

# Addressing Youth Issues in the English/Language Arts Classroom

October 2011

Connie Bray

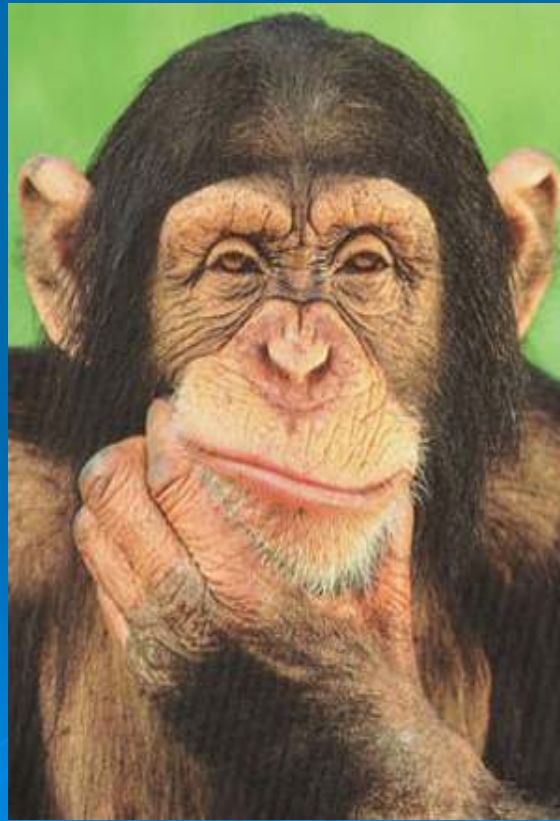
Toni Wilson

Thames Valley District School Board

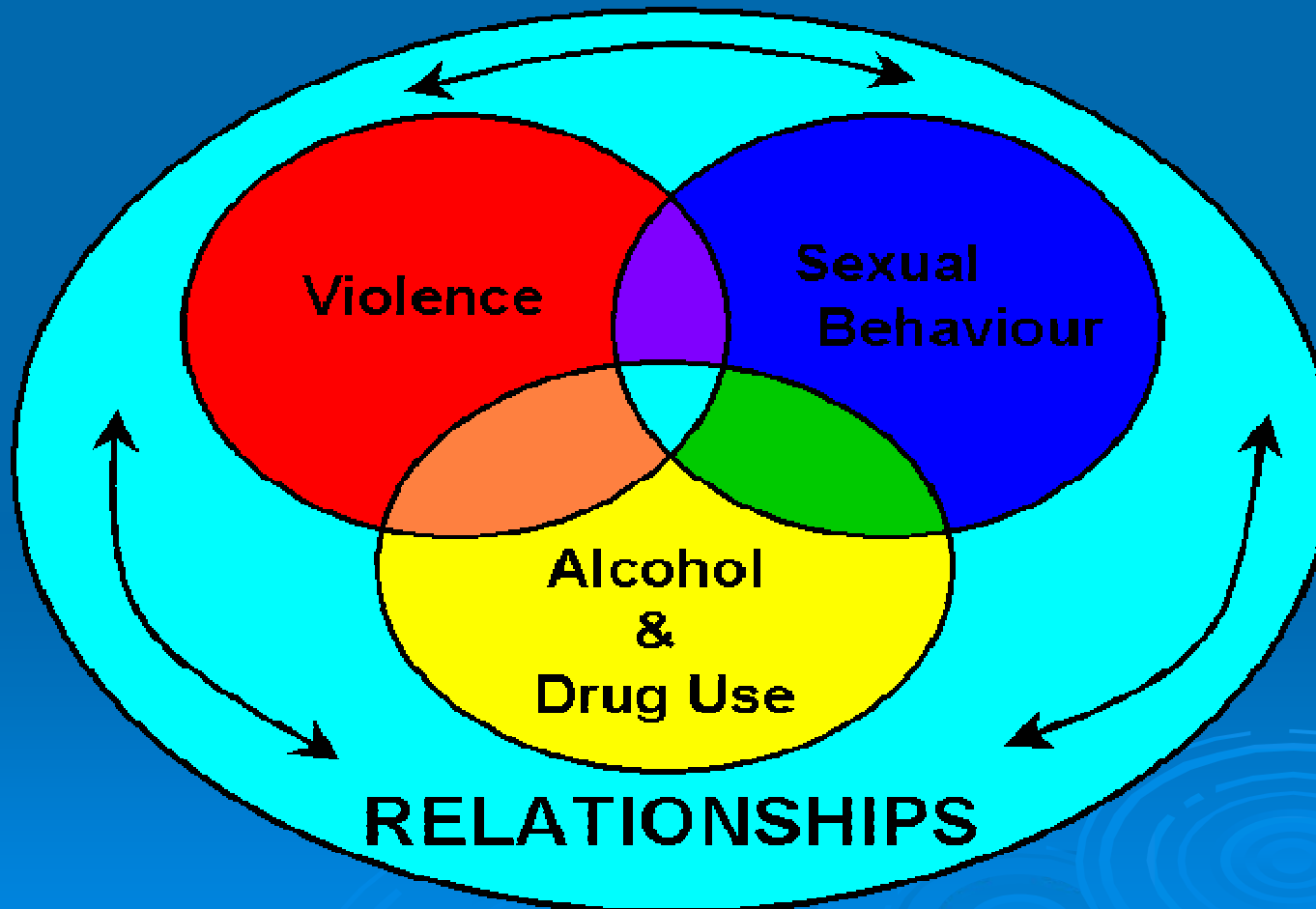


# Test Yourself

“Youth Violence Facts” self quiz



# Adolescent Risk Behaviours: The Relationship Connection



The Fourth R

# Think about...

- How has this single technology changed everyday social practices?



YouTube

WordPress



skype™

myspace.com  
a place for friends

deviantART

msn

weebly

twitter



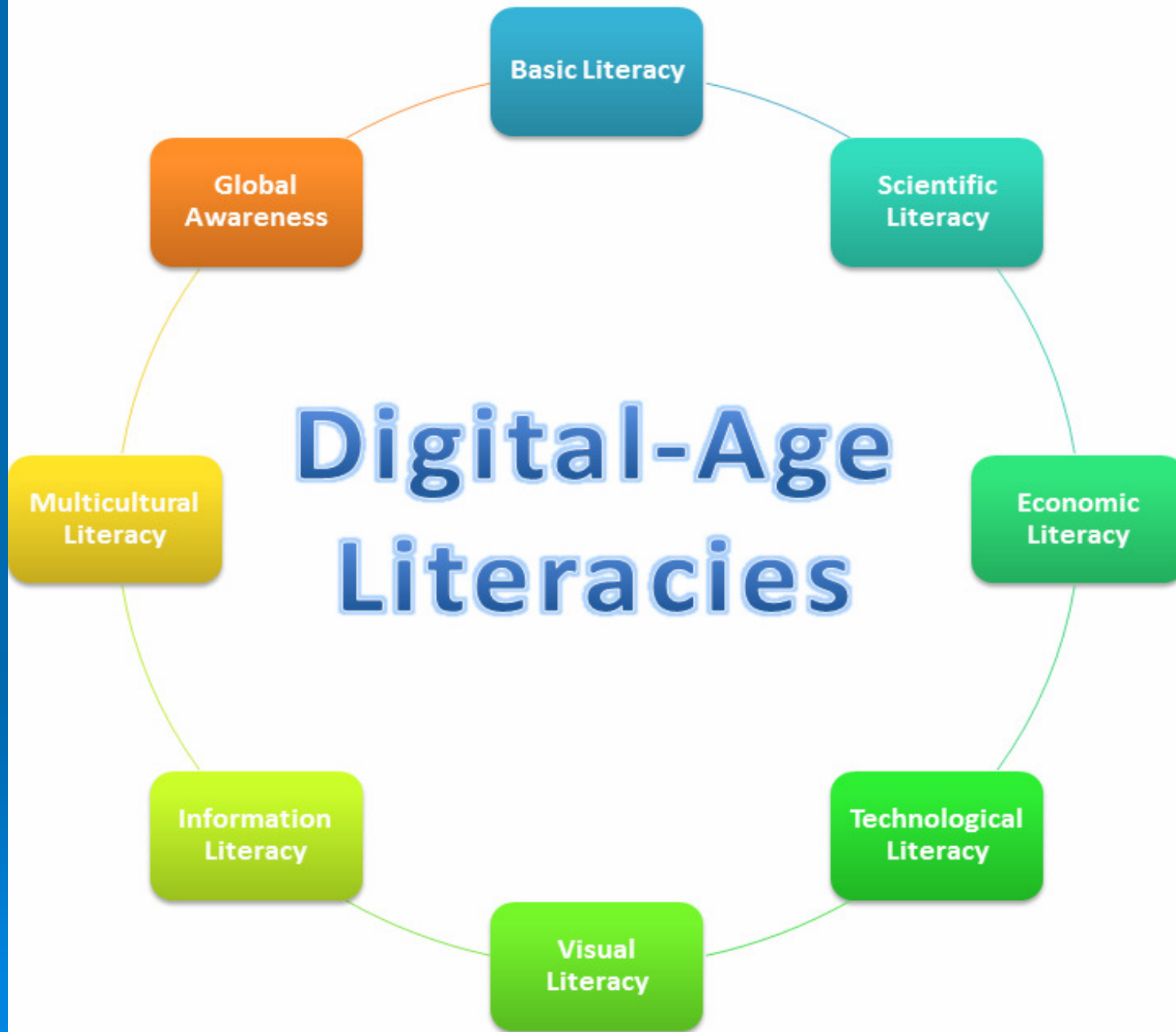
facebook

# Importance to Educators ...

This child of the iPhone, iPod, Blackberry, MSN, Facebook, Twitter, and You-Tube *is* a voracious reader and prolific communicator, but in ways monumentally different than ever before. And what is she reading (and producing)? Websites, emails, text messages, online fan fiction, videogame cheats, news online, MSN chat, social networking websites. Not to mention *Twilight*.

