Media Literacy Prepares Students for the Future

Sixth, educators must look to the future and understand how they can prepare their students for the future direction of the U.S. and the world. In 1963, the *Newsom Report* drew attention to the development of media education programs in schools. By 1985, when Masterman published *Teaching the Media*, an entire generation had passed through the school system and very few had received adequate instruction on how to critically approach the media. Little has changed since 1985, as demonstrated throughout this essay. Media is constantly changing and developing; therefore, education also needs to be flexible and open to change. This will occur if higher education's traditional conceptions of education are expanded to include the work of organizations and agencies who have legitimate knowledge of the development of media education (Masterman, 1985).

Information Has Become a Commodity

Seventh, and lastly, as part of an information society, Masterman suggests that students need to understand the privatization of information. Information continues to be turned into a commodity and transnational corporative system, which threatens the future of public information systems, including the educational system. When information is a commodity, its character and role changes. Students must know this so that they can advocate for change, which is part of the media literacy Circle of Empowerment. Understanding the powers behind ownership and control, and the powers within media messages and its influence, allows students to gain agency over their lives and the realities that they live in, which ultimately empowers them to do something about it (Masterman, 1985).

Standards for Media Literacy Education

To date, no U.S. communication or media association has directly addressed standards for media literacy in higher education. Two groups, however, address them indirectly. The first is the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC), an agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. ACEJMC is responsible for evaluating professional journalism and mass communication programs at universities in the U.S. Media programs that wish to be accredited must meet ACEJMC standards (Christ, 2004). The second is the National Communication Association (NCA). NCA has set media literacy standards and competencies for K-12 education. To incorporate media literacy into the basic communication course, these standards may serve as a starting point for establishing media literacy standards for communication programs in higher education (Christ, 2004).

ACEJMC Standards

First, ACEJMC states under its preamble: "The Accrediting Council does not define specific curricula, courses or methods of instruction.

It recognizes that each institution has its unique situation, cultural, social or religious context, mission and resources, and this uniqueness is an asset to be safeguarded" (ACEJMC, 2013). Therefore, its standards are guidelines, not specific definitions that apply to curriculum and student-learning outcomes (Christ, 2004). The same concept can be applied to implementing media literacy into university curriculum- a university should implement media literacy according to its mission and resources.

Under Standard 2 "Curriculum and Instruction" ACEJMC suggests that all graduates should be able to identify the "Professional Values and Competencies" and be able to demonstrate the following objectives outlined in Table 2.

	ACEJMC Communication Accrediting Standards: Standard 2 Curriculum and Instruction Professional Values and Competencies
1	Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances
2	Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications
3	Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communication
4	Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society
5	Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information
6	Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity
7	Think critically, creatively and independently
8	Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work
9	Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve
10	Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness
11	Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts
12	Apply current tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work, and to understand the digital world

Table 2. Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC) Accrediting Standards (2013): Standard 2 Curriculum and Instruction, Professional Values and Competencies. Adapted from "Accrediting Standards,: by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, 2013, Retrieved from http://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/PROGRAM/STANDARDS.HTML.

Standard 9 "Assessment of Learning Outcomes" ACEJMC (2013) suggests that programs should engage in the following actions, which should then be observable through evidence in students, as explained in the following chart. (See Table 3)

Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Accrediting Standards (2013): Standard 9 Assessment of Learning Outcomes	
Indicators	Evidence
1 The unit defines the goals for learning that students must achieve, including the "Professional Values and Competencies" of this Council. (See 2. Curriculum and Instruction.)	• A written statement on competencies • A written assessment plan • Evidence of alumni and professional involvement in assessment, such as: surveys, advisory boards, social media initiatives, portfolio reviews and other activities • Records on information collected from multiple measures of assessment and on the application of this information to course development and improvement of teaching, ensuring that the assessment findings have been systematically gathered, synthesized and applied • End-of-year unit summary assessment report and analysis
2 The unit has a written assessment plan that uses multiple direct and indirect measures to assess student learning.	
3 The unit collects and reports data from its assessment activities and applies the data to improve curriculum and instruction.	
4 The unit maintains contact with its alumni to assess their experiences in the professions and to provide suggestions for improving curriculum and instruction.	
5 The unit includes members of journalism and mass communication professions in its assessment process.	

Table 3. Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC) Accrediting Standards (2013): Standard 9 Assessment of Learning Outcomes. Descriptors of the indicators and evidence. Adapted from "Accrediting Standards,: by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, 2013, Retrieved from http://www2.ku.edu/~acejmc/PROGRAM/STANDARDS.HTML.

