorporates Swiss style graphic design. It attempts to analyze the role of corporate media in how we perceive the world and what our responsibilities are, in order to decipher the truth behind the messages it propagates.

While studying Mass Communications for my undergraduate degree, one of the most recurring discourses was the ever increasing influence of media on society. I was always intrigued by the private ownership of mainstream media in the western world which implied that news could be owned by anyone simply by the virtue of owning the media. This led me to focus my master’s thesis on how mainstream media has the means and ability to influence our thoughts and perceptions about the world and ourselves. My goal was to deliver a clear, important and legitimate message that uncovering the truth is ultimately an individual responsibility.

Since the video was short, it was important that the narration be concise while also being persuasive and powerful enough to relay my message to the audience. Therefore, it was crucial that I chose my verbiage carefully and spend enough time perfecting it.

First, I consulted with Prof. David Neumann from the Department of Communications and discussed the relationship between media and society. At first, I wanted to incorporate all forms of media, namely, advertising, marketing, news, movies, TV, etc. in my thesis. However, Prof Neumann advised that rather than trying to cover everything in my 2-3 minute project, I should focus on the one subject, the news media and society. He introduced me to multiple theories regarding the relationship between media and society—some that claim media has a big impact on society, others that believe society influences the media, and others still that think that people tune into the media that enforces their belief.

Given the short time frame of my video, Prof Neumann advised that I focus on only one of these theories. Taking his advice, I chose to focus on the one that seemed most convincing to me—that media influences society.

Once I had the general premise of my thesis decided, I talked to Dr. Laura Shackelford from the Dept. of English about my thesis. She agreed to be on my committee and help me with the narration. My biggest challenge was creating a convincing narrative on the relationship between media and society into a 3 minute dialogue without omitting anything crucial. I wanted the narration to start like a news bulletin. Here is the preliminary draft:

*In today's news bulletin, the truth about 'News Media' reports say the news media has lost its journalistic integrity, and has turned into a tool of propaganda for profit and control. The 24-hour news business is only profitable when they are in control of your mind. They have been programmed to keep your mind in control and to make you unintelligent.*

*The news media is loud and passionate, but they hide facts and contexts. They have the power to glorify one side of the story, and condemn the other. You will only be told what they want you to hear. Eventually you will be told what is good or bad for you, and even which candidate to vote for. This way, you are in their control.*
The media are also master manipulators. Entertainment is disguised as news. You will be told nothing is more important than celebrity marriages and divorces. There will be expert-panel discussions on nonsense trivial topics. All this to make you unintelligent.

Why is your mind being controlled? Because you cannot be controlled by force. Propaganda is to democracy, what violence is to dictatorship. Whoever controls the media controls the mind. You are being mobilized in the interest of the dominant elite who own the media.

But it is human nature that you do not fall for these deception, because you have a curious and an independent mind. An independent mind has common sense to make sense of the that the world around you is much more complex than the how the media shows it to you. Only your mind, the smartest one in the planet and free from misinformation, can answer what is good or bad for you.

Your mind is smarter than the deceptions, and you are smarter than the media, are smart enough to outsmart the propaganda. Be smart to understand it, you have to be independent from indoctrination. Break free from the strings that pull you away from truth. Disobey the puppet master. Seek truth, be informed. Be smart. Be smarter than the media.

This draft was longer than 3 minutes, lacked finesse and required thorough editing. With Prof Shackelford's help, multiple peer reviews and after countless revisions, I ended up with the following as my final version:

Have you pondered about the machinery that brings you your news? Would you believe that this apparatus is being used to make you unintelligent? Do you know it is programmed to control you?

According to reports, six corporations own the majority of the media outlets in the country, which means the proliferation of media outlets is merely an illusion, for all these outlets are ultimately run by the six parent companies. In other words, media are controlled by those in power, and you will only be told what they want you to hear. In modern democratic societies people cannot be ruled by force. The means of control must be more subtle, more psychological, even more powerful, than weapons. And media are the most effective weapons in that sense. Whoever controls the media, controls the mind. Propaganda is to democracy what violence is to dictatorship.

Through a constant barrage of images and (mis)information, the media influences our habits, opinions and our very way of thinking. That’s how fast food is made popular and movie celebrities turned into role models. Even well-known media outlets that appear balanced and objective often serve the interests of power. Eventually you will be told what is good or bad for you, how to perceive other societies, and even which candidate to vote for.

But we need not be tricked forever. Human beings, being the most intelligent species, have the capacity to break free from such illusions. Every time we consume news and information we should ask ourselves: Who is bringing me this news and with what underlying motive? Is the information correct and complete? Or is it distorted and partial? Are there other sources that
offer alternative viewpoints? The only way to overcome media manipulation is to relentlessly question what we see and hear, and proactively look for alternative sources of information. Only then can we think and act like independent individuals.

The first paragraph of the concise and more structured version accesses the audience's knowledge about the state of today's news media. It challenges the viewer by questioning their knowledge about the media. The second paragraph states who owns the media and why it is important to have a controlled flow of information. The third paragraph tells the viewer how this media machine controls the viewer's thoughts. The final paragraph is an appeal to viewers to not fall for the media's tactics to control the masses' thoughts. The idea is that, as the supposed smartest species on Earth, we need to use our common sense and intelligence and not be deluded by news media.

The narration/script was only one part of my project and I was simultaneously working on stylizing it. As I had mentioned in my proposal, I wanted a flat/2D look for the whole project. Below are the frames that I sent to Prof. DeLuna that I thought could be part of my work.
After the script had been finalized, I began storyboarding. I changed the frames that did not fit the look that I wanted. The rejected frames were replaced. Below is the storyboard:

**Storyboard:**

Audio of multiple news broadcast played simultaneously to give an effect of overwhelming commotion.

Have you pondered about the machinery that brings you your news?…

…Would you believe that this apparatus is being used to make you unintelligent?