*Skills for Surviving the 21st Century. Media Skills are Essential.* By Barry Duncan & Carol Arcus In Education Forum 35 (1), Winter, 2009.

# Digital-Age Literacies



# English and cross curricular literacies include

- reading, understanding using, responding to and creating texts in a range of forms (efferent and aesthetic)
- demonstrating knowledge/skills in multi-literacies: oral, visual, informational, etc.
- communicating for a wide range of purpose/audiences
- critical thinking and ...



# Literacy as a Thinking Activity

- While functional literacy refers to the “basic ability to read and write” – focusing on decoding -- critical literacy emphasizes critical thinking, questioning, understanding context, thinking about multiple perspectives, asking questions of self, the world, and power relationships.



# Re-viewing the Ordinary

- Key Question: To what extent has your self-image been influenced by television/film?
- For example: To what extent are men and women stereotyped by television/film?

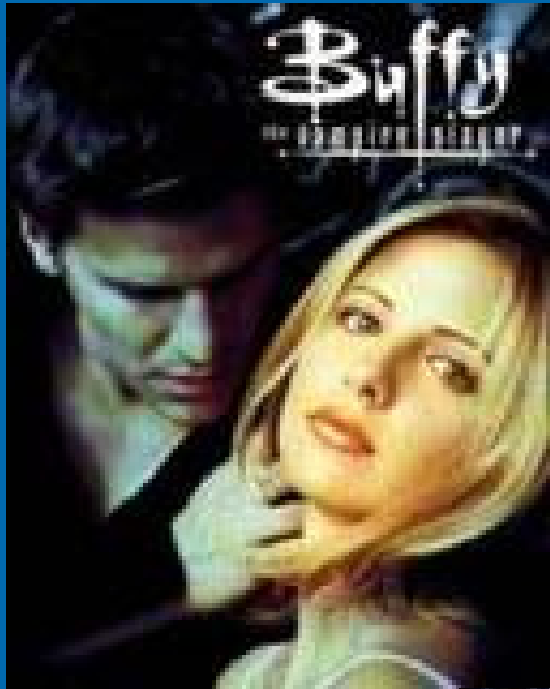


It's only a cartoon

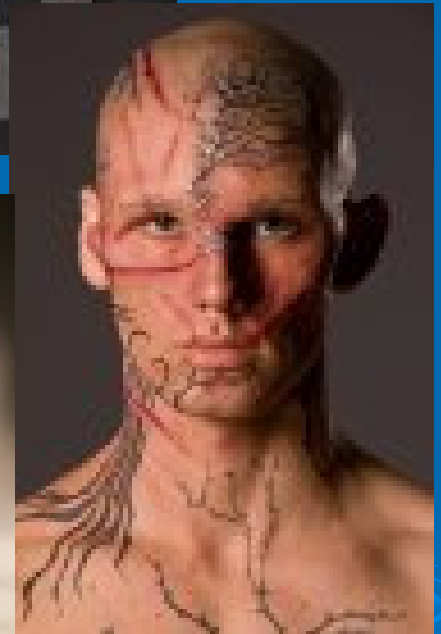
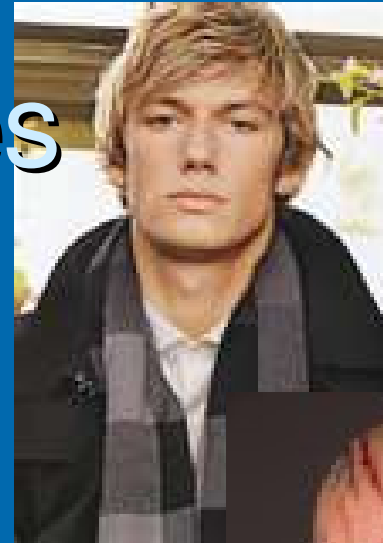




# Heroines

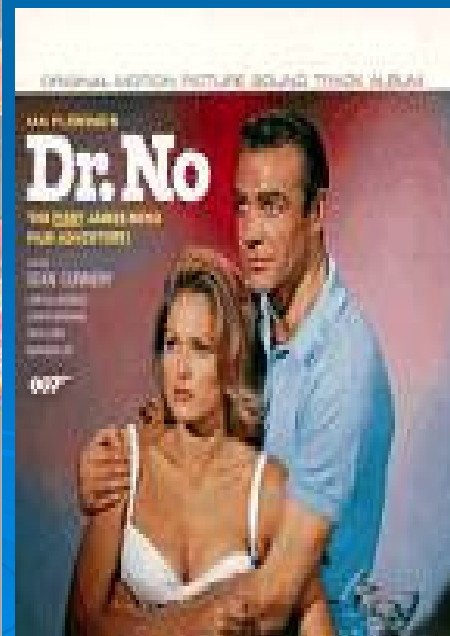
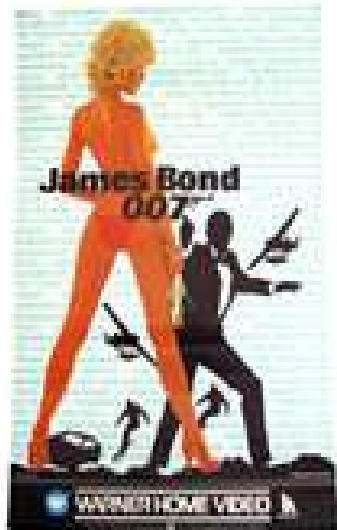
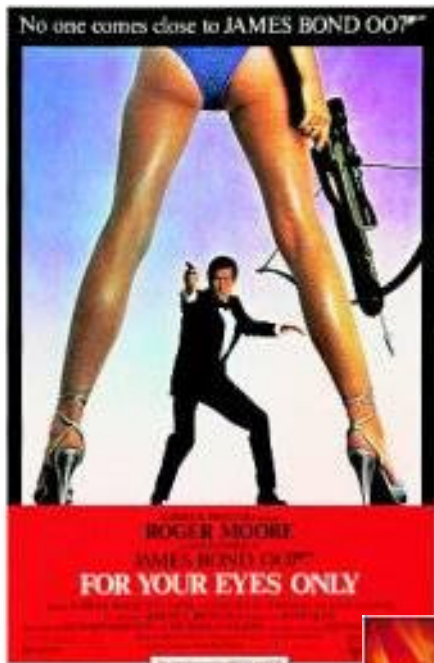


# and Heroes



# Sample Activity

- Choose a list of current films/ tv shows.
- Web search “images” for that film/show.
- Count the number of promo-images that feature male actors/characters; do the same for female actors/characters.
- Analyse images for power, relationship male/female
- Ask questions about sub-texts, expectations of “What makes a hero?” for each.



