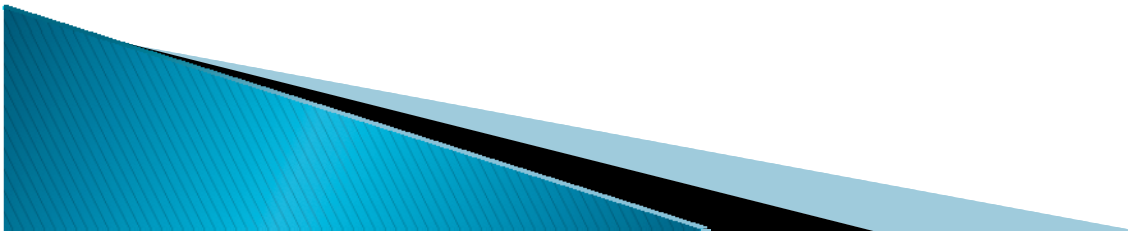
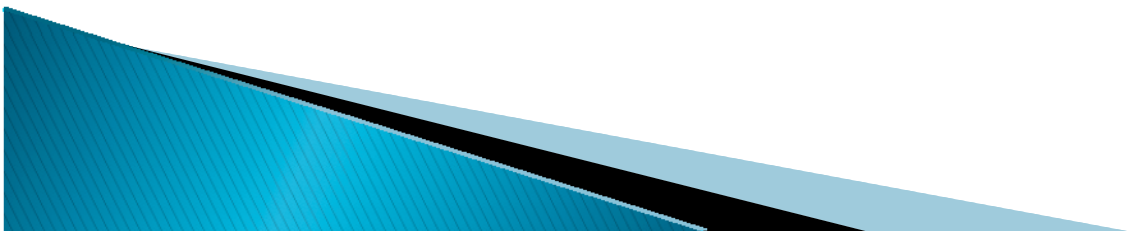


## Mass Media Effects: Individuals

- ? 1993 – Beavis and Butthead turned an aerosol into a torch; 3 Ohio teenagers set their rooms on fire
- ? 1993 – 2 teenagers killed lying on a highway at night – playing chicken
- ? 1997 – Teenager killed himself after listening to Marilyn Manson's CD
- ? 1997 – 14 year old opened fire on a prayer group – killing 3 students and injuring 5 [ copying scene from The Basketball Diaries]
- ? Who is to be blamed for these violent acts?



- ? Is the Media turning us into a violent and angry society?
- ? If violent scenes are causing this, how do we balance the issue of censorship and protecting people's right to free speech?
- ? People spend more time interacting with the media. Of the 40 hours of free time available/week – 15 hours (38%) are spent in front of the TV [Robinson & Godbey, 1997]
- ? This is more than the time spent reading, socializing, & engaging in outdoor activities
- ? It is assumed that mass media has an effect [negative] on individuals & society
- ? This assumption has led to the mandating of V-chip technology & voluntary TV rating system.



# The Critique of Mass Culture

- ? Its historical roots go back to the French Revolution – the position of the aristocrats was challenged by the masses
- ? Social Darwinism – justified the differences among classes & to excuse lower-class conditions on the basis of natural law – survival of the fittest.

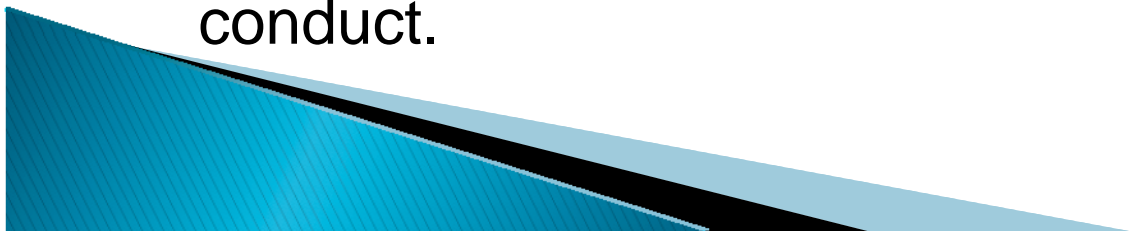
## The Two World Wars:

- ? Propaganda was used by governments on both sides for the purpose of uniting their populations against opposing external forces.
- ? Joseph Goebbels – propaganda as a pragmatic art, the means to an end, the seizure of total power [Herzstein, 1978]



# The Critique of Mass Media

- ? When the media was turned against the enemy in a methodological strategy of subversion, it was called “psychological warfare” – During WWII , Japanese radio beamed the voice of “Tokyo Rose” to seduce and weaken the resolve of American troops.
- ? During the Cold War [US vs. Russia] – voice of America beamed music & news across the “iron curtain”.
- ? Vietnam War – leaflets with pictures of B-52 bombers were dropped – implying bombs will be dropped next, not leaflets.
- ? 1987 – Allan Bloom’s “The Closing of the American Mind” – an attack on the concept of cultural relativism, which he associates with the lack of standards for moral conduct.



- ? In discussing music, Bloom agrees with Plato that the power of music to arouse emotions must be tempered by reason. This must be done to appeal to what Bloom calls “higher purpose” – beauty, religion, or politics. The task of the arts is to provide pleasure & appeal to these higher purposes.
- ? Bloom contends that rock ‘n’ roll provides no such wedding of emotion & intellect. He refers to the popularity of rock as an addiction to a rhythm & lyrics that stirs sexual passions while appealing to rebellion against parental authority.
- ? As a society, we are not completely comfortable with our mass mediated culture. Note that the persistent concern over sex and violence on TV resulted in voluntary rating system & government mandated V-chip for TV.