Do you know it is programmed to control you?
According to reports, six corporations own the majority of the media outlets in the country, …

which means the proliferation of media outlets is …

merely an illusion, …
In other words, media are controlled by those in power, and you will only be told what they want you to hear.

In modern democratic societies people cannot be ruled by force. The means of control must be more subtle, more psychological, even more powerful, than weapons.
Propaganda is to democracy what violence is to dictatorship.

Through a constant barrage of images and (mis)information, the media influences our habits, opinions and our very way of thinking.
Thesis Proposal for the Masters of Fine Arts Degree

Anti-Propaganda Propaganda Animation

Ruban Tamrakar

Even well-known media outlets that appear balanced and objective often serve the interests of power.

Eventually you will be told what is good or bad for you,…
... how to perceive other societies, ...

... and even which candidate to vote for.

But we need not be tricked forever. Human beings, being the most intelligent species,...
… have the capacity to break free from such illusions. Every time we consume news and information we should ask ourselves:

Who is bringing me this news and with what underlying motive?

Is the information correct and complete? Or is it distorted and partial?
The only way to overcome media manipulation is to relentlessly question what we see and hear, and proactively look for alternative sources of information. Only then can we think and act like independent individuals.

Are there other sources that offer alternative viewpoints?
Once the storyboard was approved by Prof. DeLuna, I was ready to record the narration. For the narration, I wanted a voice that mimicked news broadcasters from the 1950s and 60s. Fortunately, my work supervisor had the perfect voice for this task and agreed to record the narration. The audio was edited in Adobe Audition and Audacity. It was recorded as a big block of audio. Then, I used Audacity to break it down by sentences. Each sentence was a separate file that was imported into Adobe Audition. In Audition, I added an effect that made the narration sound like a 1950s AM news bulletin from. After the audio was edited, I lined them up in a timeline in After Effects. This was done to find cadence between the sentences and paragraphs and also to be used as a base for the animatics.

Following my storyboard, and using the audio for timing, this is a breakdown of the project by sentence.

It starts with a machine-like object floating and coming closer to the viewer. The audio reads, "Have you pondered about the machinery that brings you your news?" This is to imply that the floating object is a mechanical and a programmed machine that brings the news, which is represented by the newscaster’s microphone.

Would you believe that this apparatus is being used to make you unintelligent? The imagery accompanying this sentence implies that news media is intentionally trying to make you less intelligent, which is done by showing the brain shrinkage.

Do you know it is programmed to control you? The imagery for this sentence suggests that the news machine is controlling you with an invisible rope.

According to reports, six corporations own the majority of the media outlets in the country, which means the proliferation of media outlets is merely an illusion, for all these outlets are ultimately run by the six parent companies. We get many channels in our cable services but ultimately those channels are subsidiaries of six parent companies. This fact gets buried under guise of options.

In other words, media are controlled by those in power, and you will only be told what they want you to hear. The fist in the video symbolizes the power that controls the media in general, which is seen to be squished in the hands of the few companies. And if there is anything these companies do not want the public to know, they are easily able to stop the flow of information.
In modern democratic societies people cannot be ruled by force. It is very important to note that the flow of information has a big impact on how we operate in the 21st century. Gone are the days where kings and rulers ruled the general public by brute force.

The means of control must be more subtle, more psychological, even more powerful than weapons. Today, it is done by controlling the media. In the past guns were used to intimidate and indoctrinate the masses which has now been replaced by a camera or media. That is the reason, in the video, you see a gun and a camera substituting each other and creating a flickering effect.

And media are the most effective weapons in that sense. The use of media by powerful companies isn’t apparent amongst the general public. They are content in consuming what is being presented. In developed countries, it is next to impossible to have a dictator in this age. The graphics of the gun and the camera both contain parts of the ‘MIND CONTROL’. The fast flickering effect makes them read right to the human eye.

Whoever controls the media, controls the mind. Propaganda is to democracy what violence is to dictatorship. It is easier to control the masses by controlling them psychologically than physically. To control the masses psychologically, media are the most effective way. The few parent companies mostly control what you see and hear everywhere. That is how they ‘mind control’ the masses. In the video, the strange connected circle represents a human brain in a minimalistic way. Then the word ‘PROPAGANDA’ fills the air-waves and bullet holes appear on the screen comparing both tactics as a way to control the general masses.

Through a constant barrage of images and (mis)information, the media influences our habits, opinions and our very way of thinking. We can see the air waves leaving the TVs and are being received by the viewers. With these air waves, they send us misinformation on a regular basis, enforcing our beliefs and opinions to be aligned with their motives.
That's how fast food is made popular and movie celebrities turned into role models. Here we have a classic television set in front a pink background that represents the glitz and glam of the current infotainment scene. The TV then spews out information that is messy and is indecipherable from real news. Entertainment news is presented as real news.

Even well-known media outlets that appear balanced and objective often serve the interests of power. Most of the news outlet today claim to be fair and balanced but they are neither. The tipping microphone symbolizes the news organization leaning one way and ignoring the other side.

Eventually you will be told what is good or bad for you, how to perceive other societies, and even which candidate to vote for. This sentence shows a megaphone, which is representative of news media that tells you what is good and bad instead of reporting the facts. The eye represents how the media tells you to view opinions and cultures from the ones that differ from yours. The red and white stripe is inspired from the US flag, and the media also tell you which candidate you should vote for.

But we need not be tricked forever. Human beings, being the most intelligent species, have the capacity to break free from such illusions. This sentence brings us to the last paragraph, which tries to provide a rationale for the narrative thus far and an insight to how we can overcome the biases introduced by media. What we see here are words such as 'mumbo-jumbo', 'propaganda', 'bullshit', 'sensationalization', 'distractions', etc. on TV which represent illusions that hide the truth, just like a magician's hat that he uses to hide his tricks.