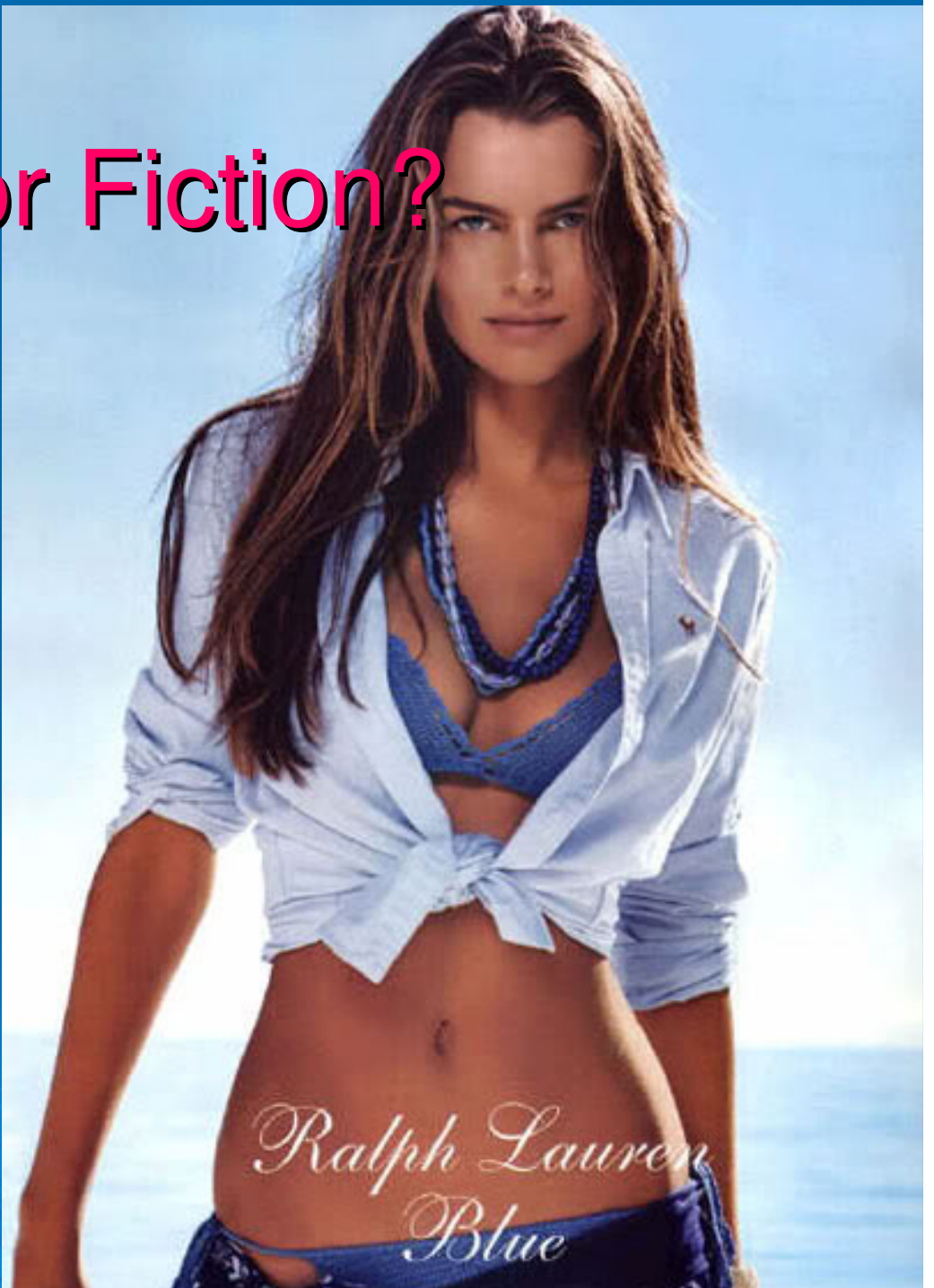


RALPH LAUREN

Truth or Fiction?



photoshopdisasters.blogspot.com





GRACE FASHION COLLECTOR'S ISSUE

# GRACE

## The Dress

FASHIONING  
VERDICT IS IN

## That Party

WHAT REALLY  
HAPPENED AT THE  
ROYAL WEDDING

## Those Guests

OUR BEST  
DRESS  
MOMENTS

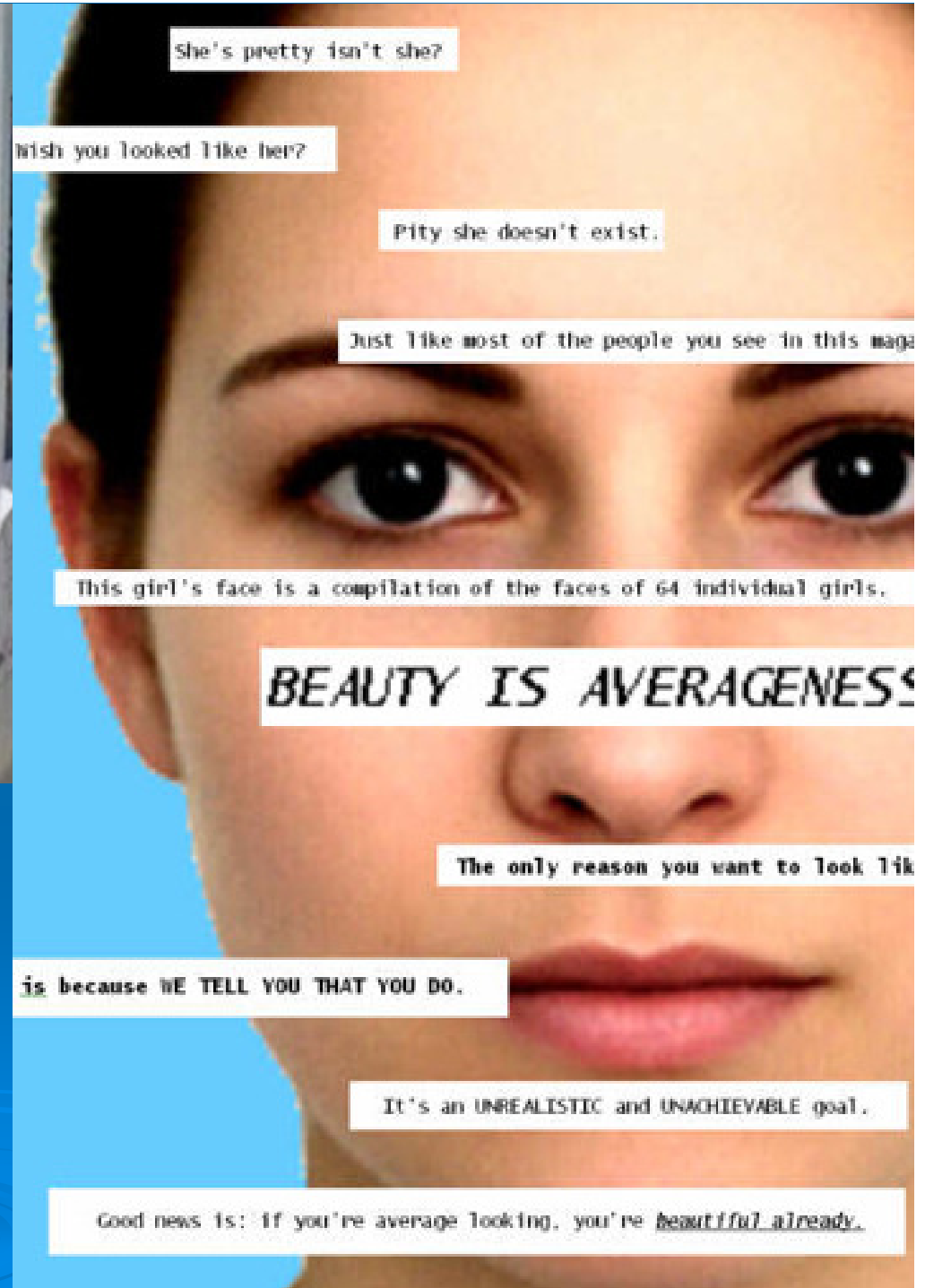
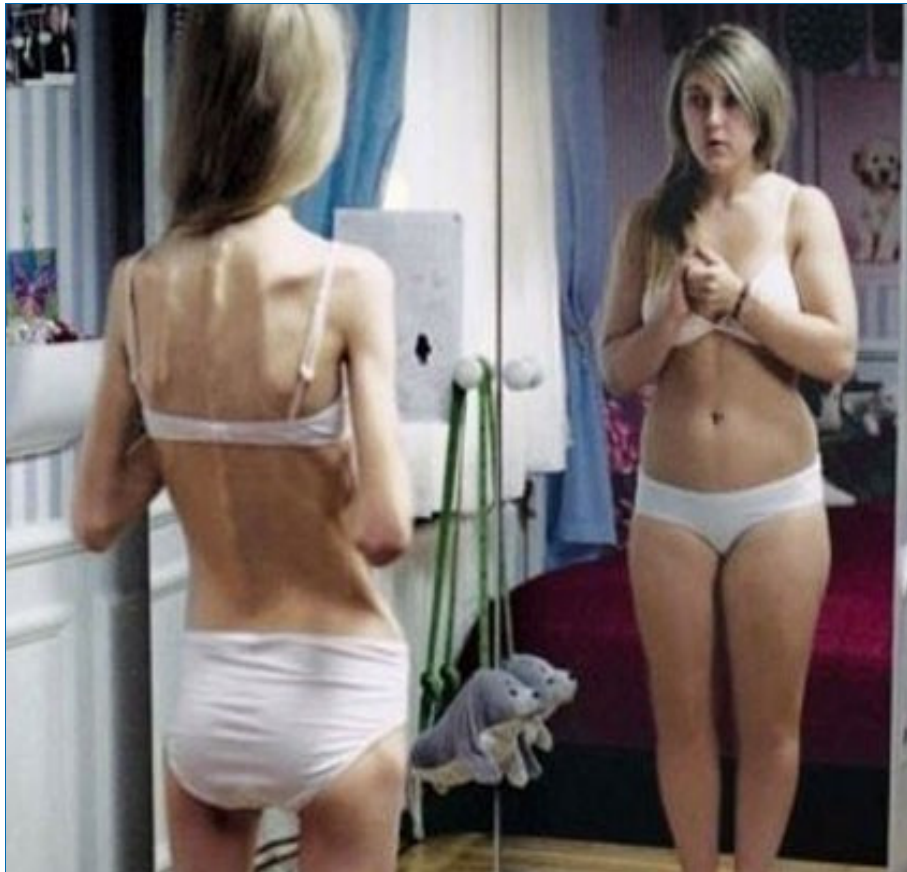
# Arise McQueen KATE!

Plus

[christopharcoulurp.co.uk](http://christopharcoulurp.co.uk)

WILL'S BIRTHDAY NOTE  
KATE'S PINK SHIRT  
THE BEST PARTY GUEST  
AND... MORE GET TOGETHER!





She's pretty isn't she?

Wish you looked like her?

Pity she doesn't exist.

Just like most of the people you see in this magazine.

This girl's face is a compilation of the faces of 64 individual girls.

# BEAUTY IS AVERAGENESS

The only reason you want to look like her is because WE TELL YOU THAT YOU DO.

