Course Focus

This course raises five areas of questions about youth culture:

- **CULTURE**  What is the nature of culture, of popular and youth cultures?
  What is the relationship of Christianity to cultures?
  How are we to exegete contemporary pop culture?
  What do we need to know about media literacy, and how can we use it?
- **DIGITAL WORLD**  How is the electronic/Internet revolution shaping Gen Z, the Mosaics?
- **ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT**  How does contemporary culture affect the identity and growth of young people in our society?
- **EXEGESIS OF SELF**  How have I been and how am I being affected by society?
  How can I be in the world and not be of the world?
  What does it mean to be “salt and light in the world?”
  What responsibility do I/we have to change society?
- **RESEARCH**  How can we best study the youth culture and apply our findings to our own lives and to youth ministry?
- **MINISTRY**  How is the Gospel to youth best contextualized?
  How can the youth minister best function as leader, counselor and advocate?
  What responsibilities do youth ministers have in freeing young people from cultural oppression/contamination, helping youth interpret media, and empowering them for mature leadership in church and society?

Course Goals

1. To become more aware of our culture and understand how Christ calls us to be its leaven, its salt and light.

2. To become a more effective exegetes of popular culture and help young people interpret the positive and negative influences of the media more effectively.

3. To monitor the youth and popular cultures in a way that makes us better advisors to parents, pastors and concerned adults.

4. To grow as practical theologians so that our lives and words will be more prophetic and our pastoral ministries more relational, holistic and relevant.

5. To develop life-long patterns for spiritual and professional growth—including study of a changing culture—in a way that inspires young people and encourages volunteers.
Background Reading
(from my presentation and your browsing, we may have a quiz on these)

Reading: MA, Addison-Wesley, 290 pp. If you haven’t yet done so, read this basic text carefully as background for our lectures/presentations. If you have read it, review changes in social systems that affect children and youth, the causes and effects of the “patchwork self” and the resulting stress factors. Students over the years have considered this essential reading. It presents the socio-psychological dilemma of adolescents today in a clear and readable way, and its conclusion points to the critical issue in youth ministry. (If you know this book, go on to further reading.

Patricia Hersch (1998) *A Tribe Apart: A journey into the heart of American adolescence*, New York: Ballantine Books, 391+ pp. A great title describing the place of youth in our society today. And the author sets us a great example hanging out with 8 teenagers for three years. Keep your own index of the name of each teenager in the back of this book and jot down each page(s) where each is described. This is a great exploration of teenagers’ inner life, kids who may look perfectly normal and happy on the outside.

Christian Smith with Melinda L. Denton (2005) *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*, Oxford/NY: Oxford Univ. Press, 346 pp. This is the definitive study for youth ministry today. Meticulous survey of a random sample of some three thousand American youth with a couple of hundred more in face-to-face interviews finds that students 13-17 are no rebelling against theirs and their parents’ religious tradition, are not “spiritual rather than religious,” and generally follow with adults what this study calls moralistic, therapeutic deism.

Go to the “Encyclopedia of Youth Studies,” EYS, at (www.centerforyouth.org). The Encyclopedia is the second band on the home page. Select Y on the keyboard to the left, and under Youth Ministry, select Articles and then study carefully “The Ten Stages of Youth Ministry,” “The Four Basic Questions in Youth Ministry,” and “Distinguishing Theologies, Philosophies, and Models of Youth Ministries.” Then, check out this whole website and see topics such as subculture, media, film, television, Internet noting what’s there and what’s missing. Be prepared to critique this site and explain how you can use it for this class and in your ministry.

Go also to the Center for Parent and Youth Understanding (www.cpyu.org). This site has been developed by Walt Mueller, one of your authors and a former student. It is an amazing collection of resources from popular culture that includes encouragement for exegesis/discernment and suggestions for use in ministry. Note how this could be used by you in ministry and for parents needing such a resource.

Note: YPulse is Anastasia Goodstein’s hip, secular site keeping you in touch with youth culture and marketing to youth (see www.ypulse.com).

Course Texts
(Read most relevant sections from texts below.
In suggested order of reading—though you may want to skip back and forth.)

Borgman, Dean (1997) *When Kumbaya Is Not Enough: A Practical Theology for Youth Ministry*, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 241 pp. Read this basic text thoughtfully to correspond as much as possible with class lectures. If you have already read it, review especially, Chs. 3-10. Question its theological and sociological assumptions as well as its implications for your ministry. It is asking you to think theologically about culture, human growth, social systems, sexuality, humor and ministry.

Craig Detweiler and Barry Taylor (2003) *A Matrix of Meanings: Finding God in pop culture*, Baker Academic, 351pp. This text looks at advertising, celebrities, music, movies television, fashion, sports and more, introducing you to meaning in pop culture and how it can be interpreted theologically—hopefully with hints as to how culture may be used in ministry. You’ll want to go through this text, but may skip some illustrations or examples.


Walt Mueller (2007) *Youth Culture 101*, Zondervan/YouthSpecialities, 480pp. This former student of this course, DMin from GCTS, and founder director of the Center for Parent and Youth Understanding, has written several books in addition to his website (q.v.). This is his latest and you should make yourself familiar with it, concentrating on chs. 3-8.

**Using Media in Youth Ministry**

Ted Baehr (1987) *The Movie/Video Guide for Christian Families*, Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Pub., 234 pp. Ted Baehr is a conservative movie critic. This book establishes the foundations for discernment from a biblical perspective, by asking the right questions, and by learning from the positive lessons from old Westerns, then it reviews hundreds of movies giving basic facts and a two paragraph review and evaluation of each, then finally its indecies.

Ted Baehr with Bruce Grimes (Vol. 2, 1989) *The Christian Family Guide to Movies & Videos*, Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, Publishers, 411 pp. “Back by popular demand, this second volume reviews movies” missed in the first or which came out from 1987 to 1989). Also, there is a chapter which highlights several excellent movies such as “Mr. Smith Goes to Washington” and “Chariots of Fire” which teach biblical principles…. Another chapter examines the moral decay of feature films… shows why movies decayed and how the Church could have stopped that decay.” Most of this book are reviews and evaluations of another couple of hundred movies.

Doug Fields & Eddie James (1999-2005) *Videos that Teach: Teachable Movie Moments from 75 modern film classics*, through # 4 so far (maybe 5 is out by now) Zondervan, about 175 pages each. Here is a practical tool for using movie clips to get student discussions going. For each film, your talk sheet give you a Trailer (question the movie deals with), The Movie (type and quick synopsis), This Clip (where to start and stop), By the Book (a relevant Scripture), and Where to Take It (discussion questions). You also get an Index of Movies included, Clips by topic, e.g. Abuse through Worry), and a Bible Reference locator. In addition, you get suggestions for using this method and book.


