

# TWO THUMBS UP: STUDENT REACTION TO THE USE OF POPULAR MOVIES TO STUDY BUSINESS ETHICS

by

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**ABSTRACT:** Today's college student is visually oriented and therefore appropriate classroom pedagogy should be used. As part of two improvement of education grants at different institutions, *Business Ethics/Business and Society* courses were developed using theatrical movies as the basic pedagogy. Students were surveyed regarding the course, and it was found that using movies was a successful and popular method for teaching business ethics and social responsibility. In particular, it was found that movies motivated students to more actively participate in class discussions; developed a sense of responsibility in the students for the success of the class; increased understanding of the concepts presented in the course; and improved the students' enthusiasm for education.

## INTRODUCTION

"The movies were my textbooks for everything else in the world."<sup>1</sup>

"It's the movies that have really been running things in America ever since they were invented."<sup>2</sup>

"Does art reflect life? In movies, yes. Because more than any other art form, films have been a mirror held up to society's porous face."<sup>3</sup>

Readings, theatrical movies and discussion form a creative and effective pedagogy for the teaching of business ethics and social responsibility. Movies are a valuable tool in the education process. Bringing cinema into the classroom gives the students a common basis for analysis and discussion. This is especially true in studying business ethics and social responsibility.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Conrad Ostwalt, in his article "Religion and Popular Movies,"<sup>4</sup> identified three contributions that popular films make in the classroom. First, according to Ostwalt, the communal experience of watching the film motivates class participation by breaking down barriers and building trust among class members. Second, students respond enthusiastically to films and are stimulated by the auditory and visual experience in a manner books do not achieve. Since students are comfortable with the material, they engage in discussion confidently and critically and are more willing to take imaginative risks. Finally, because films are part of the students' culture, there is an immediate relevance for the students. They feel a sense of ownership creating a greater responsibility for success of the class. Discussions generally are more exciting and dynamic.<sup>5</sup>

In her article "Making the Most of a Good Story: Effective Use of Film as a Teaching Resource for Ethics,"<sup>6</sup> Ellen Ott Marshall addresses the issue of using film as a form of ethical deliberation. She concludes that any video that engages students has the potential to teach. Marshall uses movies for two over-arching goals. First, films provide background knowledge on something that may be foreign to students. Unlike books that discuss the issues, movies give the students characters to follow and with whom to empathize. Secondly, the movies flesh out the complexities of the ethical/moral question presented. Marshall noted that using movies also may have a downside. Student empathy may interfere with the ethical evaluation. Movies frequently have "happy endings" that resolve complex and difficult matters in a simplistic manner in less than two hours. According to Marshall, even the Hollywood endings provide teaching moments. She strives to "equip them [her students] to understand and express their own reactions more formally, to learn the language and methods of ethics, and articulate their views in a publicly defensible way."<sup>7</sup>

In the article, "Mass Media Use in the Classroom,"<sup>8</sup> Nola Kortner Aiech states that mass media may be used to channel the students' enthusiasm and to achieve useful academic goals. Films are especially effective with visual learners and offer a link between society and the classroom. It was observed that videos are being more fully integrated into the curricula.<sup>9</sup>

According to Ruth Harper and Lawrence Rogers, both associate professors of Education, "In addition to capturing student interest, use of films helps to dramatize and frame issues, generate discussion, and provide links with personal experience."<sup>10</sup> Hollywood films are slick, dramatic and appealing to visually oriented students.<sup>11</sup>

Lynn Kuzma and Patrick Haney wrote, "We teach and live in a culture dominated by film, television and other visual media. . . . Consequently, [our students] are geared to audiovisual rather than written forms of expression and communication."<sup>12</sup> The authors state that using films in the classroom serve five purposes: (1) stimulating the senses, (2) making abstract concepts concrete, (3) engaging emotions, (4) creating bridges to the past and (5) advancing the learning paradigm. Authorities are cited to support the theory that the more senses engaged in the learning process, the more that is

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retained and recalled by the student. Movies are valuable because no other medium is more effective at engaging so many senses simultaneously. By providing tangible examples of core concepts, movies place these concepts in a meaningful context. Studies, according to the article, show that memory is improved by stimulation of emotions. Movies stimulate emotions and grab attention allowing students to more easily remember. Movies may provide a bridge to occurrences and conditions prior to their birth or memory. Kuzma and Haney found that students are more willing to participate in class discussion in film classes.<sup>13</sup>

