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Dear Sir / Madam,

I would firstly like to commend you for organising this educational program which will be touring local high schools next year. I personally feel that it is a great initiative. Secondly, I would like to bring to your attention three texts that I feel are worthy of inclusion into your consumerism section of the program. These texts are the collection of Bruce Dawe's poems "Sometimes Gladness", the image "American Psycho" by Lindsay (19th May 2001 Sydney Morning Herald) and the satirical cartoon "The Penguin Leunig" by Michael Leunig (1974). These texts are highly successful in communicating various ideas regarding the negative aspects of consumerism in our society.

One of the most interesting of Bruce Dawe's poems is "Americanised". In this poem, Dawe has utilised several textual features

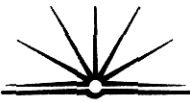


successfully to convey his meaning.

The style of the poem is allegorical, where Mummy's dominance of the boy is a metaphor for America's dominance of the rest of the world, especially in the domain of the culture of consumerism. Dave also uses contrast to convey his meaning. He quotes "He sees her figure loom", "her fat friendly features" and "her large hands" reveal the contrasting size between Mummy and the boy, with Mummy being superior. This contrast is used to explain and express the dominance and power that American consumerism has over other cultures of the world. This is an important issue in today's society because of the ~~increasing~~ increasing influence of America over other cultures. It should therefore, I feel be included in your program. ~~Also~~ Dave also uses sarcasm in this poem. An example is seen in the quote "He carried treasures that Mummy's

world contains from Pepsi-Cola figurines to spam". When Donne refers to these items as "treasures" he is being sarcastic. This sarcasm is used to reveal not only the cheapness and worthlessness of the American culture but also the way that it debases life and destroys other cultures. A second metaphor is introduced in the last few stanzas of the poem, that of the day declining into evening. Not only does Donne use this feature to show how the boy (representing other countries) can not see his culture anymore because it is overpowered by American consumerism, the darkness is also used as a symbol of evil.

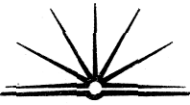
Overall I feel that this is a great poem, which expresses many ideas about consumerism that are just as relevant in today's society (even more so) as they were when Donne wrote them. ~~They~~ It should definitely be included in your program.



The image "American Psycho" by Lumsden is another text that I feel you should consider including. The textual features used are highly successful in communicating similar ideas about American consumerism to those in "Americanised".

In the image the American flag is very large, ~~revealing~~ revealing the dominance and power of the American culture. This is emphasized by the continuity of the stars and stripes pattern in Uncle Sam's clothing. Uncle Sam is used in the image as a symbol of American consumerism and materialism. He has a fake, almost mask-like, facial expression. This reveals the falseness, shallowness, and incongruity of the American consumer culture. This is emphasized by the bright, unnatural colors used in the image.

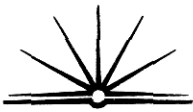
In the image Uncle Sam



is holding a miniature version of the globe in his left hand. The globe is surrounded by a chain which shows that the American culture is inescapable. Furthermore the contrasting size of Sam and the globe emphasizes the power and dominance of American consumerism. The obesity of Uncle Sam also conjures an image of American consumerism feeding on other cultures of the world.

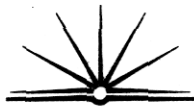
Overall I feel that this text conveys many similar ideas as those in "Americanised". It is necessary that the youth of our society understands the dominance and evilness of American consumerism before it completely takes over the world. This is why I feel that this text deserves inclusion into your program.

Another one of Bruce Power's poems that is highly successful is



conveying the negative aspects of consumerism is "Breakthroughs". Dave has successfully utilised features such as sarcasm, irony, and imagery to vividly convey his meaning.

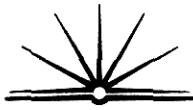
The sarcastic tone, which pervades the whole poem appears to commend consumerism. However Dave actually uses this feature to express his disgust. An example of this sarcasm can be seen in the quote "Angels' backed up by guitars" which presents an image of consumerism invading heaven. Through this image Dave reveals the way that consumerism debases human life and values. Dave also uses irony to convey his meaning. The title of the poem "Breakthrough" is an example of this feature. A breakthrough is usually viewed as an advance which is beneficial to humanity. The only breakthrough in this poem however is that of consumerism which is ironic because it is actually a



breakdown in society's values. Therefore
Dane uses this technique to show the
debasement of values and life as a result
of consumerism.

Throughout the poem Dane refers
to images of heaven and nature to express his
views. This is evident in the quotes "Bring
heaven at last within the mortal bounds" and
"Downy soft is dropped around the stars" which
creates images of consumerism invading everywhere.
Dane feels that its intrusion is always
destructive of true values and that even the
beauty of heaven and nature is debased by
consumerism.

Once again I feel that this
poem successfully conveys ideas about consumerism
that the youth of our society need to be aware of.
It explains how consumerism debases life and
values and also warns us of the manipulative
plays of advertising agencies.



The final text I am going to discuss is the cartoon "The penguin Leaning" by Michael Leung. Leung uses several features in this cartoon to express his condemnation of consumerism.

The sign "Reading" sky sale now on" presents us with the ridiculous yet humorous idea that ~~the~~ the sky is actually being sold to the birds by a real estate agent. This shows the extent of consumerism in our society. The real estate agent is wearing a bird mask so he can better secure a deal. This shows the lengths that people will go to in our society to make money. This reveals our shallowness and the debasement of our values as a result of the materialistic values imposed by consumerism. The contrasting size between the birds and the man, with the man being larger is used by Leung to reveal the power of consumerism and the weakness of our society as we succumb to it.

Once again I feel that the messages and ideas communicated in this text are highly important and should be expressed

to the youth of our society through your program.

Finally, I would just like to say that I passionately feel that these texts are of important value and urge you to consider their inclusion into your program "something to say". Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and I look forward to seeing you perform at our school in the near future.

Yours sincerely

John Smith



P.S. Good luck with the program.