**Further Reading about Youth Today**

(Depending on whether you are reading Elkind, we hope you’ll read at least one of these.)

Dean Borgman (2003) *Hear My Story: Understanding the Cries of Troubled Youth*, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 418 pp. This book does not blame it all on the media. Rather it looks at all social systems surrounding youth with what is in many ways, a toxic environment. You also may want to read this for insights about healthy and unhealthy growth, or deeper explanations of sex and violence—and a theology of it all.

Chap Clark *Hurt: inside the world of today’s Teenagers*, Baker Academic236pp. A professor at Fuller Theological Seminary uses his research and experience with youth to demonstrate the too important place of hurt (and stress) among today’s teenagers.

James Garbarino (1999) *Lost Boys: Why Our Sons Turn Violent and How We Can Save Them*, NY: The Free Press, 274pp. I consider James Garbarino the expert on youth at high risk in this country. Here he not only plumbs the etiology (causes, origin) of youthful violence, but presents developmental issues, importance of good parenting, the toxicity of our culture, and how youth can be reclaimed.

Daniel J. Kindlon (2003) *Too Much of a Good Thing: Raising Children of Character in an Indulgent Age*, Mirmax Books, 288p.p. Indulged and ambivalently protected and excused, the case tough love and teaching responsibility and service is of high importance. Results of a scientific survey and anecdotes will help parents especially cope with the surge in attitudes of entitlement.

David Kinnaman & Gabe Lyons (2007) *unChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity... and Why It Matters*, Baker Books, 256pp. “Mosaic and Busters (generations that include late teens to early 30-somethings) believe Christians are judgmental, antihomosexual, hypocritical, too political and sheltered.” If you want to reach this Generation with the Good News, this book, based on objective research, ought to be something you carefully consider.

Walt Mueller (1999) *Understanding Today’s Youth Culture: For parents, teachers, and youth leaders*, (Revised and Expanded) Tyndale, 461 pp. Somewhat dated, this book is written first of all to parents, which can be valuable to you. It is packed with facts and examples relevant to our course content. Notice its different style and emphasis from the previous text. (You may skim sections of this book, but be sure to note its principles and guidelines for future reference. You should read about 300 pages.) At (www.cpyu.org). You will find current updates on the youth and pop cultures at that site.


Course Assignments

(All work, not expected earlier, is due at our last class. I need to have all your work in hard copy—not by Email—with one exception. This is not quite as much work as it looks; wait for explanations.)

1. Your prompt and animated presence, to get, and contribute to, the gist and flow of the course, and especially your presence and sharing in your small group’s discussions, are very important for each class—unless you have an emergency (10% of grade).

2. Annotated Bibliography. List and briefly describe (bibliographic data and a paragraph as to the content and value of the book) all your reading for this course (2-3 pages, for future reference). Your reading consists of the Syllabus (with its rich bibliography), a few handouts, Elkind, if you haven’t read *All Grown Up and No Place to Go*, the required texts, and a further book or two (totaling about 1500 pages). There will be a couple of announced quizzes on certain texts and areas. I want you to have flexibility to “Google” and “Amazon” books of special interest, skim and read at least 50 pp. Such books will qualify for your Annotated Bib., noting how much you actually read of each book. (Quizzes and Bibliography count for 15% of grade)

3. You are asked to view the disturbing movie “Thirteen” before the second class (see Guide). Then in the second half of the semester, we want you to see Wall-E. The first of these films will introduce our discussion of teenagers and their identity formation; the second will collect our theories on culture and the media.

4. Interviewing Teenagers. In an informal and unscientific, yet significant random survey, we want to find out what’s making kids happy these days. You’ll be given this one-page, easy to fill out survey, not only to get back their opinions, but to initiate conversations with your own youth groups and those outside the church and faith. Try to interview 12-20 youth. Teenagers generally love to express their opinions. I think we should promise to make the results of our surveys known to them by the end of the semester. We will also try to post the results under “Teenagers” in the Encyclopedia of our website. I hope you’re a little excited about this. We do not need all sheets your Interviews; turn in a summary of your findings by (20% of grade)

5. Exegesis of Self. Your personal journal (or reflections) is an important part of your work for several reasons. Write it up in three stages. In the first chapter, look back at how you were socialized (note five primary social systems) and developed your personal identity (childhood through adolescence). This is due early on or before our first reading week. Your second chapter will record reflections on the course and its readings, how these have helped you understand yourself, first of all, and then teenagers today (due at least by end of second reading week. Your final reflections and evaluation (of the course, of me if you want, and as to how you have grown or been stretched), along with response to final readings, will be turned in with all other work at the last class. We’re looking at your approach to culture and how you see Christians engaging secular culture these days. (20% of grade)

6. Your final and main project for this course is topical research. After perusing EYS, find something that is too dated, inadequate, or missing. Your topic should be something of interest to you and that you’ve experienced or studied. Format for this can be found under (“Get Involved,” #1 Click on Write for… Of course, each document you look at in the Encyclopedia is a model.) More explanation of this assignment will be given in class. Due at the last class. (about 35% of grade)
Youth Ministry Books

(If you took this course thinking it to be a basic youth ministry course and are need of basics, try looking at one or more of the following…)

Jim Burns with Mike DeVries (2002) *YouthBuilder: Today’s Resource for Relational Youth Ministry.* Gospel Light. Students usually find this a very good basic coverage of the skills needed in youth ministry.


Duffy Robbins, ed. (2004) *This Way to Youth Ministry: An Introduction to the Adventure,* Zondervan, 597 pp. This is an ambitious project, culling wisdom and suggestions, from many expert sources, on a wide range of issues underlying youth ministry.


Doug Fields (2002) *Your First Two Years of Youth Ministry,* Zondervan, 304 pp. For any who seem to be floundering or are discouraged, this book tackles critical issues and presents topical essays from acknowledged experts in the field.

Alex Gee and John Teter (2003) *Jesus and the Hip-Hop Prophets,* InterVarsity Press, 116 pp. This book is a change of pace and balances off your reading. There are actually four hip-hop prophets in this reading, aren’t there? Do you agree with this definition of prophets—“…people who deliver an appropriate word for a given situation,” forth-tellers? Can you dig this kind of Jesus? Does this small book give us an example of prophecy and evangelism in a postmodern age?