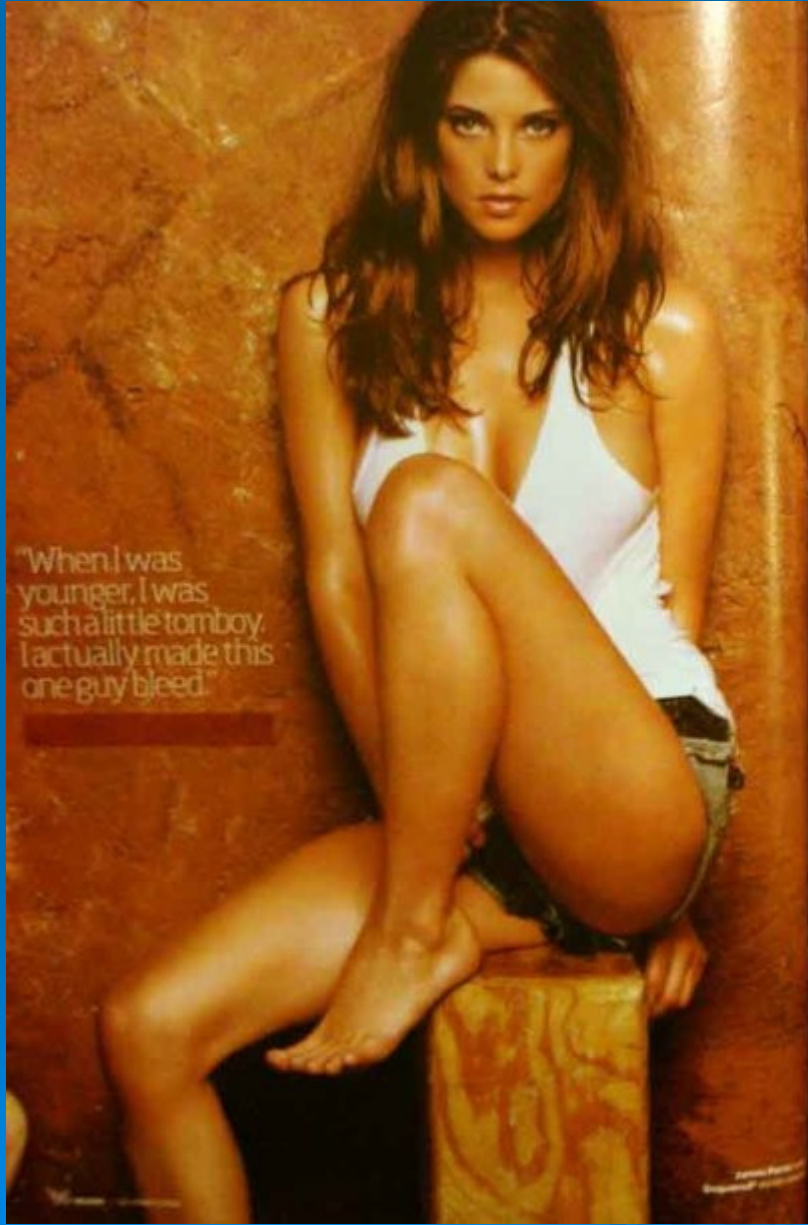
It's an UNREALISTIC and UNACHIEVABLE goal.

Good news is: If you're average looking, you're *beautiful already*.

## Truth Or Fiction?







"When I was younger, I was such a little tomboy. I actually made this one guy bleed."

**UNDER ARMOUR**  
**COLDGEAR**

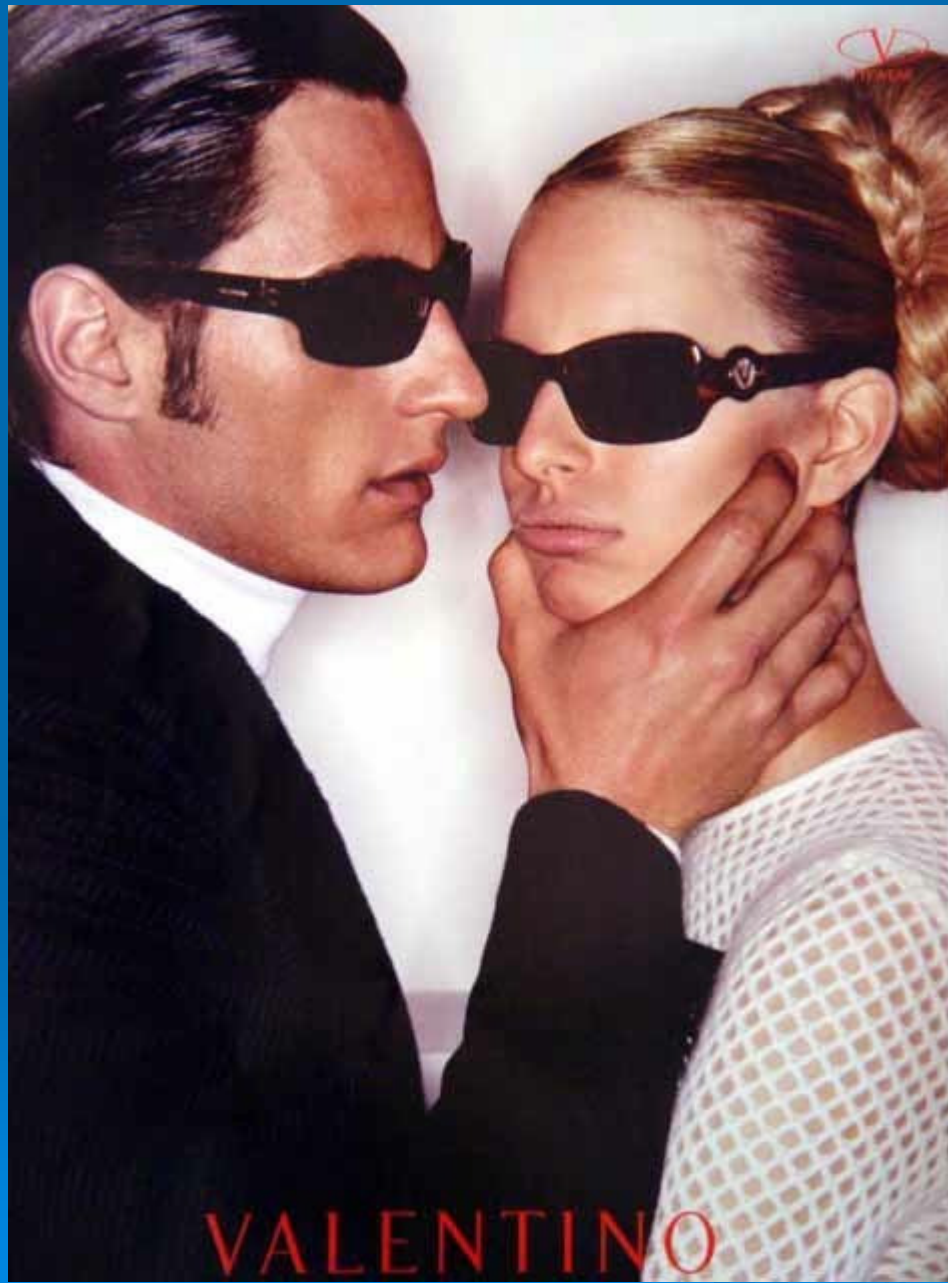
**CHOOSE YOUR FIT**

**FITTED COLDGEAR**  
THE ORIGINAL COLDGEAR BASELAYER—RE-ENGINEERED IN A FITTED PROFILE. USE COLDGEAR'S THERMAL 2.0 OPEN MESH FOR A FEEL THAT'S SOFTER THAN THE ORIGINAL, BUT STILL LIGHT ENOUGH.

**COLDGEAR COMPRESSION**  
THE SINGLE BASELAYER THAT HELPS ATHLETES WARM, DRY AND COOL. USE COLDGEAR COMPRESSION TO HELP YOUR MUSCLES RECOVER FOR LONGER AND DEEPER, WITHOUT ADDING ANY WEIGHT.