These values and competencies provided in Standards 2 and 9 create a framework from which media education can be discussed. Christ (2004) asks if media literate students outside of the media industry should be required to learn the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press. Questions such as this would have to be considered if these standards would be adopted by higher education for communication undergraduate programs.

NCA Standards

The NCA (1998) media literacy standards for K-12 education suggest that media literate communicators should be able to demonstrate knowledge of the ways people use media personally and publicly. These standards and competencies are not a curriculum, but rather they enrich and support curriculum. While the competencies and standards developed by NCA are targeted towards a variety of dimen-

sions of communication, the competencies within this table are specific to media literacy. (See Table 4)

NCA Media Literacy Standards for K-12 Education	
Knowledge	
(16-1)	recognize the centrality of communication in human endeavors
(16-2)	recognize the importance of communication for educational practices
(16-3)	recognize the roles of culture and language in media practices
(16-4)	identify personal and public media practices
(16-5)	identify personal and public media content, forms, and products
(16-6)	analyze the historical and current ways in which media affect people's personal and public lives
(16-7)	analyze media ethical issues
Behaviors	
(16-8)	access information in a variety of media forms
(16-9)	illustrate how people used media in their personal and public lives
Attitudes	
(16-10)	are motivated to evaluate media and communication practices in terms of basic social values such as freedom, responsibility, privacy, and public standards for decency.

Table 4. National Communication Association (NCA) Media Literacy Standards for K-12 Education (1998). Description of the goal behaviors and attitudes. Adapted from *Competent communicators: K-12 speaking, listening, and media literacy standards and competency statements*, by the National Communication Association. Copyright 1998 by the National Communication Association, Annandale, VA.

The NCA K-12 standards are directed at students, while ACEJMC standards are directed at practitioners. Can NCA K-12 standards be useful and important for students who want to be media practitioners (Christ, 2004)? In an extension of that idea, can NCA K-12 standards be useful and important to future graduates of communication programs? Can these serve as standards for higher education? It is arguably necessary to explore extending and revising K-12 standards for higher education because students are not reaching all standards of media literacy upon completion of high school, nor are these standards being addressed in college courses (Schmidt, 2012; 2013). Therefore, similar to the Hope College Conference Report, these K-12 standards serve as a starting point for developing higher education standards.

A Foundation for the Foundations

In the basic communication course, students are introduced to the field of communication by learning about the foundations of communication. Namely, students learn that communication is influenced by attitudes, values, beliefs, identity, and perception. As stated previously, media is the single most powerful and concentrated source for the "transmission, reproduction, and maintenance of the values of

dominant culture" (Denski, 1994, p. 65). Because of this, media has influenced communication in all contexts, including organizational, interpersonal, intercultural, health, rhetoric, telecommunications, journalism, and all others. Media influences how we think, believe, perceive, behave, feel, and desire. Overall, media representations help to construct students' social realities (Aufderheide, 2001). Therefore, because of media's strong influence on the foundational concepts of communication, undergraduate students should learn the foundations of media literacy in their basic communication courses. Because this course introduces students to foundational ideas associated with communication, they must learn about the most powerful influence on people's communicative interactions and the communication fields that they may choose to enter: the media.

While some students may have received media literacy education in primary and secondary school, much of their secondary education focuses on media access and production (Schmidt, 2012), which is only one element of the MEF's Circle of Empowerment. Potter (2013) emphasizes that media literacy education is a never-ending process, just as with all education, and therefore, students will never reach a quota of knowledge, hence the circular process of MEF's definition of media literacy. It is not enough to know how to access and create media. Students must also understand how to engage in all elements of MEF's Circle of Empowerment: media awareness, analysis, advocacy, activism, and access.

Ideally, students should obtain this foundation of media literacy through a communication course dedicated directly to media literacy education, which some universities have established. Within this course, students should learn to critically read, analyze, and decode media texts in the same way that students are taught to cultivate and analyze written texts so that they can understand the power behind media in society and within themselves (Kellner, 1995). Many colleges and universities may not have the funding or resources to create such a course. Media literacy, therefore, should be incorporated into current basic undergraduate communication course curricula. For information and examples on how to incorporate media literacy objectives and activities into communication courses, numerous resources are available for educators, which can be used and/or adapted as preferred by instructors to meet media literacy objectives. The Media Education Foundation (2015) offers a variety of interactive activities and films on their website that focus on building media literacy. Other organizations that offer a variety of teaching resources on their websites include the Center for Media Literacy (2011) and the National Association for Media Literacy Education (2015). The resources offered by these organizations include opportunities for students to engage in all stages of MEF's Circle of Empowerment. For instance, there are resources for assigning speeches that allow students to analyze different forms of media and then engage in activism by communicating their personal opinions through public speaking.