Every time we consume news and information we should ask ourselves: Who is bringing me this news and with what underlying motive? Here we see a television set bringing us news. But it isn't what it looks like. There is a hidden agenda behind the news, in this case, money. The dollar sign is revealed when news is spun around and can be used to make profits.
Is the information correct and complete? Or is it distorted and partial? Are there other sources that offer alternative viewpoints? Here we see incomplete parts of the newscast in the TV by which I am trying to convey that news organization deliberately don’t show the full picture. I ask responsible viewers to check if the whole story is being presented. As responsible viewers, we also need to look into more than one source of information, which is represented by multiple TV screens.

The only way to overcome media manipulation is to relentlessly question what we see and hear, and proactively look for alternative sources of information. Only then can we think and act like independent individuals. Here we see an eye that turns into a question mark, which asks us to look at important matters in a deeper way than what is being presented. The face at the end represents a person forming their own opinions based on the truth they have gathered.

With this basic storyline, I completed my animatics. But the color scheme, transitions, final graphics weren’t finalized. I had the basic timing with semi-finished graphics. I wanted to make sure that I was on the right track before I started to add more details. Prof. DeLuna suggested that I make the transitions more dynamic and fluid, and use less dissolve between shots.

Below is the technical explanation of how I created, modeled and composited my thesis project.

Have you pondered about the machinery that brings you your news? The flying machine object is a 3D element modeled in Maya, rendered with Maya Software. For the arms, I created a flat cube and a flat cylinder. I aligned the circle at one end of the cube, and grouped them together. Then, I duplicated the group couple of times, made some modifications to each group, and lined them up against each other lengthwise. Using the Joint Tool, I created 3 joints, aligned with the grouped cube and cylinder. Then, using the IK Handle Tool, I created an IK handle for the first two groups. The last cube and cylinder group was rotated using keyframes. And using Smooth Bind under the Bind Skin menu, the objects were parented to the joints. I was able to control the bend using the IK Handle and the last group with keyframes. I made two copies of the grouped cube and cylinder. Just like before, the joints and the IK handles were rigged. All the three groups were parented to a sphere. The three groups could independently bend and rotate. The newscaster’s microphone flown in the frame is also rendered in Maya, but was put together in Illustrator. They are attached to the flying machine using the Constraint tool. The flying microphone is rendered separately using Mental Ray. On top of that, these microphones were rendered in 2 different batches. The first batch starts from the start of the clip and ends when it comes to a complete stop.
At this moment, I turned the visibility off for the first batch, and turned the visibility on for the second batch.

*Would you believe that this apparatus is being used to make you unintelligent?* In this section, the flying object is rendered like before with Maya Software. This was brought into After Effects and composited with the shrinking brain, that was created in Illustrator. Here, the brain and person were in separate layers. This made it possible to keyframe separate layers.

*Do you know it is programmed to control you?* Here again, the flying machine object is composited with shape layers and text in After Effects to give a feel that the shape layers is interacting with the flying object.

According to reports, six corporations own the majority of the media outlets in the country, which means the proliferation of media outlets is merely an illusion, for all these outlets are ultimately run by the six parent companies. From this point onwards, in After Effects, I used the 3D camera. It was mostly because from here on forward, I have primarily used After Effects for elements and compositing. For this scene, I created a flag-like object in Illustrator, copied the path, created a Shape Layer in After Effects and pasted it on the shape layer. All the six flags were created similarly, with different fill colors. The names of the companies were in text layer above the Shape Layer, and are used as an Inverse Alpha track matte. The reveal of the flagpole was done by moving the vertex points in the path. All six flagpoles have different reveal time. All of this was pre-comped into six different pre-comps for six companies. These were then composited in the final comp. The next scene after the transition is composed of paths of a Shape Layer moving in time to form a tall rectangle. After this, I used a mask to reveal the names of the individual channels.

After several iterations, the maze evolved into its current angular form. First I drew the page in Illustrator as paths, with a stroke of 25 points. All these paths were converted into compound objects using the Expand command. The maze has 6 inlets on top and 18 outlets on the bottom end. The 6 inlets are for the 6 flagpoles and all these have their separate colors. There are 18 white rectangles of the same width behind the colorful 18 outlets. When importing the paths in After Effects, each inlet and its 3 outlets were done separately, along with the white rectangles. All of these were pasted into a Shape Layer as paths, so I could move the vertex points around. I used movement in the maze to make it dynamic and alive. For this, I moved the knots and outlets in random order.

*In other words, media are controlled by those in power, and you will only be told what they want you to hear.* The fist was first roughly drawn on paper, and then was drawn in Illustrator. It is a series of image representing stages of making a fist, which starts with a hand with extended fingers and ends with a fist. The object that the fist grabs represents the outlets from the previous scene, and basically are shape layers using the same path that made the maze. These colorful lines shoot upwards to show the power to stop the flow of information. Here again the vertex points are
moved vertically to show the information drying up. While compositing this scene, the fist had to be in two separate layers, one above the colorful paths, and one under it to simulate a fist grab.

*In modern democratic societies people cannot be ruled by force.* In this scene, the camera zooms in really fast to get the close of the fist, pans down, and reveals part of a gun. This also gives an

*6 sub-mazes individually with one flagpole and 3 outlets each.*

*4 different images that were used for the flickering effect.*
opportunity to transition into another scene. This was drawn in Illustrator and the paths are imported into After Effects.

The means of control must be more subtle, more psychological, even more powerful, than weapons. To achieve the flickering effect, I created and lined up 2 guns and 2 cameras in Illustrator. Then, I created the fonts to write ’MIND CONTROL’. The design of the phrase had to be cut into 2 incomprehensible sets, each to be attached to the cameras and guns. It was very important that the 4 elements (2 guns and 2 cameras) lined up perfectly to get the flickering effect correct. These were then pasted on a Shape Layer, and it gave me the opportunity to make those objects as big as I want. In the start of this scene, continuing from the previous scene, the camera is very close to the first gun. The use of the Shape Layer was apparent here, as the vector object did not pixelate at this level of zoom.