Despite warning about the possible “edutainment” aspect of using movies in the classroom, Matthew Paris notes, “By their own accounts and those of their critics, the current generation of students is a visual generation. . . . This familiarity can make film and video a powerful pedagogical tool.”<sup>14</sup> Perry states that films and television impact different learning modalities in students. To protect against students passively watching the video without gaining the desired results, Perry stresses that the teacher must develop critical viewing skills, and thus critical thinking, in the class.<sup>15</sup>

As early as 1995 Anna Dorris recognized the role that visual materials played in educating high school and college students. She wrote:

. . . the motion picture . . . [has] found a definite place and are rendering invaluable service in all the more progressive schools of the country. . . . There is not a subject in the curriculum that cannot be made more interesting and meaningful to students by a sane and proper use of visual materials. . . . the motion picture [is] indispensable in solving problems in the social studies, and the natural and physical sciences.”<sup>16</sup>

In reviewing the literature, other disciplines have successfully integrated movies into the curriculum. These subjects include history,<sup>17</sup> health,<sup>18</sup> nursing<sup>19</sup> and economics.<sup>20</sup>

## UNIVERSITY 1 PROJECT

As the literature review demonstrates, several disciplines have successfully used movies in the classroom to stimulate students. No doubt, today’s generation is more visually-oriented than a generation ago. Many of our students have grown up with theatrical movies, television, videotapes, DVDs, computer games, Internet and other visual stimuli. Reading no longer plays as prominent a role in our students’ lives as it did when most faculty members were growing up.

Incorporating movies as a major pedagogical strategy in *Business Ethics* or *Business and Society* courses appears to be a logical approach. Movies allow a professor to take advantage of the students’ visual orientation to increase analysis, discussion and understanding. Issues involving business ethics and social concerns appear to be especially appropriate to this methodology.

Frequently movies show the negative side of an ethical issue. For example greed, aggressiveness, insider trading, market manipulation and corporate corruption are the most notable issues in the movie *Wall Street*.<sup>21</sup> However, motion pictures may also be used to show positives. In the movie *It’s a Wonderful Life*,<sup>22</sup> the protagonist exemplifies the ethical businessman. When he needs the support of his customers, they rally in support to repay him. Many movies show a change in behavior. Even in *Wall Street* the protégé changes and eventually finds the mentor’s behavior unacceptable.

Many movies will provide basis for meaningful study of business ethics and social responsibility. In designing the course, the instructor must coordinate readings and the movies. However, in discussing the ethical dilemmas and social issues contained in a certain movie, the professor should not limit the students to those presented in the assigned readings.

It should also be remembered that many students will quickly and easily recognize unethical or questionable behavior. However, many will not immediately identify ethical or socially responsible behavior. This is especially true if the movie plot is not “good vs. evil.”

In Fall 2003, I received an improvement of instruction grant from University 1 to develop an upper-level business ethics/social responsibility course, *Business and Society*, based on movies. The grant money was used to purchase approximately fifty movies and equipment; although only fourteen of the films were used in the classroom during the semester.<sup>23</sup> The remaining movies were used for student assignments and to have a rotation of movies to be used in class over the years.

Based on the literature review, desired outcomes of incorporating popular movies into a *Business Ethics* or *Business and Society* course were identified. These desired outcomes were:

1. Motivate students to more actively participate in class discussions;
2. Develop a sense of responsibility in the students for the success of the class;
3. Increase understanding of the concepts presented in the course; and
4. Improve the students’ enthusiasm for education.

At the end of the semester, in addition to the regular course evaluation, the students completed a detailed survey regarding the overall success of the use of movies in the course. The survey, designed to assess the success in achieving the desired outcomes, was administered as an anonymous survey in Blackboard<sup>24</sup>. The survey questions are contained in Appendix 1.

When designing the course care was given to student sensitivities. Some people are upset by offensive language, violence, sexual content or nudity; while other students will not be affected by these types of material. The learning opportunities in movies with such content may be very beneficial; however, care should be made not to offend any student. Therefore, on the first day of class students were given the list of movies to be viewed during the course of the semester. They were urged to look up the movies in a source that explain content in detail.<sup>25</sup> Students were told if they believed a particular movie might be offensive to them an alternate movie would be assigned for them to watch. The student then would write a paper on the alternate movie rather than participate in class that night. None of the students in the class opted for an alternative movie.