Kenda Dean, Chap Clark & Dave Rahn, et al. (2001) *Starting Right: Thinking theologically about youth ministry,* Zondervan, 397 pp. If you want to do some serious thinking about youth ministry and its issues, here are some challenging selections from several notables in youth ministry.

Ginny Olson, Diane Elliot & Mike Work (2001) *Youth Ministry Management Tools: Everything you need to successfully manage youth ministry,* Zondervan, 420 pp with CD. After you understand, you will need a toolbox of practical, ready-to-use helps. Believe me, this book lives up to its title for those of you up to your neck in youth ministry. Here are tools for planning yearly calendars and events, time management, risk management (legal, etc.), budgeting and finances, office and personal management, building a youth ministry team, how to get and leave a job and much more. Permission requests to parents, when accidents happen—it’s all here for you to copy or download from this invaluable CD!


Books for Youth

Just a sampling of books for student reading.


**Additional Bibliography on Pop and Youth Culture**

**Culture & Subcultures & Pop Culture**

Wendell Berry (1992) *Sex, Economy, Freedom & Community*, NY/San Francisco: Pantheon Books, 177 pp. This contemporary prophet is a caring critic of our American culture. He cannot be pegged as liberal or conservative—although, as Jesus did, he sounds radical at times. He speaks of simplicity of life in a complicated society, for community is an age of isolation. He would have us be good stewards in the full biblical sense.

Beaudoin, Tom. *Virtual Faith: The Irreverent Spiritual Quest of Generation X*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998, 210 p. This remarkable analysis of Postmodern Generation X and their spiritual use of popular art and entertainment will challenge our understanding of pop culture and spirituality. The author writes of Gen X as one himself. But whether he is from your generation or not, or speaks from your framework or not, this is important reading for those who share the Gospel with, or provide spiritual counsel to contemporary post-moderns.


Albert Borgmann (2007) *Real American Ethics: Taking Responsibility for Our Country*, Univ. of Chicago Press, 232pp. A summation of this philosopher’s project in moral philosophy for a modern, technological world. He’s urging us to resist the allures of the virtual world for “real life,” to foster authentic relationships rather than getting lost in amusement and “consumeristic” materialism. How should we live as responsible Americans, and how should we spend our money? What kind of values will help us deal with environmental concern, poverty and war?


Daniel Joseph Boorstin (1962, 1992) *The Image: A Guide to Pseudo-Events in America*, Vintage Books, 336pp. A seminal thinker, on whom many, from a more negative perspective, have built—such as Neil Postman, Allan Bloom, Ken Myers, David Wells, and Neal Gabler. Our greatest obstacle is not ignorance, but our illusion of knowledge. Celebrities, known for being known, and their contrived events are created by publicists who stage pseudo-events. Heroes were folk-based; celebrities are mass based.

Ian Chambers (1986) *Popular Culture: The Metropolitan Experience*, London/NY: Methuen, 244 pp. Traces the rise of popular culture since the 1880s, the impact of commerce and urbanization on popular tastes, the effects of advertising, photography, cinema and television and film, and critical aspects of popular music.
Andy Crouch (2008) *Culture Making: Recovering Our Creative Calling*, InterVarsity Press, 288pp. Musician, documentary producer, editor of *Christianity Today’s* Christian Vision Project, calls us to get beyond the culture wars and become God’s creative agents of new culture. Has been critiqued for a narrow, materialistic definition of culture, but presents an exciting challenge.

Craig Detweiler and Barry Taylor (2003) *A Matrix of Meanings: Engaging Culture; Finding God in Pop Culture*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 351 pp. You’ve got to put your thinking caps on for this one—as the teachers used to say. And you’ll probably find things you don’t understand or disagree with. Read the back cover carefully. Study the Preface and Introduction underlining or taking notes. Note the Table of Contents—how the chapters flow. Then you can skim over some sections—there’s a ton of illustrations here—but get their main argument and points. There are valuable notes and references in the back.

John Fiske (1989) *Understanding Popular Culture*, Routledge, 224pp. Although somewhat dated, this is an important book standing between positions of cultural determinism from producers and opinions that people design their own meanings that dominate pop culture. Fiske does insist that the recipients of pop cultures symbols and texts do rewrite them and enter into a synergistic creative process with producers.


Ken Gelder and Sarah Thornton, eds. (1997) *The Subcultures Reader*, London/New York: Routledge, 599 pp. “Subcultures come in many, varied and disputed forms…. Teds, punks and ravers, taxidancers, zoot-suiters and drug-takers, football ‘hooligans,’ screaming girls at pop concerts, Star Trekkers and netheads, male prostitutes, cross-dressers and queers.” After an introduction on the definition and characteristics of subcultures, you’ll find readings from the Chicago School of sociology, then from the the Birmingham tradition of cultural studies, an important section of readings about place, identity and territory, and much more.

Ruiford Guins & Omayra Zaragoza Cruz (2005) *Popular Culture: A Reader*, Thousand Oaks, CA, London: Sage Publishers, 549 pp. For the serious student, this is an invaluable selection of important studies on various aspects of pop culture. Its key premise: “that popular culture is the site of a dynamic process characterized by its status as a product of industry, an intellectual object of inquiry, and an integral component of people’s lives.”

Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon (1989) *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 175 pp. An almost Anabaptist and radical challenge to Reformed theology and Realistic theology (the Niebuhrs), here is a compelling vision calling Christians to reclaim their counter-cultural and alien status in society in a way that regain the Church’s vitality, reclaim those who are disappointed with the faith, and bear dynamic witness to the world.


E. Michael Jones (1993) *Degenerate Moderns: Modernity as Rationalized Sexual Misbehavior*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 259 pp. “In the last one hundred years, the western cultural elite embarked upon a project which entailed the reversal of values of the intellectual life so that truth would be subjected to desire as the final criterion of intellectual value. In looking at recent biographies of such major moderns as Freud, Kinsey, Keynes, Margaret Mead, Picasso, and others, there is a remarkable similarity between their lives and thought. After becoming involved in sexual license early on, they invariably chose an ideology or art form which subordinated reality to the exigencies of their sexual misbehavior.” (cover)
John Wiley Nelson (1976) *Your God Is Alive and Well and Appearing in Popular Culture*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 217 pp. This is the book that started it, at least for me. Nelson explains popular culture as “religion,” a celebration of civil creed and values in films (the revival), country music (its hymnody), magazines (quite time or instruction manuals) television (family devotions, and detective fiction (eschatology or hope for the future triumph of good). Dated, but a good place for Christian students to start.