And media are the most effective weapons in that sense. The first gun appears on screen for 30 frames. Then, the camera is on screen for 30 frames and back to an image of the gun and vice versa, until each object was on screen for 1 frame. This keeps looping for a few seconds, and that is how I created the flickering ’Mind Control’ phrase.

Whoever controls the media, controls the mind. The previous scene transitions to this scene with an abrupt camera pan to the left, accompanied with a loud bang. Parts of the minimalistic ‘mind’ are controlled using IK. I downloaded a very useful script from ik.duduf.com. This script makes it very easy to pick layers to generate controller and create IK. In this case, the two biggest circles and the bridge between them is the root. To use the DUIK script, the script needs to be downloaded from the above mentioned website, and copied into the correct folder. When After Effects is opened, a control panel can be opened by going to Window>DuiK. I added a Shape Layer, and created a pendulum looking object, a combination of a circle and a rectangle.

These are steps I took to achieve the IK using the Duik script:

- Arrange the layers, and place the objects accordingly. After this, it is very important to move the anchor point to the end where you want the bend.
- Create a controller. Select the layer that is going to be the end bone. Click Controller in the DuiK panel.
- A Null Object appears in the timeline. This is the Controller layer.
- Then, the sequences of selecting the layers are also very important. Select the bone at the end, second, the root, then the controller, in this exact order.
- Click IK Creation in the panel.
- Now use the controller to change position and rotation to achieve IK.

I created IK controllers for 3 main arms, and one of the arms were controlled with keyframes.

The next scene transitions from where one of the pendulum ends. The radio waves of the next scene start from the circle at the end of the pendulum. The blue circles have the Radio Waves effect, and each of these grows up to fill the screen. The yellow is a one circle growing behind the blue ones, with the Radio Waves. This made it look like alternating colors, and used position keyframes to move the letters making the word ’Propaganda’. The bullet image were manually
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placed 2 frames apart. The bullet layers are then pre-comped, and uses an enlarging circle as a track matte. This track matte clears out the scene, as the last radio wave moves out of the frame.

*Through a constant barrage of images and (mis)information, the media influences our habits, opinions and our very way of thinking.* For this scene, I used the television I modeled in Maya. This TV comes into frame from the left, and has a static signal video with these effects: Mosaic, Brightness & Contrast, and CC Toner. The radio waves were first created in Illustrator using repeating concentric circles with alternating colors. The circles were cut into fit a rectangle using the Pathfinder. I created the left side first, and then mirrored the image to make it symmetrical. The rectangle that fit the radio waves is exactly the same size as the comp. I saved the Illustrator file with each layer consisting of a section of the radio wave, sequenced from left to right. The file was imported into AE; the layers were offset by 2 frames, with the opacity keyframed. This makes it look like the radio waves transferring from left to right. I pre-comped all the layers, and repeated it a few times. The words floating from left to right were put in the comp that contains the radio wave layer. I used the same radio wave as a track matte, with frame offset and opacity keyframes, for the transition to the next scene.

*That’s how fast food is made popular and movie celebrities turned into role models.* This scene transitions from the previous scene with a radio wave wipe. A pre-comp of particles layers are revealed with a mask keyframes. The pre-comp contains the words Celebrity, Gossip, Fashion scrolling from right to left. Behind the text layers are the particles created by using the Convert Audio to Keyframes option. The yellow particles were created with CC Particle Systems II, using Motion Polygon as the Particle Type. Additionally, Hue/Saturation, Offset and Echo effects were also applied. The black particles were similarly created using the CC Particle Systems II, using Line as the Particle Type. This scene transitions when the TV moves out of the frame, and the projection is stretched and squashed. At this point the frame is all pink.

*Even well-known media outlets that appear balanced and objective often serve the interests of power.* In this scene, the microphone from an earlier scene comes in the frame from the top. Several shape layers are keyframed to spring out into position. All these shape layers and the microphone is pre-comped, with an anchor point that is higher than the top of the frame. This is to create the swinging motion of the microphone. As the microphone swings to the left, the yellow shape layer is keyframed to make it wider. This scene transitions into the next when the pre-comped microphone is keyframed in position and scale. The microphone being color blue, when moved closer to the camera, fills the frame with blue.

*Eventually you will be told what is good or bad for you, how to perceive other societies, and even which candidate to vote for.* The megaphone that comes in the frame, first in this scene, was created in Illustrator. The ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ are text layers, with position and scale keyframed. The check
and the cross were created by brush strokes in Illustrator, and the reveal was done using the Stroke effect. The eye in this scene was also created in Illustrator. This eye object was pre-comped, and used as a 3D layer to reveal the eye from blue. This was done using 3 separate layers. The first layer had the contours of the eye, but was filled with blue, the same color as the background. As a 3D layer, this layer is rotated through its center on its X axis. Underneath this layer is the second layer, consisting of the eye object that is masked halfway done its center on its X axis. The rotation of the first layer makes it like a reveal effect. Right when first layer is perpendicular to the camera, the layer is cut off, and the third layer is turned on. The third layer consists of the top half of the eye, and is also masked at the center on its X axis. This layer is also rotated on its X axis to complete reveal the eye. The red and white stripes are shape layers keyframed to sequence alternately. The ballot in the middle is also timed to the reveal with the red and white stripes. It is pre-comped, and at the end of this scene, is keyframed to go off screen.