Future Directions

Teaching media literacy in communication departments will enhance the future of intercultural, interpersonal, organizational, gender, family, health, and mass communication, as well as all other communication fields. Communication majors are the future of these fields, and for students to expand and enhance the field, and to constructively contribute to society, they need to be media literate, engaging in all aspects of MEF's Circle of Empowerment. How and why communication educators need to teach media literacy using a critical pedagogical approach is also explained by Stan Denski in *Building Bridges: Critical Pedagogies and Media Studies* (1994). Denski (1994) suggests that bachelor degree programs in media and related fields train generations of students to enter into the media industries to contribute to the ongoing cycle of creating, recreating, diffusing, and containing. Denski specifically applied this to undergraduate media programs, as do most others, but this can also be extended to encompass communication programs as a whole. Students graduating from communication programs go into their careers and social lives and also contribute to the ongoing cycle of creating, recreating, diffusing, and containing. For this reason, communication instructors must incorporate media literacy objectives into their courses.

Hobbs and Frost (1998) conclude that media literacy initiatives that seek to reach a large number of students requires leadership and facilitation by a dedicated individual as well as solid program and staff development, support, and passion. Educators need to be confident and comfortable in including new approaches, topics and activities into their classroom by having the support of their departments. This requires thoughtful discussion about media associated issues and educational practices that can encourage the growth of professional relationships, collaboration, and support between instructors incorporating media literacy into their courses. To reach this goal, collaboration and support among instructors should be established at the regional and/or national level of the various communication associations to establish media literacy standards for communication departments to adopt. With agreed upon standards, communication departments and instructors will have a framework from which they can build their own course objectives around, which is the necessary step toward incorporating media literacy into communication education.

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BOOK REVIEW

Heinrichs, J. (2013). *Thank you for arguing: What Aristotle, Lincoln, and Homer Simpson can teach us about the art of persuasion.* New York: New Rivers Press. [revised and updated edition]

Reviewed by TOMEKA ROBINSON, HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY

Persuasion is everywhere. From the foods we eat to the brand of toothpaste we prefer, persuasion is all around us. However, many do not understand what persuasion is or how it functions. Jay Heinrichs' (2013) latest edition of *Thank You for Arguing: What Aristotle, Lincoln, and Homer Simpson Can Teach Us About the Art of Persuasion* provides a witty, clever, and engaging explanation of argument.

The author strives to provide clear and relatable examples and tips for the use of argument in everyday settings. While the book is 28 chapters long, the flow of each chapter allows it to read more like a novel rather than a textbook. The first chapter provides the introduction to what argument is and how it surrounds us everyday. The author takes us through a journey of attempting to go an entire day without using any persuasion. While he fails in this attempt, his entertaining way of explaining why escaping persuasion is futile draws the audience into the text and provides a nice synopsis and outline for subsequent chapters.
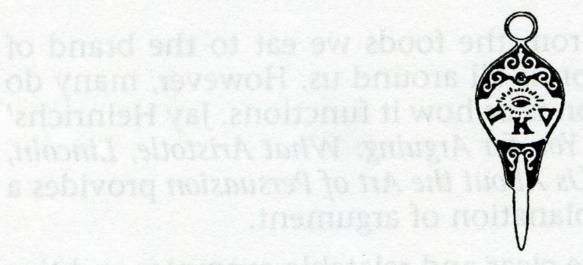
Chapters 2-13 center on building offense plans. From goal setting to gaining the higher ground, this section provides a clear justification of how to move from fruitless argumentation to winning strategies. While some of the tips, like "how to seduce a cop" (p. 18-20) and "how to manipulate a lover" (p. 21-23), may raise a few eyebrows, Henrichs is a rhetorician and grounds all of his tips within sound teachings. However, some of the drollness went a little too far for my tastes.