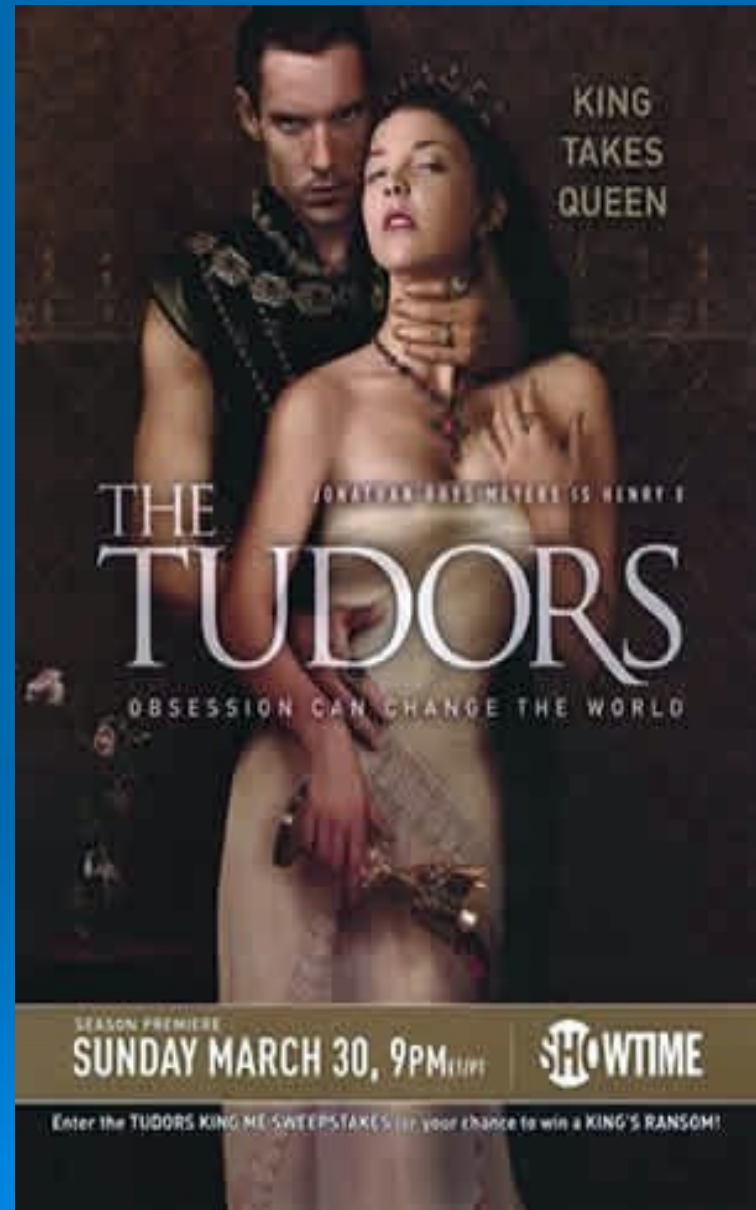
**COLDGEAR FIT**  
**COLDGEAR PURE**

Maxim Dec 08

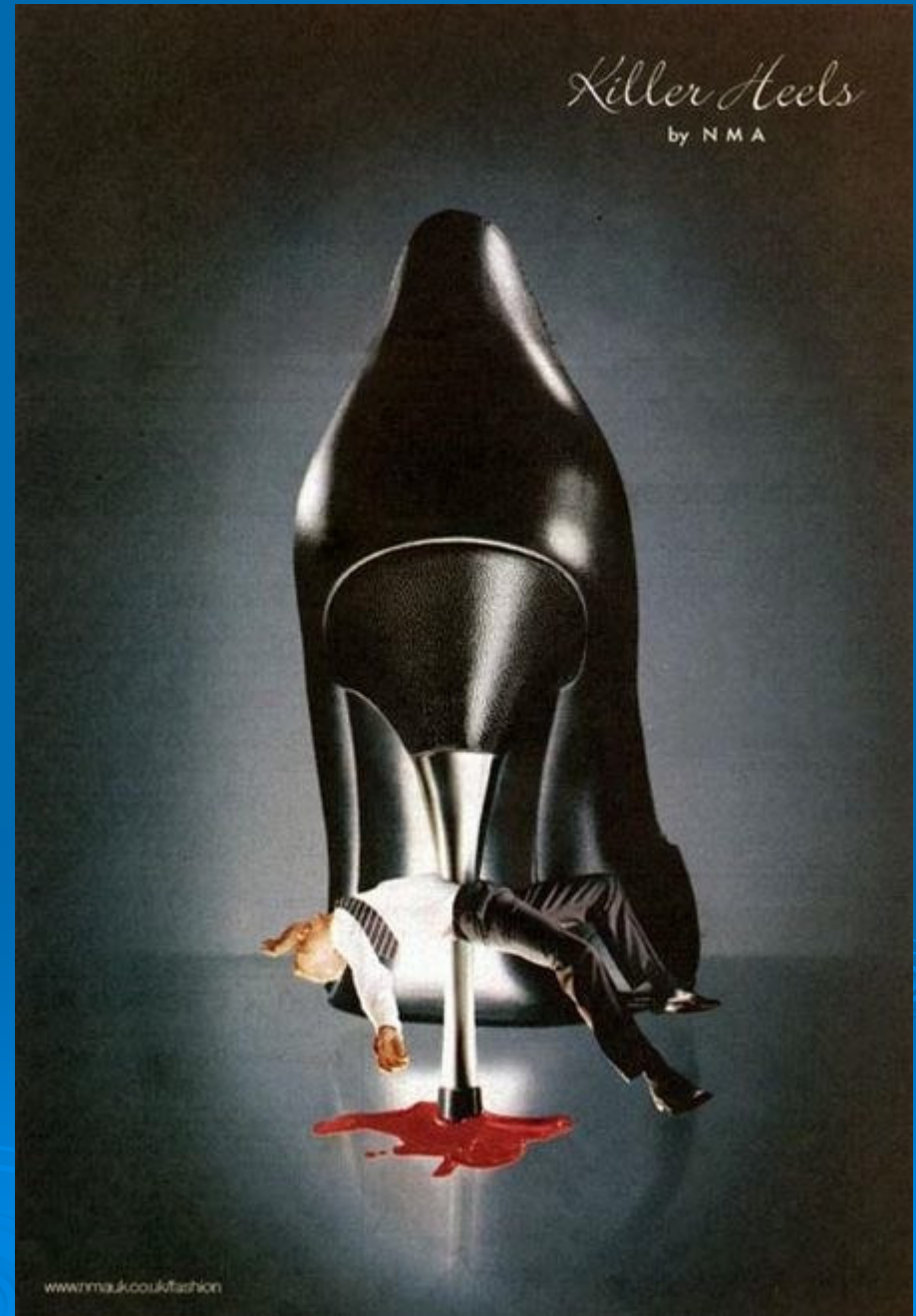




Ref. [www.genderproject.com](http://www.genderproject.com)







# At what cost?









If you saw this girl on the beach, how would she appear out of place? Why/why not?

To what extent does the context of a live run way show affect our understanding of the image? (e.g., purpose/audience)

What details do you notice that raise questions/concerns for you?

What questions might you ask the fashion designer? What questions might you ask the model's parents?

# A pressing question....



WHO NEEDS BRAINS  
WHEN YOU HAVE THESE?

I had a  
nightmare  
I was a  
brunette

Available  
for  
parties



Or the manufacturers  
of these T-shirts?



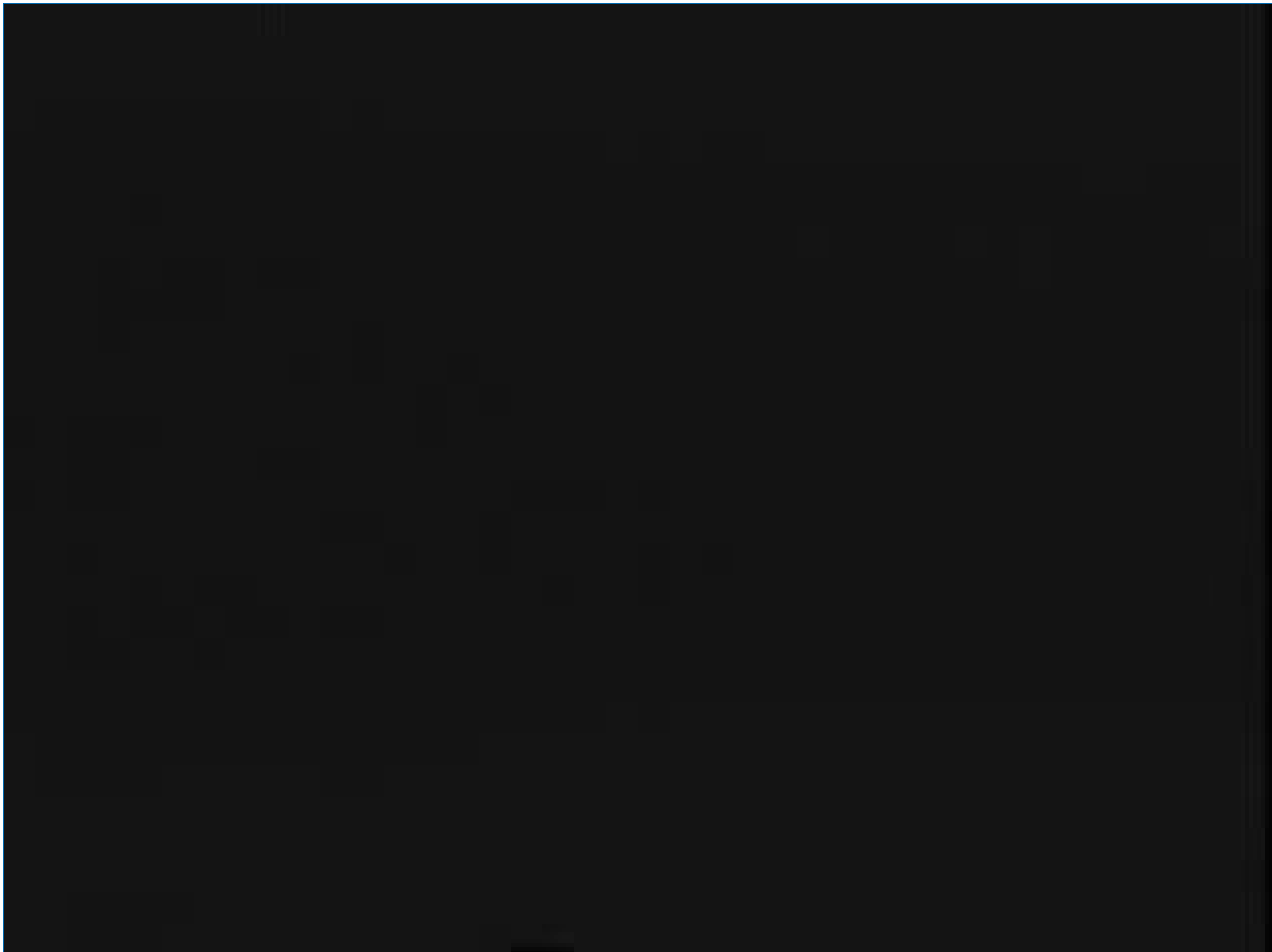
I'm  
too  
pretty  
to do  
**HOMEWORK**  
SO MY BROTHER  
has to do it  
FOR ME





# Everybody wants AXE







What questions might you ask the photographer? The actress/model?