H. Richard Niebuhr (1951) *Christ and Culture*, NY: Harper, 259 pp. It’s often said that all seminarians should read this before graduation. It is seminal for this course. It traces the different attitudes toward culture held by Christians and the church through history pointing toward five timeless paradigms which will help you place yourself and understand others.

John Storey (1996) *Cultural Studies & the Study of Popular Culture: Theories and Methods*, Athens, GA: Univ. of Georgia Press, 148 pp. Once a text for this course, if offers an “accessible introduction to the range of theories and methods which have been used to study popular culture…. Organized around a series of case studies, each chapter focuses on a different media form… television, fiction, film, newspapers and magazines, popular music and consumption (fan culture and shopping).”


Dominic Strinati (1995) *An Introduction to the Theories of Popular Culture*, London/New York: Routledge, 301 pp. For students of pop culture who want to know its leading theorists and be familiar with “mass culture, the Frankfurt School, the culture of industry, semiology and structuralism, Marxism, feminism, postmodernism and cultural populism.”

James Emery White (2006) *A Mind for God*, Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 125 pp. This book by the president of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary could be placed under the category of culture wars. It is a worthy polemic against ungodly and unbiblical aspects of our culture. But it is primarily a challenge for Christians to think about culture and worldviews—which this course is about.


**Youth Culture & Subcultures**


Michael Brake (1985) *Comparative Youth Culture: The sociology of youth culture and youth subcultures in America, Britain and Canada*, London & New York: Routledge, 228 pp. Ground-breaking work on youthful subcultures in its time. Its major theme: “if young people are not socialized into conventional political, ethical and moral outlooks, if they are not programmed into regular work habits and labor discipline, then society as it is today cannot continue. The author sees subcultures “as attempts to resolve collectively experienced problems arising from contradictions in the social structure… generating a collective identity from which individual identity can be achieved….”
Thomas Hine (1999) *The Rise and Fall of the American Teenager*, NY: Avon Books, 322pp. The author sees the teenager as “a social invention shaped by the needs of the twentieth century.” This work will place 13-19-year-olds in historical perspective and introduces us to a variety of subcultures, many of them new to us.

Tracey Skelton & Gill Valentine eds. (1998) *Cool Places: Geographies of Youth Culture*, London/New York: Routledge, 383 pp. These authors consider “how the media imagined young people as a particular community with shared interests and how young people resist these stereotypes and create their own independent representations of their lives.”


**Business and Culture**

John Battelle (2005) *The Search: How Google and Its Rivals Rewrote the Rules of Business and Transformed our Culture*, New York: Penguin, 311 pp. Business and culture are almost post-research—or supra-research as giant Internet engines record and interpret the wishes of the public instantaneously. Companies who “know what the world wants” are on their way to succeed over all competitors. “More than any of its rivals, Google has become the gateway to instant knowledge. Hundreds of millions use it to satisfy their wants, needs, fears, and obsessions.”

Dee Hock (1999) *Birth of the Chaordic Age*, San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 345 pp. Take a look at your credit card. Who owns it? Your answer must be in the plural. Here the man behind VISA explains the vision and process that developed a new kind of dynamic, evolving, collaborative business structure dominated neither by chaos or order.


George Ritzer (1993, 2004) *The McDonaldization of Society*, Pine Science Press, 328 pp. “The central theme in Ritzer's book is the "enabling" and "constraining" affects of McDonaldization and how this phenomenon has changed parts of society both in the United States and abroad - from private and public industries to its citizenry. Ritzer contends that McDonald's success is a direct outcome of their implementation of a kind of bureaucratic system that involves the concepts of "efficiency, quantification, predictability, and control" (rules and regulations). This system, according to Ritzer, results in striking changes throughout society, dehumanization of employees and to a great extent even control over consumers. Ritzer considers these four components above to be at the heart of McDonaldization and therefore covers the concepts in separate detailed chapters.” (Amazon review)

George Ritzer (1998) *The McDonaldization Thesis: Explorations and Extensions*, London/Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 212 pp. The thesis of this book is that “the fast-food restaurant, especially the pioneering and still dominant chain of McDonald’s, is the contemporary paradigm of the rationalization process... (we) are likely to see a continuation, even an acceleration of this process. McDonaldization involves an increase in efficiency, predictability, calculability and control through the substitution of non-human for human technology. While undoubtedly bringing with it many positive developments, McDonaldization also involves a wide range of irrationalities, especially dehumanization and homogenization. It is these irrationalities of rationality (and associated problems) which represent the true heart of the McDonaldization thesis.
Consumption and Consumerism


Chin, Elizabeth (2001) *Purchasing Power: Black Kids and American Consumer Culture*, Minneapolis/London: University of Minnesota Press, 258 p. You will profit from this scholarly book in many ways. It will help you understand consumer culture. It will also take you into the lives of three black girls of about ten years of age and their poor-working class community. I think you will be inspired by the relationships between the author and these girls as well as her analysis. She is an associate professor of Occidental College, LA and describes herself as half white, half Chinese and a native of a middle-class area of New Haven. Her analysis is penetrating and balanced.

Stuart Ewen (1988) *All Consuming Images: The Politics of Style in Contemporary Culture*, NY: Basic Books, 306 pp. You will hear it from Bloom, Postman and the negative polemics against media and television of theologians and Christian leaders: “Television and mass media represent a fatal triumph of style over substance.” But how many of them have studied style? Here, in a book that carries on the criticism is a” powerful, compelling and entertaining look at how style and the power of images dominate every aspect of our lives.” Of this book Bill Moyers comments: “This is more than a first-rate book about consumer society. Stuart Ewen is one of the foremost interpreters today of our culture, and he has put his finger on one of the principal reasons why we are increasingly divorced from reality. It is the numbing of our sensibilities which most threatens our political life, and Ewen has laid bare why this is happening.”

Susan Linn (2004) *Consuming Kids: the Hostile Takeover of Childhood*, NY/London: The New Press, 288 pp. Instructor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and Associate Director of Boston’s Media Center, Linn “takes a comprehensive and unsparing look at the demographic advertisers call ‘the kids’ (i.e. children’s) market. She describes the intensity with which “corporations are rushing to stake their claim on the consumer group formerly known as children.”

Paul L. Metzger (2007) *Consuming Jesus: Beyond Race and Class Divisions in a Consuming Church*, Eerdmans, 191pp. In the spirit of John Spirit and of a mind against postmodernism and consumerism, which he sees invading homogeneous churches, Metzger provides needed analysis and encourages six steps toward new priorities.