Chapters 14-17 cover establishing defense tactics. In this section, Henrichs focuses on spotting logical fallacies, building trust, and detecting persuasion. This section was one of my favorites as it reads more like a well-written debate case because the author provides substantive evidence to support every claim that is offered. While Henrichs still uses humor to advance his points, the examples felt much more authentic.

Chapters 18-28 enhanced the contentions raised in the preceding chapters by giving advanced offensive and agreement strategies. In these chapters, the author discusses how to speak the audience's language and "spot[ting] and exploit[ing] the most persuasive moments" (p. 260). The tools provided in these sections illuminate the vital devices that other persuasion texts seem to either gloss over

or miss entirely.

Overall, *Thank You for Arguing: What Aristotle, Lincoln, and Homer Simpson Can Teach Us About the Art of Persuasion* offers a unique perspective to the use of argument and persuasion. While the overuse of humor and toolboxes throughout the book were not my favorites, by using contemporary examples and an engaging writing style, this book would bode well within any persuasion classroom.

BOOK REVIEW

Hertenstein, M. (2013). *The tell: The little clues that reveal big truths about who we are.* New York: Basic Books.

Reviewed by NINA-JO MOORE, APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY

The Tell: The Little Clues that Reveal Big Truths About Who We Are is an interesting venture into the study of nonverbal communication factors from a position of someone who is not a communication scholar. Hertenstein is a member of the Psychology faculty at DePauw University, and his approach to looking at this topic was more as a consumer of nonverbal messages – "the tells," as it were – than as a scholar of the discipline. If you are looking to read a scholarly book on this topic, this would not be your best choice.

Hertenstein begins his foray into this topic by discussing many situations where we really do seek to see the messages that are being sent to us that are either subconscious messages or unconscious messages. Most notably, he begins the discussion with an example of his own son, whom he and his wife thought might be emitting some of "the tells" of being on the autism spectrum. Clearly, a parent would have an interest in such a topic. He even includes a chart of "the tells" to look for when trying to determine autism in a young child (p. 18). If I were a parent I would most definitely be watching for any signs of autism, especially knowing its prevalence in today's society.

As a reader, I am not so sure that this issue has clear applicability to a broad spectrum of readers, nor did Hertenstein expect the reader to settle for just one example, such as his personal one. He includes many different situations where people would be better off if they paid attention to "the tells" they are encountering. Too often, he feels, we let the clues we encounter elude our senses and psyches. He goes about trying to get us to begin to attend to signs and clues we have to what people are communicating to us.

Hertenstein's coverage of the topic is eclectic. He includes topics of how we look at others and how we look at ourselves equitably. In Chapter 2, "The Genes in All of Us," he looks at how perhaps our ability to pay attention to messages we are being sent may come from our genetic make-up. In Chapters 5 he approaches how we look for others in love relationships and how we respond to close significant relationships in our lives. Interestingly enough, he approaches the topic of "gaydar" when trying to establish romantic relationship (pp. 69-82). I found it rather interesting, though, that this was the only subject he discussed in that chapter, even though the title of the chapter was "The Targets of Our Attraction." I guess I thought it would include both heterosexual and homosexual "tells." I was pleased to discover

that he did find that it is not acceptable to do the good old "judge a book by its cover" phenomenon when discussing this topic.

As a scholar of nonverbal communication myself, and as a scholar of gender communication issues, I took great interest in Chapter 6, "From Dating to Mating." He does give good coverage to meeting men and women for romantic reasons, and how to determine if "the tells" are indicating that the relationship will move toward a more intimate, romantic affiliation, or if it will end before it ever progresses that far.

Probably the chapter that caught my interest the most was Chapter 7, "Detecting Deception." I think my biggest issue with this chapter was what I always teach as the "cardinal rule" in my nonverbal communication classes: you should never try and evaluate honesty in an individual that you do not know well. I always say, "The better you know the person, and the better you know the context, the more accurate your judgments of deception will be." Hertenstein addresses this a little, but I am always leery of people who think that you can tell how people are lying by the way they avert their eyes or how they hold their bodies.

I think that Hertenstein's coverage in his last chapter about "the tells" of politicians is one of the better chapters of the book. He is prescriptive of things to watch for and how to determine what is being "told" by the politician. The unfortunate thing about this is that most people will not watch for any of the "tells" of politicians if they are ego-involved with the candidate or the topic.