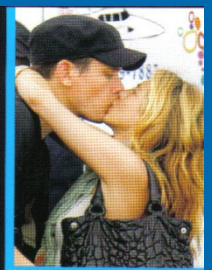
MARCH 2, 2009

# People

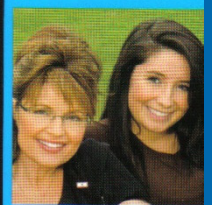
TROUBLE WITH CHRIS BROWN

## RIHANNA'S NIGHTMARE

Arguments, jealousy and hotel-room trashing. What led to the violence and how she's coping



JOHN AND JEN Kissing in the Caribbean!



TEEN MOM BRISTOL PALIN 'Kids Should Just Wait'

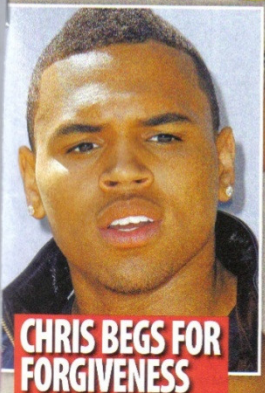


THE TRAVOLTAS Life after Jett

34-79 CANADA 09  
7 25274 10227 3  
PEOPLE.COM

ONLY \$2.99

# Life & Style WEEKLY



CHRIS BEGS FOR FORGIVENESS

## LEAVE HIM

Rihanna says she still loves Chris and still hasn't split up with him. Inside a bruised superstar's heartbreaking choice



OCTO-MOM CARING MOM OR MONSTER?

- How much money has she earned?
- Death threats
- A messy home unsafe for kids



JEN AGREES TO MEET ANGELINA



Starting at only \$23!

SPRING SHOE SPECIAL!

MARCH 2, 2009 \$2.99  
0 9  
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The Bachelor  
**TRICK ENDING!**  
\* Who gets the ring!  
\* Who gets JASON!

Behind the phony laugh  
**ANGIE DISSES JEN!**

**Star** BREAKING NEWS!  
Was Rihanna  
**PREGNANT?**  
The secret she hid from Chris

**OSCAR**  
Gossip  
Glamour &  
Glitz!

**INSIDE: Shocking Police Photo After Rihanna's Brutal Beating**

5499 Circles 1 D  
7 25274 461526 7  
MARCH 9, 2009

**ONLY \$2.99**

**Life & Style** WEEKLY

**EXCLUSIVE: CHRIS CAUSES RIHANNA MORE AGONY**

**ANOTHER ATTACK**

Chris Brown lashes out at Rihanna, claiming the brutal beating was self-defense. Is he a coward, or is he telling the truth? Rihanna speaks out

**OSCAR DRAMA!**  
WHY JEN AVOIDED ANGELINA

**THE BACHELOR PICKS A NEW MOM FOR HIS SON**

**ROBERT VS. TAYLOR TWILIGHT SHOWDOWN**

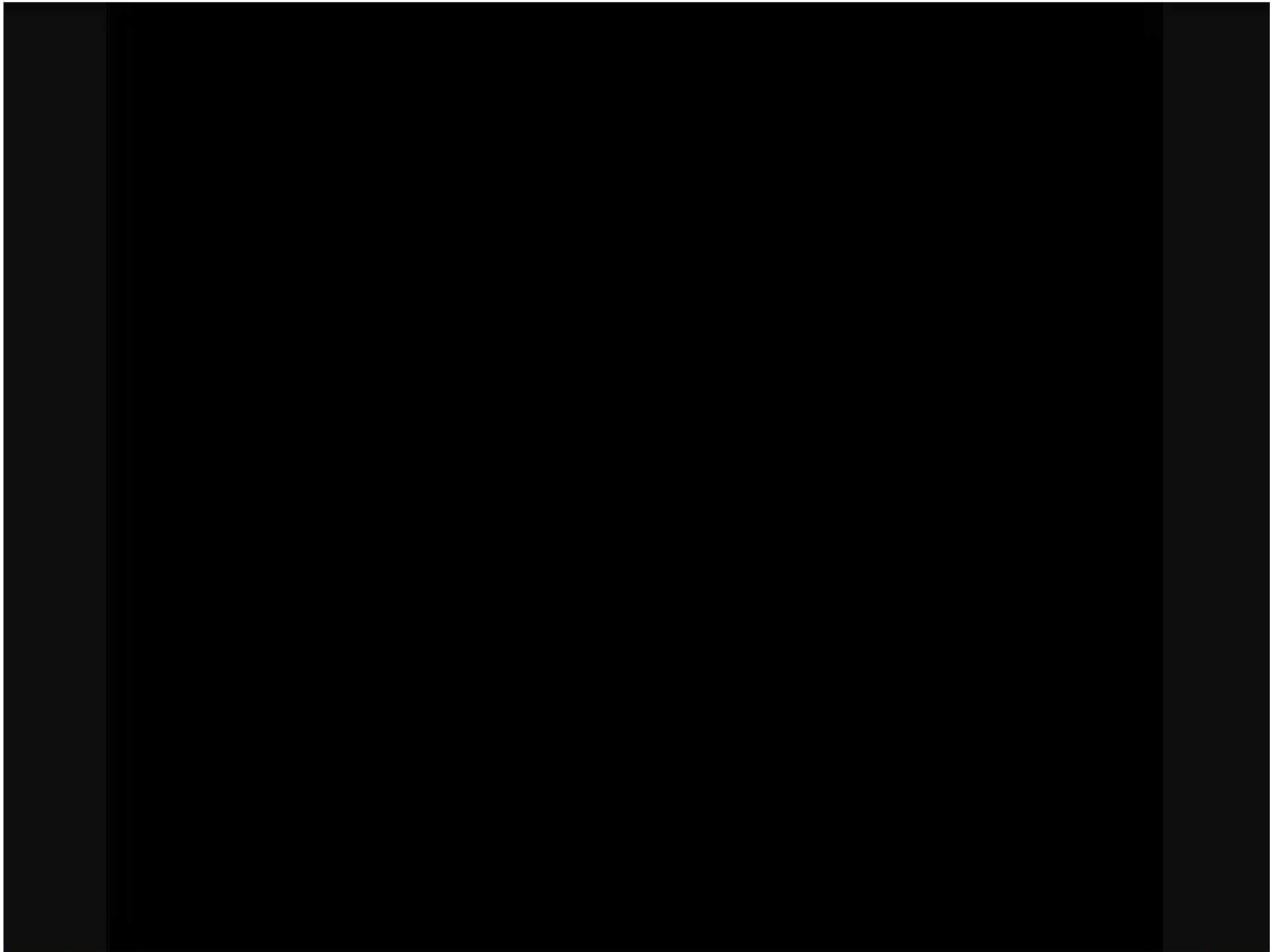
**OCTO-MOM'S DAD: SHE'S UNSTABLE**

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# Pop Culture Poetry?

- Eminem and Rhianna
- Questions for consideration





# Ctv.entertainment said...

But can it [Rihanna/Eminem video] be a teaching tool? That depends on the context in which young people see and hear it, says Marjorie Gilberg, executive director of Break the Cycle, a group that fights violence among teens.

"The danger is that pop culture defines our social norms," says Gilberg. "We don't want the message of this song to be that this kind of relationship is acceptable. So this song has to be viewed in the context of real information from adults, like parents and teachers."



# If that isn't confusing enough...

- when the controversial rap artist Eminem came to Toronto in 2000, politicians and activists unsuccessfully called for the government to bar him from the country, on the grounds that his violent lyrics promoted hatred against women. For instance, his song *Kim* graphically depicts him murdering his wife; and *Kill You* describes how he plans to rape and murder his mother.
- Source: online essay [www.mediaawareness.ca](http://www.mediaawareness.ca)

- What constitutes a healthy relationship?
- What do you need to be successful in a relationship?

