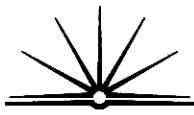
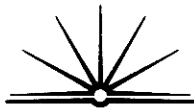


Through my study of Peter Weir's "The Truman Show", I have learnt the powerful message of how the media can manipulate audience responses. Weir has successively used film techniques, which he, ironically, has been critical of to get the point to viewers. Other themes that are addressed within the film is ethics and morals and reality and illusion. Weir also uses powerful symbols, lighting and dialogue to convey the extent of the media so that in turn, we as audiences do not glibly "accept the reality with which we are presented"

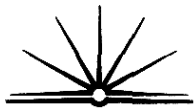
In the opening scene of "TruTalk", a montage of Truman's life is shown. This, coupled by the voice-over of Mike Michaelson "1.7 billion people were there for his birth. 200 countries tuned in for his first step. The world stood still for that stolen kiss" with additional



synchronized music serves to highlight the insidious nature of the media. The personification of the world standing still epitomises how the media has been successful in manipulating its audience. The fast-paced urgent music, similar to that of a news report also portray the importance of "The Truman Show". Another important feature that Weir has added to present to the audience is the power of Christof over Truman. The closed frame of Truman ~~on~~ being miniscule on the top right hand corner of the tv & juxtaposed against Christof on the entire screen presents the power imbalance. Christof's physical separation in the Lunar room also portray the power imbalance. It is through the image of Christof as being god-like that highlights the power of the media.



The camera ~~pan~~ pans across Seahaven's water and zooms in towards the Lunar room where Christof is standing. ~~This~~ ^{This} further shows his power. Christof is a metaphorical being for the media's ~~power~~ ^{pervasive} power as he overlooks Seahaven. During the interview, religious imagery is implemented as the ecosphere is fanning behind his head. However, unlike in religious paintings, instead of using light to radiate his holiness, blue filter is used to emphasise his dark, cold and evil ways. ~~The~~ ~~interview~~ ^{is abruptly interrupted} by several cut-aways of the internal audience that are hypnotised by the show. One shot is of an absurd man in his bath watching the show and another is a mother satirically ignoring a crying baby. Weir exaggerates how audiences can be infatuated by the media and his images convey such

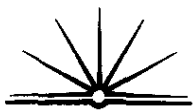


ridicule.

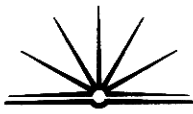
Sylvia is a prime example of the people who are trying to save Truman. Posters in her room of "Free Truman" and "rally" portray that she is in an ethical group. Her conversation with Christof highlights her passion to help ~~her~~ "save Truman".

Her dialogue, "he's a prisoner not a performer" with the additional close-up of a Truman poster behind bars ^{elevates} ~~eye~~ her issue. Christof, however, blinded by his immense power convinces himself that "ultimately Truman prefers his cell".

Her hope is diminished and a final ~~shot~~ high angle shot of Sylvia in her room looking ^{and} pleading at the tv, "Please God" highlights the sovereignty of the tv and reinforces its god-like power.



The final scene in the "Truman Show" represents the fine line (or wall) between reality and illusion. Truman, at this stage has a conscience that something is not quite right and he feels to run away from Seahaven. His triumph is conveyed by the ability to overcome the metaphorical fear of the waters. Truman's prison status is conveyed through flash backs of when he was a child. His fear of the water due to his father's drowning and Christof manipulates many ways to "keep Truman on the island". A savage dog is placed on the set to scare Truman and his expressions as a child reinforce his fear. The ~~dog~~ dog symbolises that he is Christof's captive, as guard dogs are used to trap their prisoners. Religious imagery is used throughout and in supporting the final scene, Truman is



is lying semi-conscious in a crucifix pose.
The ropes on his chest are in a cross and this gives an image of a child sacrificed for the father. This exaggerated image highlights how the media is so powerful.

Weir is conveying a powerful message and I have understood through my study of this film the ways in which the media can represent falsity. The internal audience of the film watch Truman for "comfort and support" and ~~several~~ ^{several} cut-aways represent this. They live their life vicariously without addressing their own issues and Weir highlights this as he has shown us the metaphorical puppet strings that manipulate audiences.

A related text that I have studied is



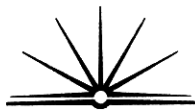
a photograph, "War on Terror" produced in "The Sydney Morning Herald" 29/7/01.

This photograph highlights unspeakable grief of a father and his son.

The cropped photo highlights the sadness of the father's eyes to emphasise his vulnerability. The close-up of his ~~eyes~~ ^{face} further accentuates his raw emotion of the empty spirit he has left during this time. This image has evoked a ~~large~~ sympathetic attitude and arouses the question "why?"

The additional caption underneath, "The two-year-old weighs as much as a normal five-month-old baby" highlights the severe environment they are in.

The way the light plays on the child's face highlighting the emaciation of his bones further uproot of such



poverty and travesty. I have learnt through this related text ~~on~~ that circumstances are unavoidable and that people need to be more aware of these situations.

The consequences are intolerable.

Through ~~the film~~ Weir's film "The Truman Show" ~~and my related message~~ I have learned that the media has many images constructed to manipulate audience responses. In turn, I have become a critical viewer and realising there are puppet strings controlling certain images. Through the image of "war on terror" I have learnt that there are consequences for human selfishness and I have seen both sides of the war. It has broadened my mind and ~~also~~ made me a critical viewer and to not be biased.