As a cross between a "pop" book and a scholarly book I found this work thought provoking. He doesn't clutter the text of his message with internal citations or foot/endnotes. This has its shortcomings, though. I kept reading things that I knew were facts, or were findings from studies, and there were no citations. This is not a book for an academician to read thinking it will give you a clear picture of the topic. Even the endnotes are strangely done. They have a page number and a specific concept on that page, then the source, and then you have to go to the "References" sections to see the source. Instead of reading like an academic book, it was very confusing to me to read it like this. One fun aspect to the book is that at the end of each chapter he gives you some "Party-Worthy Findings." These are fun little tidbits that you can use when discussing these topics with others at social gatherings.

If you are looking for a different approach to nonverbal communication, that is written just a wee bit awkwardly – although I do admit that it is easy reading – you might like this book. I think that perhaps I might not be the best judge of its value to society due to my personal background in the academic study of nonverbal communication, but I do think those who do not have that background might enjoy the read. I would suggest that you not turn it into your reference book for nonverbal messages is all.

BOOK REVIEW

Kramer, D. (2015). *Entering the real world: Timeless ideas not learned in school.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Reviewed by SUSAN MILLSAP, OTTERBEIN UNIVERSITY

What do students need to know to be successful now that they have a degree? This is the question that David Kramer attempts to answer by presenting 150 practical ideas and tools for people moving into the "real" world. As a computer software business entrepreneur turned university professor, Kramer has written a fast and easy-to-read book that connects guidance on personal growth, career, relationships, and financial advice with many motivational quotes and stories. And while some subjects are given superficial coverage, the resources listed allow the reader to investigate topics in more detail as desired. The book also has its own website where the author provides additional resources, more detail on some topics, and maintains a blog to answer specific questions. This book would make an excellent supplement to a senior year transition course.

While the chapters can be read in any order, there is logic to the organization of the book. Early chapters deal with personal growth and adapting to changes in your life such as graduation, outgrowing friends, and beginning a new job. Basic communication concepts are presented in a practical way and are a pleasant reminder of the importance of good communication in any situation. There is also an emphasis on the importance of critical thinking and its value in different situations. Asking "How do I know I'm right?" leads into an interesting chapter on defining terms for your life. The concepts covered justify what is taught in any argumentation and debate class. Students who participated in forensics will quickly see how the skills they learned in forensics are valuable tools in the real world. While these lessons are very applicable to the high school or college graduate the ideas presented are useful for all ages and all stages of life.

The middle chapters of the book deal with the various stages of finding a job. Kramer gives some good advice on goal setting and looking at the companies where you think you want to work. I found his chapter on interviewing, however, applicable to only certain types of jobs, like sales positions. His suggestions on how to answer some questions would not work for all careers. Kramer also provides advice for working with difficult people and in difficult situations. Most of his suggestions in this chapter are consistent with lessons in interpersonal communication and conflict resolution. The chapter begins to lose some focus, however, as it shifts to a discussion of win-win situations.

The later chapters on finance were filled with specific suggestions that were both practical and informative. The book's website has sample budgeting sheets which are very useful. The section on stock market investing is very interesting but does shift audiences from the new graduate to someone who has money to invest. The idea of planting seeds for future use does make this section valuable for the younger reader as well, although I'm not sure how many will actually read it. I believe the younger reader will be more interested in his chapter on starting your own business. His list of insightful questions and recommendations should help anyone to develop and focus their ideas for a new business.

Finally, Kramer provides a very thorough resource list to help anyone as they venture out in the world. The book ends with a feedback form that is also on the book's website thus indicating that the author is willing to make changes as the world changes. The various topics covered should easily stimulate conversation in a college-level transition course. Overall, this book is a very quick read that has practical information for the new graduate of any age. As the title indicates, this book will be most useful for those just getting started or those making significant changes in their "real" world.

BOOK REVIEW

Leitch, T. (2014). *Wikipedia U: Knowledge, Authority, and Liberal Education in the Digital Age*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Reviewed by KEVIN BRYANT, THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

We are all guilty of soliciting a cursory answer to life's many questions from the now infamous World Wide Web know-it-all, Wikipedia. Often, teachers and professors lament the notion that Wikipedia is a source that, although useful in the seminal stages of researching topics, should ultimately not be relied upon in and of itself. In his book, *Wikipedia U Knowledge, Authority, and Liberal Education in the Digital Age,* Thomas Leitch attempts to revise this misconception. Based on his inquisitive assessment of authority, Leitch's main claim is that Wikipedia is useful because its entries are never completed. Any person with an Internet connection can sign up for a free Wikipedia account and edit any entry. Leitch's book compiles the most compelling arguments to date for why Wikipedia should have an efficacious reputation.