But we need not be tricked forever. Human beings, being the most intelligent species, have the capacity to break free from such illusions. The end of the last scene, alternating red and white stripes, is pre-comped. The top stripe is red, which helps me transition into this next scene, where red is the background color. The previous scene slides down, and has a continuous red background extending from the top of the frame. In the foreground, is a television set, I modeled in Maya. This television has text on its screen. These are text layers, and are keyframed to move around and into the hat. I also used the Posterize Time effect on the position and rotation to give it a jerky, stop-motion feel. Zooming into the hat, where all the text have gone into, creates a transition to this next scene. The hat was modeled in Maya and it flips back and falls off the frame. The flip reveals a television inside the hat. The reveal was done with masks. The TV was also modeled in Maya, but is composited with hat only in AE. The TV and the TV screen were rendered out separately and composited in After Effects. For the TV screen, I initially tried to render a Custom Color Render Pass, so I can change the animation on the screen in After Effects. But after numerous attempts, and trying to follow tutorials, I failed and gave up on that idea. Since, I only had to render 195 frames, I created a material with an image sequence of TV static. The screen was rendered separately using Mental Ray, and the TV was rendered using Maya Software. I added the Mosaic and CC Toner effect to the rendered image sequence to change it from TV static to bold colored blocks.

The TV and the screen were rendered separately. The TV was rendered with Maya Software, and the screen was rendered with Mental Ray with an image sequence as its texture.
Every time we consume news and information we should ask ourselves: Who is bringing me this news and with what underlying motive? Towards the end of this scene, the ‘NEWS’ that flips around, was done with 3D layers. The last rectangular block that contained the ‘S’ spins really fast on its Y axis. When it stops spinning, a red line is keyframed to go from transparent to opaque, to make the ‘S’ look like a dollar symbol. After this, different designs of NEWS appear inside the television. All these were done using keyframe on individual letters.

Is the information correct and complete? Or is it distorted and partial? Are there other sources that offer alternative viewpoints? The TV, mosaic static and the text are all pre-comped. To get the distorted effect, I duplicated the pre-comped layer, and used it as a Luma Matte with Fractal Noise effect. In a different pre-comp, I created another television set with an orange monitor, the word ‘news’, and a vertically scrolling black line. This pre-comp was duplicated multiple times, and arranged in a grid. The opacity was keyframed, and was offset to make it look like it is appearing in a random order. All these duplicated pre-comps were also parented to a null object, which changed its Z position. This made it easier to move all the duplicated pre-comps uniformly. After the television sets stops moving in the Z direction, it starts to rotate on its Y axis. Right when, the television is at a 90 degree, and perpendicular to camera, the layer ends right there and the eye object layer starts. The eye object and the question marks were pre-comped separately, and also rotate on its Y axis.

The only way to overcome media manipulation is to relentlessly question what we see and hear, and proactively look for alternative sources of information. Only then can we think and act like independent individuals. The head that appears in this scene, with the alternating colored strips were created in Illustrator. First, I created the outline of the head. I, then, drew the left and the right eyes. I made a copy of the head outline to make two sets of heads for the left and the right eye. With a stroke, and no fill color, I used the Blend function, using the ‘Specified Steps’ option. This yielded a result of the strokes transitioning from the eye to the head. Then, I used the Expand command to create separate paths for the strokes. I made few changes to these paths to make them look just the way I wanted. After I made changes to the paths, and had it just the way I wanted, I selected all the paths, and using the Pathfinder’s Divide option, I created a compound path for each band of color. I could select the first band of compound path, and change its color, then select the second band and change the fill to a different color. Then, I used the ‘Release to Layers (Sequence)’ from the Layers panel menu to have a separate layer for each band of color. All of these processes were done for both the sets of head with left and right eyes. The alternating colors

Each band, is in it's separate layer, has the opacity keyframed to show the growth of the head.
that were used were yellow and blue. These files were imported into AE as a Composition - Retail Layer Size. In the comps, the individual layers for each band of color were offset by a frame. The transition from the previous scene is made possible with a venetian blind transition from green to blue. This blue zooms out of form the eye for the first eyes. The other bands of colors follow the blue eye to form the first head. I controlled the position keyframes, moving the color bands in the Z-direction. I used a plugin, named ‘Ease and wizz’ to control the easing for the keyframes. With this plugin, I was able to create a bouncy effect at the last keyframe. Then the left eye appears and gradually reveals the sequenced alternating color. This side of the head was imported and composited into AE similarly like the one I mentioned earlier, only these are not keyframed in its Z-position. This overlapping of the comps takes place few times, and at the end, instead of the alternating color bands all the bands are applied with the ‘Tint’ effect and changed it to match the orange background.

Before the sound effects were added, the project looked and sounded monotonous because of the style of the narration. I added background sound effects that match the mood of the sentence, rather than try to sound literal.

In the second round of emails, after my 2nd draft, Prof DeLuna suggested that I try to keep the style of the elements consistent. I had some element with some shadows. I took out those shadows, and immediately saw how it helped me keep the flat/2D look. He also mentioned about the section where I talk about news media creating noise. Previously, I had used a line noise generated by audio keyframes from the crowd audio in the background. He suggested that, that section was felt out of place from the rest of the project, and to make that section come together with the rest of the elements.

One last minute change was the font in the project. I had used Univers, and Minion but the type didn’t feel right with the composition. Earlier in the project, I had made up some fonts to write ‘MIND CONTROL’ in the flickering sequence of the gun and the camera. That type felt heavy and appropriate in the frames. I made some more characters, and used those sets to replace the font I had been using.

After all these were done, I presented and defended my thesis on May 10, 2013.
TECHNICAL ISSUES
IK in Maya
At the beginning of the animation, the news machine brings a news microphone into the frame. I had some issues with the images not rendering correctly. In the rendered images, the IK tool that I applied to the joints of the machine went into random directions, resulting in the joints, not in sync with the position in the viewport. The microphone that was supposed to be following the joints went haywire too. Doing a playblast, the IK tool acted just like it was supposed to, but not when I did a batch render.

The joints and IK handles on the left image is going in random direction. The image on the right is from a playblast of the same frame where all the joints and IK handles work as intended.