The fourteen movies selected for class viewing were *The Hudsucker Proxy*,<sup>26</sup> *Bread and Roses*,<sup>27</sup> *The Insider*,<sup>28</sup> *Antitrust*,<sup>29</sup> *John Q.*,<sup>30</sup> *The Distinguished Gentleman*,<sup>31</sup> *Erin Brockovich*,<sup>32</sup> *Startup.com*,<sup>33</sup> *Barbarians at the Gate*,<sup>34</sup> *Boiler Room*,<sup>35</sup> *Roger & Me*,<sup>36</sup> *The Associate*,<sup>37</sup> *The Paper*,<sup>38</sup> and *Proof of Life*.<sup>39</sup> Students also individually watched an additional four movies, of their choice, and wrote papers concerning the ethical and social responsibility issues presented in those movies. In order to expand my list of potential films, students were given extra points for writing about an appropriate movie not on the list of movies I provided them. Many students took this option for at least two of the four papers. The current list of applicable movies is contained in Appendix 2.

A major decision that needed to be made regarding the organization of the class was whether or not the movies would be viewed in class. Throughout the literature there is a discussion on this issue. There are valid arguments in support of both alternatives. However, for me the decision was fairly simple. By viewing the films in class, it was assured that students would have watched the movie before the discussion. In addition, it was my belief that there was benefit to the communal viewing as Oswalt noted in his article (see literature review above). Because the movies were going to be viewed in class, it was decided that the class should be offered in a one-evening per week format.

At University 1 the class was taught in an informal manner. The classroom had a projection system, so it was almost like viewing the movie in a theater. But the classroom had regular student desks, which help maintain the reality of the classroom. On the first day of the class the students were told that there would be no break during the class session. (At University 1 night classes have twenty minutes of break time built into the class.) Students were advised that they could come and go from the movie just as they would in a theater. Few students over the course of the semester left the room during the movie, and when a student left, they would return quickly.

After the movie ended there would be a class discussion. Students would be asked to identify potential issues regarding business ethics, personal ethics in a business setting and social responsibility, either positive or negative. Several of the issues identified would lead to active discussion among class members.

## UNIVERSITY 2 PROJECT

After receiving the grant and establishing the movie-based class at University 1, I relocated to University 2. Again, I applied and received an improvement of instruction grant from University 2 to establish an upper-level, movie-based *Business Ethics* class. The class, an elective, has been taught twice at University 2. Both classes at University 2 were relatively small, nine and fifteen students respectively.

At University 2 the same four desired outcomes were identified. As at University 1, the students at University 2 were surveyed at the end of the semester to determine if the outcomes were achieved. The surveys were administered as WebCT<sup>40</sup> anonymous surveys.

The first time the class was offered at University 2, most of the movies were the same as used at University 1; however there were four movies replacing some of the less popular movies at University 1. The films that were used from the previous offering were *The Hudsucker Proxy*, *John Q.*, *Proof of Life*, *Distinguished Gentleman*, *Erin Brockovich*, *Antitrust*, *Barbarians at the Gate*, *The Associate* and *The Insider*. The additional movies were *Two Weeks Notice*,<sup>41</sup> *Silkwood*,<sup>42</sup> *Runaway Jury*<sup>43</sup> and *North Country*.<sup>44</sup>

Three movies were not used from the class' first offering at University 1 because of student reaction to the particular movies. *Startup.com* and *Roger & Me* were not used the first time at University 2 because they were documentaries. This format was not as accepted by the students as a traditional movie. Even if the story was based on fact, the students preferred watching popular movies to viewing documentaries. *Bread & Roses* was not shown in class because students were not accepting of reading subtitles. Although the movie was mostly in English, there were scenes in which the characters spoke Spanish and subtitles were provided. The excessive use of profanity was the reason for not using *Boiler Room*. Of all the movies shown at University 1, this movie offended the most students.

*North Country* was released in theaters during the first semester the class was offered at University 2. So the schedule was modified (*The Paper* was dropped) and arrangements were made with a local theater for discount tickets so the class could view the movie. Instead of meeting in the classroom that week, my students attended a private showing of *North Country*. By the time the class was offered a second time at University 2, *North Country* was available on DVD.

When the class was taught for a second time at University 2 *The Hudsucker Proxy*, *Silkwood* and *Barbarian at the Gates* were not used. Added were *In Good Company*,<sup>45</sup> *Jerry Maguire*,<sup>46</sup> *Other People's Money*<sup>47</sup> and *The Paper*. The decision not to show *Silkwood* again was based on student reaction. Students were bored with the movie, probably due to its

age and lack of glitz. *The Hudsucker Proxy* and *Barbarians at the Gate* were simply cycled out of the rotation because *In Good Company* and *Other People's Money*, respectively, were good substitutes to achieve the same objectives.