Murray Milner, Jr. (2004) *Freeks, Geeks, and Cool Kids: American teenagers, schools, and the culture of consumption*, NY/London: Routledge, 305 pp. This fine sociological study might well appear under Culture and Subcultures. It explains the nature of “status” and stratification, dependent on cultural rather than material power, and “why high school cliques have so much power and can inflict so much pain.” But it’s final Part IV, “Teen Status Systems and Consumerism” and last two chapters: “Creating Consumers” and “Consuming Life” are important to this section of our bibliography. “I am suggesting that high school status systems have played an important role in the development of consumerism in the U.S. High school status systems did not cause…. High school status systems did not cause consumer capitalism. Consumer capitalism and adolescents… are not necessarily linked. But they are highly compatible and mutually supportive of one another.” (p. 168)

Juliet B. Schor (2004) *Born to Buy: The Commercialized Child and the New Consumer Culture*, NY: Scribners, 275 pp. An economist and sociologist on the basis of her own and others’ research, describes the strategies to convince kids that products are necessary for their survival and discusses the broad implications of these strategies.
Advertising

Hugh Rank (1982) *The Pitch: How to analyze ads. A Simple 1-2-3-4-5 Way to Understand the Basic Pattern of Persuasion in Advertising*, Park Forest, IL: The Counter-Propaganda Press, 205 pp. A combination of advanced social science and technology has swayed the balance of power over to the persuaders. “We’re living in the midst of the most intense, most sophisticated propaganda blitz in human history…. Counter-propaganda is needed… This book will show you how to cope better with this blitz.” This book is based on two premises: (1) human beings are *benefit-seekers* and (2) the most common pattern used by advertisers as *benefit-promisers* is that of THE PITCH. This little, old book will then clearly and carefully take you through the five steps of the pitch: (1) Attention-getting, (2) Confidence-building, (3) Desire-stimulating, (4) Urgency-stressing, and (5) Response-seeking. It will help you to discern and encourage you to resist what may become dangerous to your health.

Al Ries and Jack Trout (1981, 1986) *Positioning: The Battle for Your Mind*, Time’s Warner Books, 213 pp. This little marketing classic (used in many marketing courses) explains to businesses “How to be Seen and Heard in the Overcrowded Marketplace.” This is the concept that “sparked a revolution in advertising… and can revolutionize your life. With it you can beat the competition and win the battle for recognition in an overcrowded, media-blitzed marketplace. You can position anything: product, politician, country, company, career. This is the book that shows you: How to find and use the competition’s weakest link and build your strategy around it, How to reposition a strong competitor and *create* a weak spot, How to use your present position to its best advantage, How and how not to choose a name for your product….” Since “positioning” was described, it has been used as a marketing key.

James B. Twichell (1996, 1997) *Adcult USA: The Triumph of Advertising in American Culture*, NY: Columbia Univ. Press, 279 pp. “This book is not about advertising but about culture—more specifically, about the culture created when advertising becomes not just a central institution but the central institution.” In his 1992 *Carnival Culture: The Trashing of Taste in America*, Twichell lamented the tidal wave of bad taste and vulgarity driven by the media. Here, in a book written for his class a few years later, he seems to reverse himself. In postmodern fashion he dismisses highbrow rants against tasteless commercialism and exalts in its triumph—comparing advertising to religion. Commercials adorn many pages, and few sentences are without ad slogans. With this sentence the book closes: “Once fed and sheltered, our needs have always been cultural, not natural. Until some other system codifies and satisfies those needs and yearnings, advertising—and the culture it carries with it—will continue not just to thrive, but to triumph.”

Peter Zollo (1995) *Wise Up to Teens: Insights into Marketing and Advertising to Teenagers*, Ithaca, NY: New Strategist Publications, 311 pp. We believe marketers know teenagers better than any of the rest of us—no matter how close we are to them. Peter Zollo was called “the teenage-marketing guru” by *Business Week* and co-founded his company, Teenage Research Unlimited (TRU)—often quoted by journalists—back in the early 1980s. For years TRU has conducted quantitative and qualitative research on teens and sold its findings for hundreds of thousands of dollars each, to major companies like Coco Cola, Pepsi, Frito-Lay, Levi Strauss, Reebok, *Rolling Stone* and *Seventeen*. This book provides an “in-depth look at the size of the teen market, where teens get their money, how and why they spend it, what they think about themselves and the world around them and much more.” It will help you understand “teens’ unique attitudes, values and social concerns.”


Stewart M. Hoover and Knut Lundby, eds. (1997) *Rethinking Media, Religion, and Culture*, Thousands Oaks/London: Sage, 332 pp. This is a unique attempt to triangulate into a coherent whole media, religion and culture in a way that had not been done before.

Steven Johnson (2005) *Everything Bad is Good for You: How Today’s Popular Culture Is Actually Making us Smarter*, Riverhead Hardcover, 256pp. A provocative argument to those who feel our culture is being dumbed down or that we are amusing ourselves to death. Using the idea of a Sleeper Curve (the growing complexity and depth of popular media), the author argues that video games and TV shows are forcing us to “learn how to learn,” and though not making us more righteous or moral (the job of parents, schools and churches), time in the media is raising our IQs.

Stephen R. Lawhead (1985) *Turn Back the Night: A Christian Response to Popular Culture. What you can do about T.V., movies, books and music*, Westchester, IL: Good News Publishers, 180 pp. At the time, the only books written on pop culture were blasting rock and roll and most entertainment as the Devil’s media. This was a refreshing challenge to understand the media and the Gospel, then to discern the good and bad in pop culture.

Marshall McLuhan (1964 MIT Reprint, 1992) *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. Obviously, you will want to know something about McLuhan. He is one of the more influential writers about media. Although his ideas were not entirely original and many of them controversial, we can see many of the things he predicted coming to pass. Here he says that media are extensions of our physical senses cameras of our eyes, etc. And he insists that the medium itself is more important than its content.


Kimb Massey (2nd ed. 2005) *Media Literacy Workbook*, Louiseville, Canada: Thomson &Wadworth, 50pp. A fine, brief and clear explanation as to how mass communication works with exercises for you or your students.

Kenneth Myers (1989) *All God’s Children and Blue Suede Shoes: Christians & Popular Culture* (Turning Point Christian Worldview), Crossway Books, 224pp. Certainly an important book on Christians and pop culture. Myers is an astute social critic. He urges Christians to get into culture but to discern, not only its devilish, but it’s dumbing-down tendencies. His penetrating analysis of culture follows secular critics like Neil Postman and Marie Winn and his position followed by later writers such as David Wells.


Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 348 pp. At its time, this was a breakthrough as Calvin College scholars examined youth and media entertainment from a critical and Christian perspective. An important and still helpful look at pop culture, rock and roll, the electronic culture, the entertainment industry, art in consumerist capitalism, MTV, teen films, leisure culture and artistic evaluation.

Dorothy G. Singer & Jerome L. Singer, eds. (2001) *Handbook of Children and the Media*, Thousand Oaks/London: Sage, 765 pp. An essential reference. “From Internet censorship to levels of television exposure, the effects of mass media on children is one of the most widely debated issues in our society. Bringing together an interdisciplinary group of renowned scholars from around the world, the *Handbook of Children and the Media* is the first and only all-inclusive, comprehensive analysis of the field for students and scholars…. Attempts to provide students with a deliberate examination of how children use, enjoy, learn from, and are advantaged or disadvantaged by regular exposure to television and other electronic media.”

David Trend (2007) *The Myth of Media Violence: A Critical Introduction*, Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 139pp. Here is the research, troubling as it may be to our preconceptions, written in a clear and understandable style. This is not a polemic for or against media violence, rather an attempt to understand, put it in context, and suggest how we are to deal with it.

Michael Warren (1997) *Seeing Through the Media: A Religious View of Communication and Cultural Analysis*, 213 pp. The professor who got me going on cultural exegesis around 1980 (and author of several books on youth ministry) progressed in his thinking and distilled his thoughts on cultural analysis and media interpretation for teachers, parents and religious leaders. “The conviction underlying this book is that the imagination of human existence communicated via electronic media needs scrutiny and judgment.”

**Television (and the Culture Wars)**

Paul Borgman (1979) *TV: Friend or Foe? A Parent’s Handbook*, Eling, IL: David C. Cook Publishing, 168 pp. The reasons for putting this small and out-of-print book on this list—besides the fact the author is my brother—is two-fold. First, here is an important example of a parent watching TV shows with his children and then talking about it—and learning from them, even allowing them to change his mind! Secondly, the message of this book counters some of the highly negative criticisms that follow.

Melissa Butcher (2003) *Transnational Television, Cultural Identity and Change when STAR came to India*, New Delhi, Thousand Oaks, London: Sage, 321 pp. “The process of economic liberalization initiated in India in the early 1990s brought in its wake a rapid influx of transnational satellite television channels…. With its focus on young people and cultural change in India, this absorbing book will attract wide readership among those involved in media and cultural studies… while also being of interest to anyone wanting to understand the impact of television on the young.”

Bob Hodge and David Tripp (1986) *Children and Television*, Cambridge, England: Polity Press, 233 pp. This book follows the ideas of Paul Borgman with a more scientific methodology. “Drawing on recent work in linguistics and semiotics, Hodge and Tripp analyze the rich and ambiguous messages of television cartoons and examine the ways in which these messages are interpreted by children. The authors show that children are sophisticated viewers; they have a shrewd sense of fact and fantasy and they are active interpreters of plot…. (they) argue that television viewing is not necessarily a passive, mindless activity for children, but an important aspect of their cognitive and social development…."

Jerry Mander (1977) *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*, NY: Quill, 371 pp. The author is dead serious in this title. To my knowledge this is the first negative critique of television culture, and those like Postman who followed did not give it proper credits. You say getting rid of
television is a crazy, impossible idea? The author would argue: the tenacious prevalence of cancer and AIDS does not keep us from trying to eliminate them. There is serious substance here—though we don’t have space to give you his four cogent arguments—and they come from someone trained in economics who spent 15 years in the advertising business.

Neil Postman (1985) *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*, NY: Penguin, 184 pp. This is a clear Orwellian and Huxleyan warning that television is killing our culture. This esteemed social critic (*The Disappearance of Childhood*) here builds on Jerry Mander’s criticisms of television. TV is robbing us of our literary skills and shortening our attention spans (common folk in the time of the Lincoln-Douglas debates listened to political lectures all day through). TV is show business; it therefore entertains rather than informs. And finally, it is commercially driven so it cannot be objective. This is an important book to study.

Quentin Schultze (1992) *Redeeming Television: How TV Changes Christians—How Christians Can Change TV*, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 198 pp. According to the author, “This book is written for everyone who, like me, enjoys television but would like to make it better…. The book is not a wild-eyed attack against sex, violence and profanity. Instead it is a realistic look at how Christians can be more discerning viewers and improve programming.”

Mitchell Stephens (1998) *The rise of the Image; the Fall of the Word*, NY/Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 259 pp. A professor of journalism and mass communication at NYU offers a brilliant rebuttal to Postman and his ilk. Himself a bibliophile who regrets his family’s TV absorption, he none-the-less sees society in transition from print to image culture. He traces historic attacks: first, in ancient times, on the early writing revolution because it would weaken memories and spread dangerous democracy, then on the printing press (the governor of Virginia, in 1671, lauded the absence of any printing press in the colony), putting erasers on student pencils was condemned because, the easier to correct, the more mistakes will be made. Stephens accepts the demise or print culture for the images and explanations of our electronic multi-media. Sure, much of TV is worthless, but it is only in its early adolescent stage. A provocative book and needed corrective to extreme invectives.

Gregory Stevenson (2003) *Televised Morality: The Case of Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, Dallas/NY/London: Hamilton Books, 299 pp. It’s agreed that television “shapes our culture’s moral values. Yet many moralist critiques misconstrue the full moral message of a show due to a restrictive focus on sex, violence and profanity. *Televised Morality* uses Buffy as a case study to separate judgments all the way from “this show is morally corrupt” to “it’s one of the most sophisticated shows on television.”

Marie Winn (2002) *The Plug-In Drug: Television, Computers, and Family Life*, Penguin, 352 pp. Like Postman and Mander, Winn is generally anti-television. In fairness, she uses substantial studies to show its ill effects. But from specific damage that too much television can do, Winn generalizes suggesting damage (including difficult TV-addicted children driving mothers to work) to children and families that may go too far. It’s not that she doesn’t admit the presence of educational shows, but it’s difficult to learn of television’s benefits here. She is not objecting so much to TV’s content as to our passive mode of watching it. The present revised edition is updated (computers and the Internet considered) and moderated. Television is addictive, and television discipline is needed for healthy families and children. This is a book well worth reading and recommending to families.

Films

R. Douglas Geivett and James S. Spiegel, eds. (2007) *Faith, Film and Philosophy: Big Ideas on the Big Screen*, Downers Grove, IVPress, 311pp. Without condemning important films, the philosophers and writers here examine important ideas about human nature, conduct and
redemption from secular films. They view film makers as modern philosophers and story tellers who through their stories, shape our cultural worldviews.

bell hooks (1996) *Reel to Real: Race, Sex and Class in the Movies*, Theatre Books. Here this feminist and womanist critic writes, not as a film critic but a cultural critic about her special interests.


