

Author uses pop culture to inspire critical thinking

“Kids spend more time immersed in TV, video games and the Internet than they do in school. My goal is to equip them with the tools they need to evaluate and challenge what they’re seeing.”

Student Responses:

The workshop was awesome – a wake-up call to younger people who are most influenced.

Samira, age 13

It was very inspirational to know what really happens in the world of advertising.

Madeline, age 12

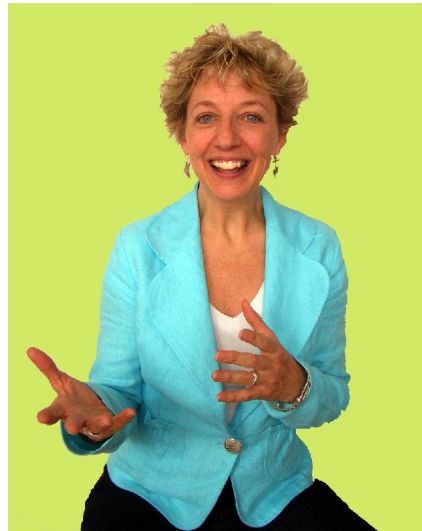
I had no idea how much advertising influences us. I’m looking forward to your next book on violence.

Coral, age 12

She presented in a very understandable way., She doesn’t make us feel we’re doing anything wrong, but now that we know this information, we can watch out for those jingles that pull us in.

Maya, age 13

Media background offers valuable insights



Ottawa-based media producer, critic and educator, Shari Graydon is the author of two award-winning media literacy books for young people.

Shari’s affordable presentations have entertained thousands of students, teachers and parents from coast to coast. She draws on her varied background as a PR exec, TV producer, newspaper columnist, TV and radio commentator, university instructor, and president of MediaWatch.

In her keynote lectures and workshops, Shari engages audiences of all ages with humour, critical analysis of current media trends, and stories from the trenches.

Workshops for students – for as little as \$500

7 Habits of Savvy Media Watchers (grades 3 – 7)

This presentation helps younger students to identify and think critically about all forms of media persuasion – from TV commercials and celebrity endorsements to brand names and insecurity appeals. Along the way, it equips them with tools to unpack the subtleties of ambiguous language and sophisticated imagery.

Body Image Un-Reality (grades 8 – 12)

Media messages about beauty ideals abound, for girls and guys alike. From Disney movies to TV makeovers, music videos to magazines, kids learn about the importance of measuring up.

This presentation gives teenagers social, historical and cultural context to help resist pop culture’s unattainable appearance standards and punishing stereotypes.

Media Violence: Truth or Consequences (grades 7-10)

On TV, at the movies, in video games and music lyrics, violence is glamorized as entertaining and inevitable, integral to sport and only resolved through more violence. This workshop explores these issues in the context of 50 years of research and kids’ own real life experiences of bullying and aggression.

Convention keynotes and parent sessions: Transforming Kids from “Zoned out” to “Tuned in”



In Your Face, about the beauty pressure kids face, won the prestigious Norma Fleck award for best non-fiction Canadian children's book and was chosen Teen Book of the Year by the Los Angeles DIY Book Festival. *The Toronto Star* called it a “junior version” of *The Beauty Myth*.

Bertrand Russell once said the purpose of education was to “defend ourselves against the seductions of eloquence.” These days those image-based, music-infused “seductions” are more compelling than ever. Arming students with the capacity to ask critical questions about the nature, context and purpose of media

messages is as important as teaching them to read and write. This lively, image-supported presentation provides practical approaches to cultivating young people's critical thinking skills. It offers teachers and parents more tools to help counter the “alternative curriculum” delivered by pop culture.

What teachers say about Shari's presentations...

All of the evaluations on her keynote presentation were glowing with superlatives – excellent, wonderful, eye-opening, enlightening, insightful, entertaining, fantastic!

Carol Ohlin, Quebec Federation of Home and School

The clarity, empathy and humour with which Shari communicates have had a transformative effect on members who have experienced her keynotes and workshops.

Carol Zavitz, Elementary Teachers Association of Ontario

It was a real pleasure to have you speak to grade sevens at Canyon Heights! The kids were so engaged with your strategies and stories.

Sheilagh Martin, Elementary Teacher Librarian, North Vancouver,

Your presentation at the Vancouver Public Library was simply great. It was so relevant to school libraries.

Mary Locke
Vancouver Library Association

Your presentation on the media was very interesting for the kids and created quite a buzz. Your message is so important; it has to be told over and over. I hope we'll see you again.

Sandra Santarossa, Elementary Teacher Librarian, North Vancouver, BC

Thanks so much for your media literacy workshops. It was a fantastic morning and surely a measure of the engagement when kids are as attentive as ours were!

Moira Ekdahl, Secondary Teacher Librarian, Vancouver

“The key questions to get kids asking are: ‘What is the promise of this ad, what are the values embedded in this game or show, and who benefits if I sign up for this view of the world?’”



Called “a kind of NO LOGO for kids”, **Made You Look** won the Canadian Children's Literature Roundtable Information Book of the Year prize, and was shortlisted for four children's choice awards.

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