accused of “buying up America piece by piece.” Shaheen argues this demonizing image creates anger against Arabs born out of fear. This was especially true of the Palestinian people in the ’80s and ’90s—there were thirty films depicting Palestinians as anti-American terrorists.

As an example, Shaheen notes The Rules of Engagement (2000) as one of the worst depictions of Arabs. Even a Palestinian girl, believed to be innocent, is identified as a cold-blooded terrorist by the conclusion of the film. “Why is the humanized Palestinian never shown? Why are these images denied us?” Shaheen asks. In more recent films, Arabs are also shown to be oversexed and obsessed with American women.

Shaheen closes the film with an insight into what Arab people must think of Americans when they see Hollywood films showing them in a negative and stereotypical light. Through cinema, Americans are conditioned to think Arabs don’t merit our sympathy. There is still an obsession with “bad guy” figures like Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden in today’s news and cinema. Shaheen believes that even though stereotypes about Arab peoples are still rampant within Hollywood cinema, it is only a matter of time before the prejudices begin to lessen. – NH

SPIN THE BOTTLE (SEX, LIES & ALCOHOL)
MEDIA EDUCATION FOUNDATION/ 45 MINUTES/2004

“It’s the American way. We overdo everything,” says a student in Spin the Bottle (Sex, lies & alcohol). “Everything we do is bigger than life, like there is no moderation in American society. Everything is bigger, better, faster, stronger.”

While this is often true, is it always a good thing? Spin the Bottle, featuring Jackson Katz and Jean Kilbourne, sheds light on the subjects of sex, lies, and alcohol in college life while allowing college students to speak their minds on these pastimes that consume their lives most weekends.

Most students in this video admitted they had engaged in excessive drinking and fallen into the trap set by alcohol companies. Yet a common question asked by the students was “Why am I doing this to myself?” For some, the answer was to appear manlier, and for others it was to feel more socially acceptable and sexually appealing. No matter the reasons, many students know careless drinking may continue to affect them for the rest of their lives if they don’t take charge now.

Spin the Bottle leaves the viewer to think about their friends’ as well as their own drinking habits in a realistic light. “The administration isn’t going to do anything and the media is going to continue doing what they’re doing,” says an anonymous student in the video. “If we don’t step up and do something, we’re going to stay in that state of mind and we’re going to start to accept it.”

The need for change is upon us and Spin the Bottle shows teens and college students it is OK to be yourself instead of conforming to the alcohol industry’s version of what they want you to be. – CH

TOUGH GUISE: VIOLENCE, MEDIA AND THE CRISIS IN MASCULINITY
MEDIA EDUCATION FOUNDATION/ 82 MINUTES/1999

While the depiction of the female body and the role of femininity in the media has been widely examined in the United States, until recently the concept of masculinity has remained largely unexplored. Tough Guise: Violence, Media and the Crisis in Masculinity is an educational documentary that analyzes the relationship between pop-cultural imagery and the kinds of masculine identities it promotes.

As the title suggests, Tough Guise focuses on the links between violence in the media and what society’s idea of the male role should be. Hosted by social critic Jackson Katz the film discusses, in detail, how masculinity is often portrayed as physical and mental strength, exercising power over others, and violent actions, while traits such as vulnerability, showing emotions, and kindness are seen as weak and unmanly, i.e. feminine.

The film touches on several points, citing examples and drawing parallels between the growing violence in American society and erroneous perceptions of what masculinity is or ought be. Katz stresses that violent acts (such as the tragic school shootings in Arkansas, Jonesboro, and Columbine) should be recognized as symptoms of an ongoing crisis of masculinity. Illustrated with clips and quotes from popular films, television programs, and even radio talk shows, Tough Guise offers strong quantitative and qualitative evidence of how unhealthy and inaccurate stereotypes about masculinity are perpetuated throughout American culture. – MB

B O O K S / T E X T S

THE CODE OF BEST PRACTICES IN FAIR USE FOR MEDIA LITERACY EDUCATION CENTER FOR SOCIAL MEDIA AT AMERICAN UNIVERSITY/2008

When it comes to using copyrighted media materials, arts educators face a daunting choice: either resort to piracy or restrict yourself to the “public domain.” According to a new guide published by the Center for Social Media at American University, this is a false dilemma. In addition to protecting media producers, copyright law also includes the doctrine of “fair use,” which defends our right to quote from copyrighted media without asking permission from the copyright holder. The Code’s five principles apply across media forms (from newspapers to YouTube) and educational settings (schools and non-profits) and recommend following the “rule of proportionality” by using only what you need to accomplish your curricular goals. Depending on the lesson, this could range from a short excerpt to the entire work. Fair use also tends to transform, repurpose, and/or add value to the copyrighted material in some way. This is important, since it dispels the myth that an educational setting in itself is enough. You cannot just rip off someone else’s work; you need to put it to a new use. If you do, then it is probably fair.

The Code concludes by dispelling some of the common myths around fair use that