I baked the microphone and the joints, and tried batch rendering. It still resulted in joints not acting the way I wanted to. After several attempts at baking and rendering, I figured that all the joints in the chain were to be selected and baked. Doing this with all the arms in the machine, I was successfully able to render the images with joints and constraint to get the microphone working like it was supposed to.
SUMMARY

Refinement after a result of audience feedback
During my defense, one of the suggestions was regarding the line noise generated by audio keyframes from the crowd sound in the background. The spiky lines still felt out of place in between flat elements. I was about to submit this project to the Adobe Student Awards. I made some changes before submitting it. A mosaic effect was added to the line noise, with solid colors. This effect gave a structured look to the frame. In addition, I chose some muted colors instead of the bright yellow lines. The structural look of the font I had created went well with the composition, instead of the Universal.

Contest submission
I submitted this project to the 2013 Adobe Student Awards in the motion design category. My submission did not make it to final rounds.

Conclusion
My thesis is a culmination of the knowledge and insights I have gathered through my coursework as well as other experiences. In fact, my main motivation in choosing to specialize in motion graphics was to be able to create projects like this. I have always been fascinated by the moving frames and animations that tell a story. For this project, I chose the simplistic 2D look because of the challenges it produced. As a graphic designer, I had already worked with the simplistic 2D look in many of my earlier projects. This time I wanted to take this style a step further by also adding motion to it.

I am content with the results at this point of my learning process. I feel like I have achieved what I had in mind. Moreover, the most important thing I learned in the process of completing this project was to break down an assignment into systematic and accomplishable segments and address each segment independently while maintaining connectivity with the entire project. I believe this project will help me gather valuable experience in taking on a motion graphics project.
APPENDIX:
Rochester Institute of Technology
College of Imaging Arts and Sciences
School of Design
Computer Graphics Design

Date:
April 18, 2011

Thesis Committee Approval:

Chief Adviser: Associate Professor Daniel Deluna, Computer Graphics Design

Signature of Chief Adviser Date

Associate Adviser: Professor David Neumann, Communications

Signature of Associate Adviser Date

Associate Adviser: Assistant Professor Laura Shackelford, English

Signature of Associate Adviser Date

School of Design Chairperson Approval:

Chairperson, School of Design: Patti Lachance

Signature of Chairperson Date
Title:
Anti-Propaganda Propaganda Animation

Abstract:
We live in a society that is heavily influenced by mass media. In this age, there is too much information being processed by human beings. This information comes through various mediums, and causes an information overload. Part of this ‘information’ is the media's propaganda pushing what is right and what is wrong for us. There is always a business agenda behind these propagandas, after all, each one of the media outlets are controlled by a handful of conglomerates. But being human, the smartest species, we should be able to filter the ‘information overload’. We should be able to think for ourselves and decide what is right and what is wrong, without direct influence from the media.

To encourage wary citizens to go beyond what is shown on television, newspapers, radio and the Internet, I propose to create a type of propaganda to see through the already-existing propaganda. The propaganda that I am proposing will attempt to persuade viewers to not take media’s message at face value, but rather use the capability of a human brain to judge what is good or bad. For example, recently there has been an enormous fear with the H1N1 flu, major news networks are reporting on the number of deaths due to the illness. This news is bound to scare people into taking drastic measures, like avoiding human contact at all, obsessive cleaning, rampant intake of medicines and shots. While all we have to do is to use common sense by eating healthy, staying healthy, and exercising. I plan to use After Effects, Maya and/or Cinema 4D to help viewers realize their potential to use their own knowledge and judgement.

Problem Statement:
There are several theories on how media affects society and vice versa. One theory says that the media has a vast effect on society, another one says society has a vast impact on what the media should be, another one says that people seek media’s message to just reinforce their beliefs. For the purpose of this project, my focus will be on the theory that states that media has an enormous effect of society.

In my final project, I want to present a narration inspired from the above-mentioned theory, on how the media affects society; the news media to be specific.

In my opinion, the popular model for a news organization is the partisan and an opinion-based one. Today, it seems very profitable to pick an ideology, and put out programs that fit the ideology. There seems to be a lot of emotionally-charged programs in this model of news media. Discussions are passionate, but it seems to lacks facts and contexts. It is easier to sway public opinion using emotions, rather than in-depth discussion. These news media are constantly telling me this is good and that is bad. Instead of having an in-depth investigation on issues; I have observed that opinions are poured in. That’s because talk is cheap. It takes a lot of money and time to carry out a good research on issues, but it's relatively cheaper to pay pundits.

There is another face of the news media that prioritizes useless events and turns them into ‘Breaking News’ status. Any insignificant piece of blurb seems to be given airtime, it is discussed by expert panels, follow ups are conducted. This can be as petty as a celebrity divorce, while leaving out an opportunity to conduct
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quality journalistic reporting on events and stories that makes a difference in the world. This, to me, is non-news news.

In my opinion, the partisan news media and the non-news news media has had a bad effect on the society and have made citizens passive, dull and unintelligent. The news organization are not giving the truth, rather it is only putting out things that they want us to hear. I believe, that, this is the news media's propaganda to make more profit. It is cheaper for them to replace investigative journalism with opinion-based and entertainment news.

As a viewer, I feel, I am constantly being told what is good, what is bad, what is right and what is wrong for me. And as a human being, the smartest of all species, I can make such decisions on my own, if I were given the truth, the correct and true information. I have my own judgments, but to make them, it seems like I have to look for information outside of the mainstream news media. I want to persuade other people to outsmart the mainstream media to look for important issues and information from different sources and be able to make their own judgments.

There will be an appropriate motion graphics to go along with the narration. This motion graphics will run for approximately 2 minutes. The final project will be shown on a projector for the final thesis showing.

Survey of Literature:
My research primarily focuses on three different topics: media, Swiss graphic design, motion graphics and psychology. My research on media is to find out about media consolidation, biases and propaganda. The Swiss graphic design research is to find out about different aesthetics, history, pioneers and style of the movement. My motion graphic research is to acquire different animations that incorporates the simplistic elements and designs.