Alan MacDonald (1992) *Movies in Close-Up: Getting the most from Film and Video*, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 123 pp. This is a very easy read by a Christian film fan. He takes 25 movies to get at the question, “How do e distinguish what is positive from what is questionable or negative?” He moves from Sci-Fi films to Heroic Adventure, Romance, Horror, War, History and what he calls Saints and Sinners (“Chariots of Fire,” “The Mission,” and “A Cry in the Dark.”). The writer keeps his final chapter. “How to be a Movie Critic,” simple but helpful.

Michael Medved (1992) *Hollywood Vs. America: Popular Culture and the War on Traditional Values*, HarperCollins, 386 pp. Michael Medved is a famous conservative Jewish film critic. He was warned by a friend that publishing this book could make him the most hated man in Hollywood. He persisted because he loves film and believes the industry can be informed. This polemic demonstrates how the movie industry turned to their own dark and liberal obsessions, how they began to attack religion and the family, how ugliness and obscenity became glorified, how all this influences society and is sustained by profits from pushing the envelope. He concludes, “The current debate on the values of the entertainment industry involves far more than abstract aesthetic issues; the stakes are intently personal (in the lives of our children)…. We can find grounds for optimism in the commitment to change from so many good people, both inside and outside the entertainment community. The struggle for the soul of the popular culture promises no quick or easy victories; all progress will be measured in subtle increments.”

James Monaco (1977, 2008) *How to Read a Film: Movies, Media, and Beyond*, Oxford Univ. Press, 688pp. This is a classic text on interpreting films now expanded and updated to include new digital, cyberspace media and their relation to film. Reading even parts of this text will make you more film literate.

Isabel Cristina Pineda (1997) *Women and the Pleasures of Horror Film Viewing*, Theatre Books. Justification of slasher films? This author “challenges convention that violent horror films can only degrade women and incite violence.” She rather senses that horror films “allow for an expression of rage and terror in the midst of social upheaval.”

Graeme Turner (1999, third edition) *Film as Social Practice*, Theatre Books. Here is a classic student text analyzing film as entertainment, narrative, and cultural event. It explores the important issue as to film’s function in popular culture.

David Veerman (1992) *Video Movies Worth Watching: A Guide for Teens*, Baker House Books, 291 pp. Here are 75 good videos for young people to watch and discuss. This book deals with the whole movie, which I would not generally attempt with most groups. Veerman suggests editing some of these movies to remove objectionable scenes and to condense to 45 minutes or less. Chapter 19 is worth checking out and its subject, “The Elephant Man” is a two-hour movie some groups could sit through. It’s lessons and possible discussions are powerful.
Music

Martha Bayles (1994) *Hole In Our Soul: The loss of beauty and meaning in American popular music*, NY/Toronto/Oxford: The Free Press, 453 pp. A wide-ranged, penetrating examination of music, art and culture. Bayles dismisses the term “postmodern” as do most philosophers. *Modernity*, for Bayles, is the worldview whose certainty is in rational natural science. *Modernism*, for her, encompasses a reaction against this modernity (and therefore corresponds to what many call postmodernism). So broad is her understanding of modernism is that it needs to be broken into three forms: *perverse modernism* is the artistic revolt that holds tradition in contempt. American popular music comes from the African American tradition (spiritual, blues, jazz, soul, gospel). The perversion of this American tradition in heavy metal, punk and gangsta rap is the hole in our musical and pop cultural soul. Of interest is her criticism of Bloom: (his) “celebrated chapter on music on the pernicious effects of rock displays a near-perfect ignorance of American popular music… and a disappointingly superficial grasp of the European classics.”

Allan Bloom, “Music,” in *The Closing of the American Mind* (op. cit.) is a thoughtful essay from a conservative perspective on the psychology, philosophy and business of music.

Bill Flanagan (1987) *Written in My Soul: Conversations with Rock’s Great Songwriters*, Chicago/NY: Contemporary Books, 472 pp. This is a labor of love from the executive editor of *Musician* magazine and it comes from the opportunities he has had to interview the greats: Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, Chuck Berry, Bono, Joni Mitchell, Mike Jagger, Keith Richards, Sting, Paul Simon, Elvis Costello, Pete Townshend, Neil Young, Jackson Browne, Carl Perkins, Van Morrison and many more. You’ll find more than thoughtful interviews, each section begins with a historical essay. “If you want to know what goes on not only in the souls but also in the hearts and minds of these individuals, read this book.”


Simon Frith (1998) *Performing Rites: On the Value of Popular Music*, Harvard Univ. Press, 360 pp. This tome is not for the enjoyment of music but for pondering it place in society. Andrew Ross’ review says that Frith here begins with a sociologist’s assumption that “taste is socially formed and moves toward a theory of popular aesthetics where value judgments carry enough ethical weight to serve as shapers of community and individual identity.”

Anthony Heilbut (1971, 1985 revised) *The Gospel Sound: Good News and the Bad Times*, NY: Limelight Editions, 370 pp. “A rousing long overdue introduction to gospel music… These profiles of the saints of gospel challenge the stigma of ignorance, naïveté, and Uncle Thomism attached to Gospel music.” “A thorough survey of gospel singing, with attention to the relationship between gospel and other black musical forms in America such as jazz and rhythm and blues.”

Robert Jourdain (1998) *Music, the Brain, and Ecstasy: How Music Captures the Imagination*, Harper Paperbacks, 400 pp. This author, musician and composer will introduce you to the basic, essential questions of music through the new science of musical psychoacoustics. It offers explanation of the basic elements of music, along with its development through animal and human evolution, to its effects upon us. “For a few moments music makes us larger than we really are, and the world more orderly than it really is.”

Daniel J. Levitin (2006) *This is Your Brain on Music: the Science of a Human Obsession*, Dutton Adult, 320 pp. The first chapter is one of the best short answers to the question, “What is music?”
Here is an expert explaining how songs are written and recorded, why particular combinations of rhythms, timbres and pitches attract you, get stuck in your brain, and then elicit special emotions every time you hear the song. The author explores the universal cultural need for music. With his deep experience in music and the music scene, Levitin provides you with the theory and science and the techniques of music with many examples.