Leitch seeks to explore the similarities between the underlying assumptions and apparatuses that extend authority in today's online knowledge culture and liberal education. Liberal education, according to Leitch, is "to question, discount, and selectively absorb [knowledge] in order to develop a more critical and confident sense of our own authority and the authority of the groups within which we think and speak and act" (p. 107). In this sense, liberal education exemplifies the same paradoxes of authority that Wikipedia offers. Namely, the very act of asserting one's authority is wrought with questions of "who conferred this authority?" Authority is established in the academy through expert opinion. This expertise then exerts a top-down confluence on other rising stars, seeking authority in their own right through establishing gaps between what they know and what others know. Essentially, authority is bestowed from an authoritative figure who ascertained his or her own potency of expertise due to the fact that others are not experts. This makes a clear demarcation of the line between expert and novice a hard distinction. How big a gap should there be before one obtains this "glorified" expert status? Leitch continues to sandblast similar critical inquiries about assuming one's own expertise as a result of disagreements with other experts. Leitch highlights the parallels and inherent interdependence of these experts' disagreements to Wikipedia's editing process; however, Leitch notes Wikipedia does not ordain authority to any particular person or group. Wikipedia's authority is derived from the constant questioning

and ever-evolving nature of its entries.

To this point, Leitch expounds on three policies that Wikipedia enforces: verifiability, neutral point of view, and no original research. Adhering to the second of these three guidelines, Leitch explicates the apparent paradoxes of authority in Wikipedia's own policies, and in doing so, establishes credible arguments against his own biases for Wikipedia. Leitch's encomium of Wikipedia is not without criticism. Verifiability holsters the most glaring of these contradictions due to the inextricable ties of current publishing conventions to authority. Leitch contends that Wikipedia allows for the repositioning of authority through edits and interrogations from the at-large public; yet, these edits must already be in print tacitly reinforcing publications' claim to authority. Leitch turns this paradox on its head by describing its function as a stepping-stone mechanism for citizens to catechize the conformist assumptions of authority. This intense probing may lead to more questions; nonetheless, Leitch contends no harm is done, as the questioner will begin to gain liberation from the current credulous declarations of authority.

Leitch extends current theories on the nature of Wikipedia by elaborating that "play" is fundamental to the success and import of the digital encyclopedia. Several of these arguments, found in chapter four, are perhaps some of the most articulate reasons to reevaluate Wikipedia's utility. Leitch's idea of "play" is an amalgam of Roger Caillois and Johan Huizinga's interpretations. The constant revision process seems to detach users from their intellectual offerings while simultaneously inculcating a sense of personal authority from their contributions. In other words, light-hearted edits can presumably bring about new or greater comprehension either in one's self or in the global community. Leitch dramatically strengthens his arguments about play with a theatrical analogy. In full-dress rehearsals for dramas, actors are intrinsically more playful than when performing for a live audience. Wikipedia edits typify this analogy, notwithstanding their immediate publishing to the Internet. Said tersely, edits are seen as playful due to the incessant deletions and re-edits of entries effectively preventing the first official live production. Every entry is practice or rehearsal for the next edit.

Few ideas come to mind when addressing the shortcomings of this book. However, this author could improve this reading by limiting its verbose chapters and redundant arguments. Readers could easily become lost in the forest of grandiloquent vocabulary and eventually quip "that tree looks familiar" as the reader has rounded the same au courant argument for the fourth time. Eventually the winding and twisting path emerges from the bristled undergrowth with eloquent arguments though slightly vacuous in number. Conversely, the redundancy helps concretize Leitch's position, perhaps intentionally. This seems to be a tug-o-war between one's compliment and another's complaint.

As far as recommended audiences or practitioners are concerned,

this book is boundless in who it can benefit. The beginning teacher or seasoned professor can use some of the activities listed in chapter five to start their students on a quest for new authority. Most courses concerning critical scholarship could find value in the questions Leitch poses about authority. Forensic and debate teams may find a home for Wikipedia among their research tools with a renewed compendium of arguments for Wikipedia's credibility and use. One of the most laudable benefits of this book is not centered on the application of Wikipedia, but the proliferation of education due to the critical examination of authoritative structures. In short, this book has helped me recalibrate some theoretical assumptions about authority while invigorating the reification of authority through simple edits on Wikipedia's four million plus entries.