1. Josef Muller-Brockmann
Kerry William Purcell, 2006
Muller-Brockmann is rightly regarded as one of the leaders of the Swiss school of graphic design which had a huge influence on other designers, especially in Europe but also in North America and Kerry Purcell has written, what will probably be considered, the definitive biography. This new book offers readers the ability to approach Müller-Brockmann's work from several points of view, resulting in an extension of his influence on graphic design beyond his familiar poster work. Illustrated by images of the final designs, sketches, and production drawings from his archive--and with long captions explaining in detail the design structure and the client's instructions--this extraordinary monograph traces Müller-Brockmann's life from his childhood through early training, rarely seen designs for the theater, famous posters for the Zurich art scene, corporate design work for clients, and, finally his efforts to educate young designers.

2. Swiss Graphic Design [ILLUSTRATED]
Robert Klanten, 2000
Swiss graphic design, which is traditionally sparing, is now becoming an international sensation: its
designers know how to often take radical creative approaches that are, at the same time, not conceited and give a light impression. The designers' creative approaches are then realized with expert craftsmanship and an obsession for detail. A further element that has helped the popularity of Swiss design a great deal is that its language of forms, which is often reduced, suits the Internet particularly well. The book also impressively proves how important it is for creative professionals the world over to develop their own local solutions and to be consistent in doing so.

3. An Introduction to Iconography: Symbols, Allusions and Meaning in the Visual Arts
   Roe van Straten, 1994
   The book presents the historical, theoretical, and practical aspects of iconography and ICONCLASS, the comprehensive iconographical indexing system developed by Henri van de Waal. It gives particular emphasis to the history of iconography, personification, allegory, and symbols, and the literary sources that inform iconographic readings, and includes annotated bibliographies of books and journal articles from around the world that are associated with iconographic research.

4. Motion Graphic Design: Applied History and Aesthetics
   Jon Krasner, 2008
   This book helps to improve the aesthetic and communication qualities of your motion graphics. It also reaches beyond technical craft skills with this multimedia examination of the essential elements of the art, which includes: technique, inspiration and process.

5. Media and Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication
   Richard Campbell, 2009
   This book goes beyond the basic facts and presents students with a critical and cultural perspective on the media. It provides a unique five-step process to encourage media literacy and focuses on the reciprocal relationship between the mass media and our shared culture, helping students to become active participants in the media.

   Noam Chomsky, 2003
   This book looks at American propaganda efforts, from the warmongering of Woodrow Wilson to the creation of popular support for the 1991 military intervention in Kuwait, and reveals how falsification of history, suppression of information, and the promotion of vapid, empty concepts have become standard operating procedure for the leaders of the United States--both Democrats and Republicans--in their efforts to prevent citizens from raising awkward questions about U.S. policy.

7. Losing the News: The Future of the News That Feeds Democracy
   Alex S. Jones, 2009
   This book argues that the demise of the newspaper industry is corroding the iron core of information that
is at the center of a functioning democracy. It insists what is passed off as news is actually entertainment. Investigating through a history of the media that touches on such technological improvements as the Gutenberg press and the telegraph, Jones focuses on the Internet and the damage he believes it has wrought on print newspapers. Weaving in the story of his own family’s small newspaper in Tennessee, Jones presents an insider’s look at an industry in turmoil, calling plaintively for a serious examination of what a nation loses when its newspapers fold.

8. 
**Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media**
*Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky, 2002*
This book is an analysis of the ways in which individuals and organizations of the media are influenced to shape the social agendas of knowledge and, therefore, belief. Contrary to the popular conception of members of the press as hard-bitten realists doggedly pursuing unpopular truths, Herman and Chomsky prove conclusively that the free-market economics model of media leads inevitably to normative and narrow reporting.

9. 
**The New Media Monopoly**
*Ben H. Bagdikian, 2004*
The New Media Monopoly will provide a roadmap to understanding how we got here and where we need to go to make matters better. This book provides insight to our understanding of the dangers of corporate consolidation to democracy and the marketplace of ideas.

10. 
**Swiss International Air**
*June 2009*
This ad for Swiss International Air shows the different thoughts in a human being, and how it affects the persons world and the world as a whole. I like how it brings together the human and human emotions to create a better world.

11. 
**Internationale Ruderregatta Luzern-Rotsee**
*Unknown, 1976*
[http://farm3.static.flickr.com/2211/2426008811_c152527cee_o_d.jpg](http://farm3.static.flickr.com/2211/2426008811_c152527cee_o_d.jpg)
This poster conveys the message with the simplest of shapes. I would like to use the simplicity of the design in my thesis.

12. 
**Du sport, des jeux et de la joie pour tous!**
*Unknown, 1975*
[http://farm3.static.flickr.com/2062/2426824938_82515fcd8a_o_d.jpg](http://farm3.static.flickr.com/2062/2426824938_82515fcd8a_o_d.jpg)
This poster uses minimalist color palettes and shapes to create a visually interesting poster.
13.  
**The Design of Dissent: Socially and Politically Driven Graphics**  
*Milton Glaser, 2006*  
This book is filled with powerful images that are beautiful, but sometimes difficult to look at. The images come from number of countries and address a wide variety of issues with text that briefly explains the issue and the work itself. It’s so captivating because you can quickly get the information you need and then concentrate on the work.

14.  
**Catch Me If You Can**  
*Kuntzel+Deygas, 2002*  
This title sequence is very creative in its class. It shows simple movement and animations, yet has the potential to convey the whole story of the movie in less than 3 minutes. It is really creative how the director use different unusual elements where the characters hide, how they transition from one place to another. It also uses simple contours of a human.

15.  
**Strange than Fiction (end sequence)**  
*MK12 studio, 2006*  
This end sequence uses interesting transitions between the scenes, how some elements appear on screen, colorful visual style and an interesting way of revealing the cast names.