James Lull, ed. (1992) Popular Music and Communication, London: Sage Publications, 247 pp. This is the critical text, the “most relevant and comprehensive treatment of this important subject to date…. Students will find interesting points of entry into the historical, institutional, racial, cultural and technological facets of one of the most ubiquitous aspects of popular culture.” (cover)

Greil Marcus (1975, 4th revised ed. 1997) Mystery Train: Images of America in Rock-n-Roll, Plume, 336 pp. The author an early writer for Rolling Stone. This classic is brilliant, unusual in its selection of material, provocative in making thinkers ponder, and controversial in its selection and in its writing which some fans find garish. Read it to find out, for instance, why he traces rock back to Robert Johnson and a one-man band from Toccopola, Mississippi, Harmonica Frank Floyd. Read it to gain insights into the cultural history of rock and roll.

Anthony Storr (1993) Music and the Mind, NY: Ballantine, 224 pp. Here a distinguished psychiatrist explores how music “stimulates the mind, captivates the heart and nurtures the soul.” In doing so he interacts (agreeing and disagreeing) with ideas about music from Freud, Schopenhauer, Jung, and Nietzsche.

Steve Turner (1988, 1995) Hungry for Heaven: Rock ‘n’ Roll & the Search for Redemption, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 240 pp. Gospel music has influenced the music scene, and many artists have come out of deeply religious heritages. Turner studied the pop music field and got to know many artists. This book is based on many interviews. Turner’s stories of spiritual quest are powerful and insightful; his analysis and conclusions may leave you dissatisfied.

Timothy White (1990) Rock Lives: Profiles and Interviews, NY: Henry Holt, 807 pp. “Rock and roll, more than any other music, is the public expression of a personal truth, offered at an enormous risk.” So said this passionate writer for Rolling Stone. Here are in-depth and sometimes intimate interviews with a half-century’s worth of stars. It will alert you to personal pain, seamy secrets, spiritual quest, and the struggle between the sacred and profane in musicians such as Little Richard and Prince.

**Hip-Hop**

Martha Bayles, “The Obstacle of Race,” “‘Blues, Blacks and Brits,’” and “‘Rap: Trying to Make it Real’” and more in her Hole in our Soul (op. cit.) Broad, brilliant and insightful analysis, but I question whether she really understands the pain, depth of grievances, and frustration behind street rap or punk.”


Rev. Timothy Holder, ed-in-chief (2006) The Hip-Hop Prayer Book with Holy Bible Stories, NY: Church Publishing, 158 pp. A priest and crew have put this together off the Book of Common Prayer. Their church is Trinity Episcopal Church of Morrisania in the Bronx where they celebrate the HipHopEMass (see www.HipHopEMass.org). To give you a sample, with backbeat throughout, the Sursum Corda begins: (Presider) May the Lord be with you, Holla Back (MC) Let the People say, May the Spirit watch you and have your back (with same response). (Presider) Lift up your hearts straight to the sky (MC) Let the People say, We gonna lift them up to the Lord (response) Lift ‘em high (response). And then the Sanctus: GOD, You are Awesome (3x) The
whole Universe is totally filled with Your Awesomeness HOSANNA! ALLELUIA! The Lord’s Prayer follows traditional language.

Murray Forman & Mark Anthony Neal (2004) *That’s the Joint! The Hip-Hop Studies Reader*, New York/London: Routledge, 628 pp. This heavy tome has been described as “everything you wanted to know about hip-hop” and “the ultimate breakdown of hip-hop scholarship.” Here’s a collection of some of the best known and influential writings on hip-hop over the past twenty-five years.

Kitwana, Bakari (2002) *The Hip Hop Generation: Young Blacks and the Crisis in African-American Culture* New York: BasicCivitas Books, Perseus Books Group. This book is necessary to understanding youth culture in the urban setting and helpful in appreciating anywhere hip-hop is popular. Realize that no study of youth culture today is worth much without an understanding of hip-hop. Here we are also dealing with the fact that many urban youth do not fit into Gen X and Millennial descriptions; generations of African Americans are described as Civil Rights, early Hip-Hop and later Hip-Hop.

Patrick Neate (2003, 2004) *Where You’re At: Notes from the Frontline of a Nip-Hop Planet*, NY: Riverhead Books, 274 pp. You don’t fully know hip-hop if you don’t understand its permutations around the world. Here an insider takes you to New York (It’s all about the benjamins), Tokyo (A watcher’s point of view), Johannesburg (how many mics), Cape Town (I’m a African), and Rio de Janeiro (one day it’ll all make sense). Along with an Intro and Outro, that’s the Table of Contents. You will begin to get a sense of hip-hop gone global.


Smith, Efrem and Phil Jackson (2005) *The Hip-Hop Church: Connecting with the Movement Shaping our Culture*, InterVarsityPress, 227 pp. Two nationally-known, young, urban pastors tell the stories of, and provide analysis of, their hip-hop ministries. Hip-hop is not for every church, but here is ministry for kids tough to reach who might not come to any other kind of church. And it is a phenomenon spreading across the country.

**Internet**

Anastasia Goodstein (2007) *Totally Wired: What Teens and Tweens are Really Doing on Line*, NY: St. Martin’s Griffin, 205pp. This author and blogger (YPulse) is really in touch with the youth culture and marketers to young people. Here she examines the threats and positives of cyberspace, what’s it’s all doing to youth, and how parents, teachers and youth leaders can respond.

Brenda E. Brasher (2001) *Give me that Online Religion*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 203 pp. We all know the Internet is reshaping our culture and ourselves. But what is it doing to our spiritual lives? This professor of religion and philosophy does not see this technology triumphing over faith; instead she discusses how the web and faith can meet and get along.

Jack Goldsmith & Tim Wu (2006) *Who Controls the Internet? Illusion of a Borderless World*, Oxford Univ. Press, 240 pp. This informative and readable book traces the libertarian begins of the Internet to government controls (Internet laws) in the 1990s and beyond. The authors argue that the power of the Internet will not break down national boundaries largely for economic reasons. But they admit its future is not fully known; the Internet is dynamic and changing.

Preston Gralla (8th edition, 2006) *How the Internet Works*, Que, 416 pp. A technical expert and author has written with “high quality graphics and simple, succinct text that makes it the ideal book for beginners yet contains much to offer Net veterans.” This is all and more than most of us will need or want to know about the Internet.

**Further Organizations and Links**

New Wine New Wineskins ([http://new-wineskins.org](http://new-wineskins.org)) An institute of Multnomah Bible College and Biblical Seminary seeking to heighten the awareness of students and the communities they serve to the pressing concerns facing post-modern society. Dr. Paul Louis Metzger, Founder/Director.