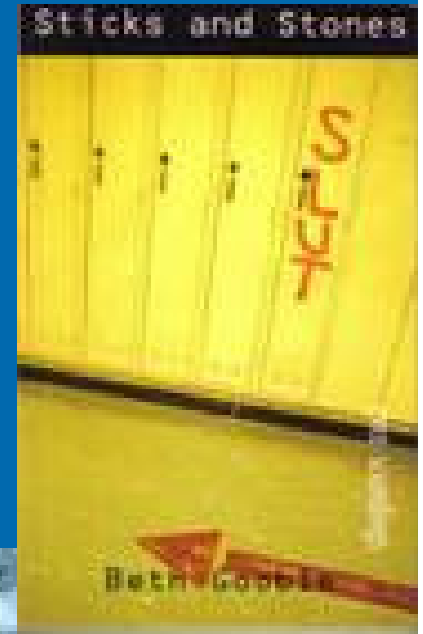
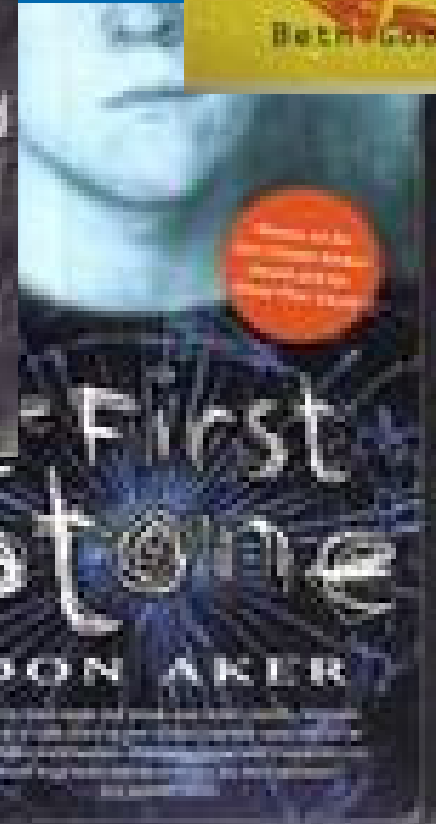
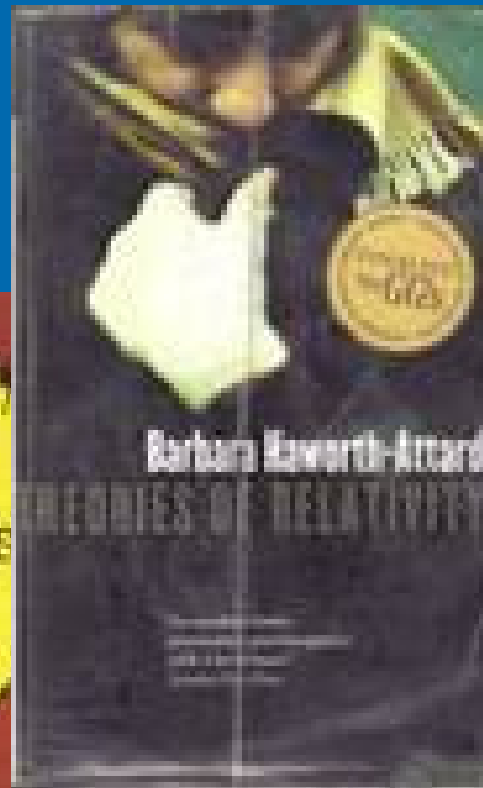
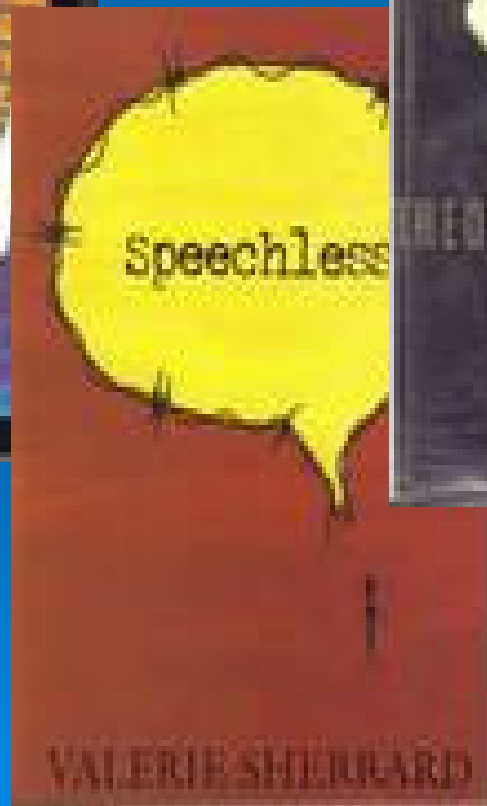
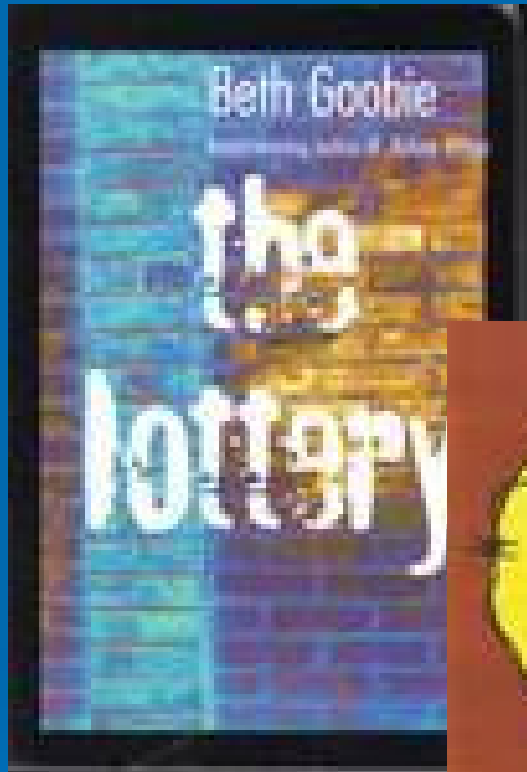


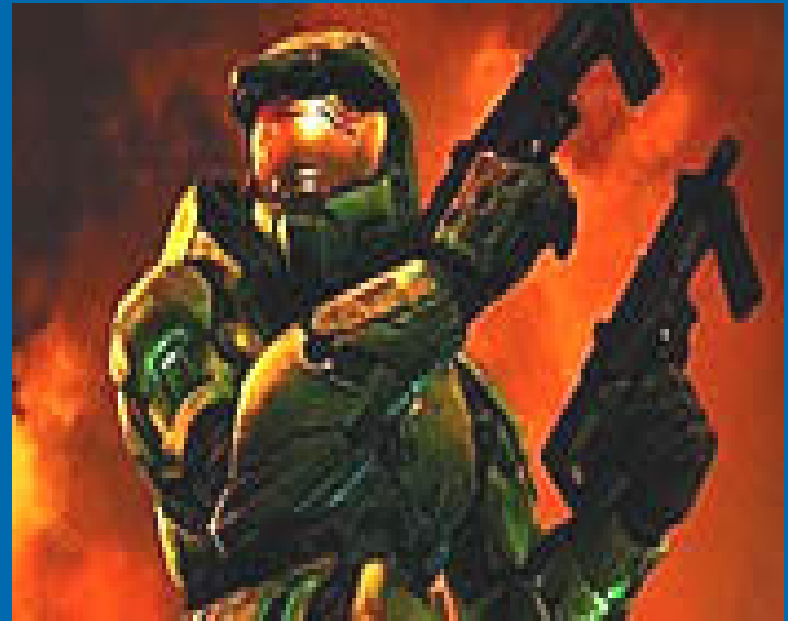


# Fourth R Curriculum

- Based on Ontario curriculum expectations
- In English classrooms, uses conventional text forms (short stories, novels, non-fiction) to address youth issues from a critical stance
- Topics include: dating violence, video game violence, self-image, drug use, teen pregnancy, homelessness, etc.