16.  
**The Daily Show with Jon Stewart**  
*Comedy Central*  
This shows is a humorous look at how today’s news media fails to show what is really important to us, the citizens. He brings up different issues that shows how the viewers can be brainwashed by news channel for their own propaganda and bottomline.
17. **Trusted Computing**  
   This motion graphics piece won the 2007 ADAA award for Motion Graphics. What particularly interests me with this work is the designer brings together different elements on screen and cohesively narrates an issue that flows smoothly.

18. **Intelligent Design**  
   [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hSZPDYriJ3s&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hSZPDYriJ3s&feature=related)  
   This thesis motion graphics animation is a critical statement towards the Pseudoscience “Intelligent Design” from a Graphic-Designers point of view. Again, it combines different elements and smoothly makes it work around the narration.

19. **The Psychology of Media and Politics**  
   *George Comstock and Erica Scharrer (2005)*  
   This book is about how individuals make political decisions and form impressions of politicians and policies, with a strong emphasis on the role of the mass media in those processes.

20. **Media Psychology**  
   *David Giles, 2003*  
   In this book, Giles investigates the effect of the 21st century media on human behaviour. He also argues that psychologist have overlooked the influence of the media on human behavior in the past century, however in today’s world it is being more prevalent that it is much more than a minor nuisance.
Approach/Project Description:
I plan to create a motion-graphics animation that shows how the media only tells part of the story (biased news media) or report unimportant stories (celebrity news) and why it is important to decipher all these messages. I plan to approach this project in the following way:

I plan to start the motion graphics as if it were a news bulletin. Below is the narration for my proposed thesis:

In today's news bulletin, the shocking truth about the 'News Media.' There are reports that say the news media has lost its journalistic integrity, and has been replaced by propaganda for the self-interest of the people who own the media and their associates. All their lies and deception will control your mind and action. Their thoughts will be your thoughts. They will decide what stories and which events are important, even decide which candidate to vote for.

The media talks a lot because talk is cheap! They amplify everything, so we hear nothing. They mask out facts and contexts, with passion and emotions. They have the power to bury the truth. Only one side of the story is magnified. You will only hear what they want you to hear.

The disguised media will trick you into thinking entertainment is news. They will tell you there is nothing important than celebrity marriages and divorces. There will be expert-panel discussions on the weddings, and follow-ups on the divorces. They put a lot of effort into making you unintelligent.

All their propaganda and misinformation gives them power to control your action with thought control. Propaganda is to democracy, what violence is to dictatorship. You are being mobilized for the interest of dominant elite group of the society who owns the media. You can not be controlled by force, but they can control you with misinformation, to make you unintelligent and docile.

But, it is humanly that you do not fall for the illusion because you have a curious mind. And your curious mind is also an independent mind. Independent from media's control over your actions. Break free from the strings that pull you away from the truth. Seek truth, be informed. Be smart. Be smarter than the media.

Design: I plan to incorporate the aesthetics of 2D Swiss graphic design and put it in 3D space and show how it interacts with each other. I picked the aesthetics of the Swiss graphic design because of its neutral aesthetics and that they have been used to address social issues in the past.

Subjects/Participants: I would like to show and test my project on students of all majors and degrees. I believe that my project can be part of students’ education at a college level. This education is not necessarily academic, but of good judgement and perception.

Computer Graphics: I am focusing my attention on motion graphics and 3D. An element of good graphic design will also be incorporated into my final project.
Procedure/Technology: First I plan to come up with what I am going to say in my animation, then precisely word it for instant attention. Then, combine my message with design that is inspired by Swiss graphic design. And at last, have it interact in a 3D environment. I will be using mostly Illustrator, Photoshop, After Effects, Maya and/or Cinema 4D. I will also digitally film any footage, if necessary.

Sketches/Examples:
Below is the storyboard of the proposed animation. As mentioned before, I plan to incorporate the Swiss style design in the animation.
They will tell you what is good, and what is bad.

They amplify everything, so we hear nothing.

Entertainment News

Talk is Cheap!
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Implications of Research:
My goal is to at least educate viewers and hopefully change their attitude towards how they utilize the media. I would want the viewers to use their own judgments and not be solely depend on the media. Because the topic of media and its influence on society is very vast, it will be impossible for me to cover all the aspects of media and society.

Budget:
I will use the computers at the Computer Graphics Design lab and my personal laptop. Besides that, the only other cost I foresee is the cost of purchasing a DV tape which would be approximately $10.

Marketing Plan:
For the thesis showing, I plan to show it on a projector at the College of Imaging Arts and Science and the College of Liberal Arts. I plan to post my animation online through websites like Youtube, Vimeo. I would also like to submit my work to magazines like Communication Arts and Print and competitions held by AIGA, Communication Arts, Motiongrapher, Adobe Design Achievement Awards.

Target Audience:
My proposed animation deals with the subject of media and since it will be mostly viewed online, I want it to be geared towards the demographics that get their information from television, and are also somewhat web-savvy, and who spend time looking for videos online. The age group of 16-32, who are even slightly aware of current events would be my target audience.

Persona A:
Name: James
Age: 18
Educational Level: College Freshmen
Motivational Level: Watches a lot of online videos
Experience with Thesis Subject Matter: Since he is online watching videos most of the time, he occasionally bumps into news of current affairs. He mostly enjoys watching news that is entertainment.

Persona B:
Name: Lydia
Age: 30
Educational Level: Masters Degree
Motivational Level: Tries to keep up-to-date with the latest news and events watching a lot of news online and on television.
Experience with Thesis Subject Matter: Since she gets her news from both television and online, she also visits blogs from independent writers and reporters. So, she has a broad overview of where to get her news.

Software and Hardware Requirements:
Windows or Mac
Flash Player 9
Internet Browser
Broadband Internet
Television
DVD Player
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BIBLIOGRAPHY