# Novel Approaches



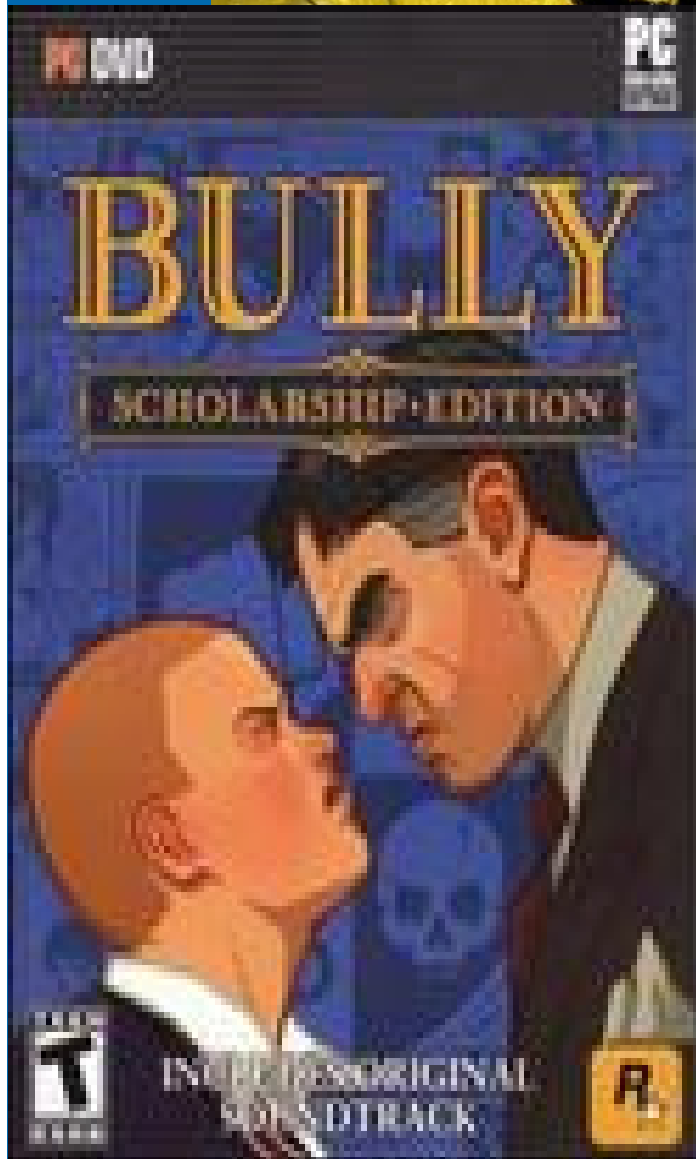


# GUN

PC DVD

## BULLY

SCHOLARSHIP EDITION



INCLUDES ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK

T

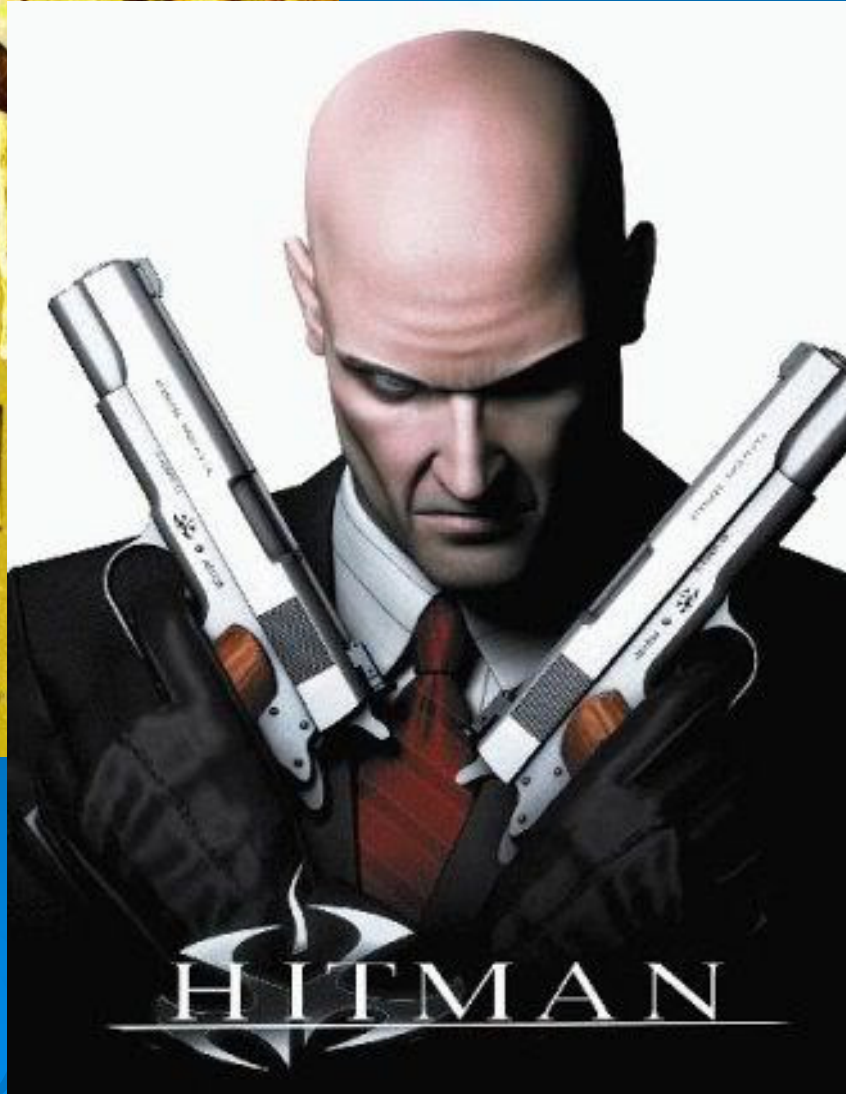
R



RES NOVEMBER 8


[GUNTHEGAME.com](http://GUNTHEGAME.com)

TRADEMARK AND GUN IS A TRADEMARK OF ACTIVISION



# HITMAN

# What do you know about...

- Halo
  - Grand Theft Auto
  - Call of Duty
  - Left for Dead
  - Bully
  - Mortal Kombat
  - Payday: Heist
  - Doom
- 



# Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 3

**MAY CONTAIN CONTENT  
INAPPROPRIATE FOR CHILDREN**

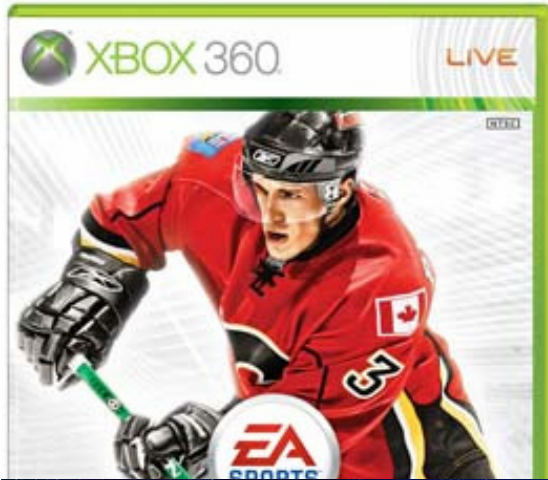
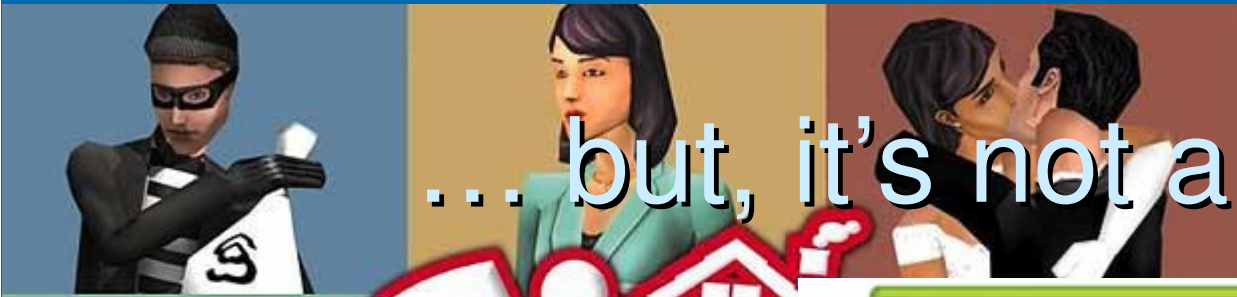
Visit [www.esrb.org](http://www.esrb.org)  
for rating information

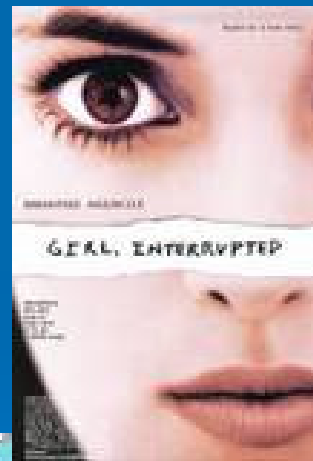
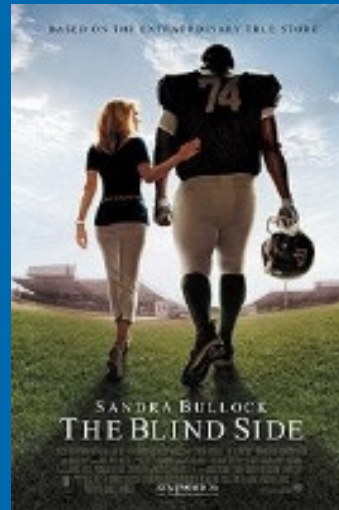
**ViSO**

# Critical Minds

- Surveys/analysis of survey data on viewing or gaming habits
- Read and write reviews of texts e.g., pro/con reviews and compare evidence provided
- Consider points of view; question bias or perspective evident in texts
- Purpose/audience questions
- Fact sheets / research
- Presentation of issue in non-fiction and fiction texts

.... but, it's not all bad





# Novel Thinking

e.g.,

- *Crank* (Hopkins, 2004) drug use, pregnancy, family relationships
- *Far From Shore* (Major 2004) substance use/abuse, delinquency, family issues
- *What happened to Lani Garver?* (Plum-Ussi, 2002); bullying, homophobia, relationships
- *Cut* (McCormick, 2002) self-harm, mental illness
- *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* (Chbosky, 1999); multiple issues, social responsibility
- *Skud* (Foon, 2003); bullying, gangs, youth violence, peer pressure

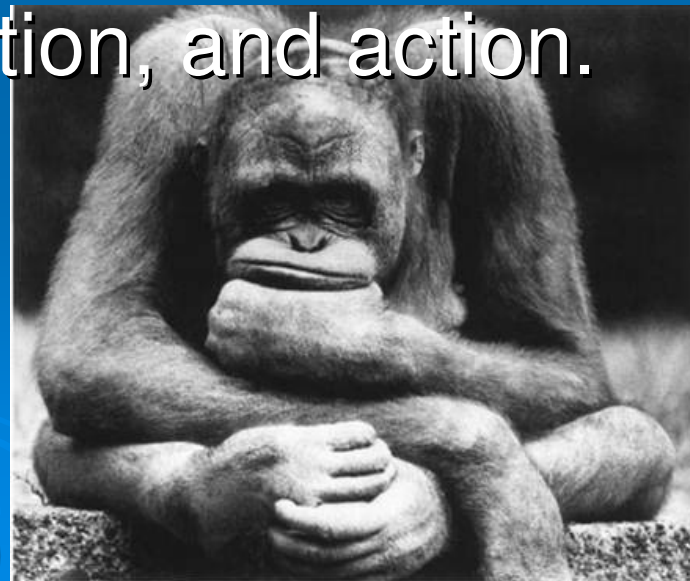
# Taking a Questioning Stance

- Nothing we read or view is “neutral”. Each text represents particular view(s), assumptions, purposes, explanations, time/context.
- No single text “speaks” for everybody. Some views/values are privileged; other views are silenced.



Critical literacy views readers as **active participants** in the reading process and invites them to move beyond passively accepting the text's message to question, examine, or dispute the power relations that exist between readers and authors. It focuses on issues of power and promotes reflection, transformation, and action.

(Freire, 1970)





“We can’t solve problems by  
using the same kind of  
thinking we used when we  
created them.”

Albert Einstein



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