Once again the class was scheduled for one night a week. The classroom had a projection system and a theater seating arrangement to make it more like a movie theater. However, the seats were molded plastic without padding, so the students still remembered that they were in a classroom.

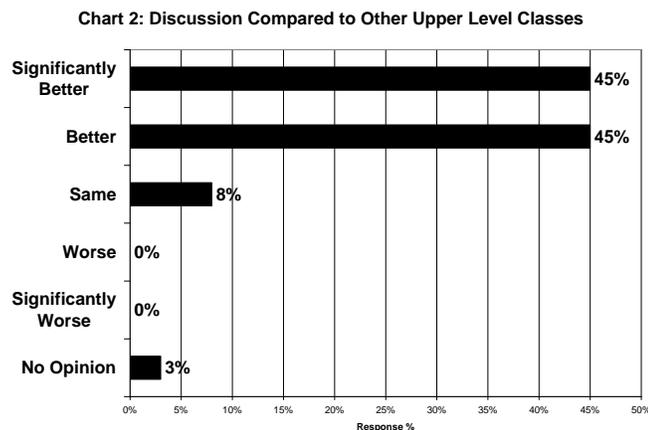
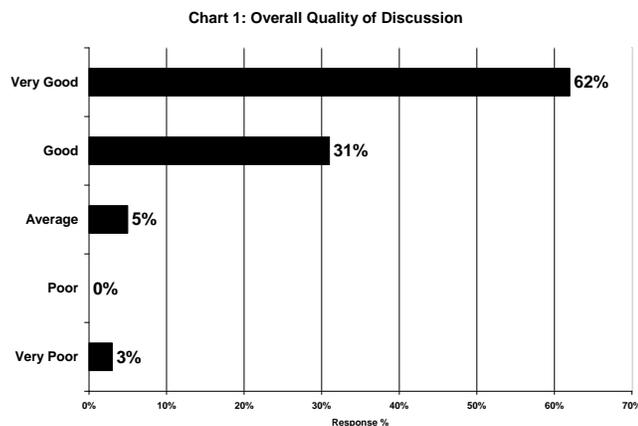
In designing the class for University 2 some changes were made in the format. Students were told on the first night of class that there would be thirty minutes of class discussion at the end of the movie. Then the discussion would continue on WebCT discussion boards. This change meant some class periods went long, while others ended early. Students reacted well to the change. No one complained about staying late. The discussions, in class and on discussion boards, were just as active and beneficial as those conducted in the classroom at University 1.

## THE SURVEY

There were sixteen students in the class at University 1 and twenty-three students combined in the two offerings at University 2. One of the students did not complete the survey and one student only answered the first question, "How would you rate the overall quality of the class discussion in Business Ethics class?" Therefore n=39 for all questions but the first. The first question has n=40. The same survey was administered all three times the class has been offered.

University 1 and University 2 are very similar regional state universities. Appendix 3 contains a demographic comparisons of the two universities.

All but three students rated the overall quality of the class discussion as very good or good (see Chart 1). When comparing the class discussion with that in other upper-level courses they had taken, most students rated the class discussion better or significantly better (see Chart 2).



Students were then asked to rate their own participation in the class discussion. One-third rated their participation as very good. Most of the remaining two-thirds of students felt that their participation was good or average. One student rated his/her participation as poor (see Chart 3). Again, when comparing their own participation in the class with that of other upper level courses almost three-fourths said better or significantly better. Only one student felt that her/his participation level was worse (see Chart 4).

Chart 3: Personal Participation

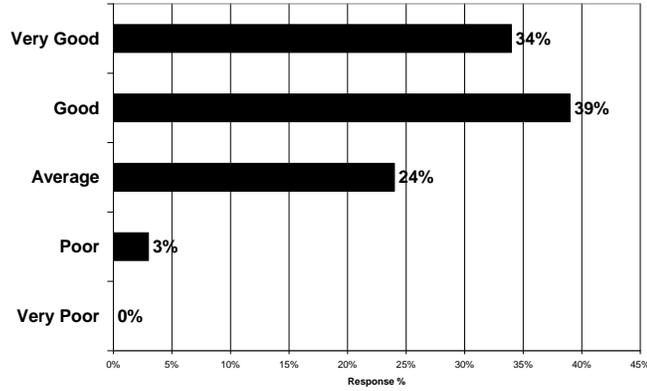
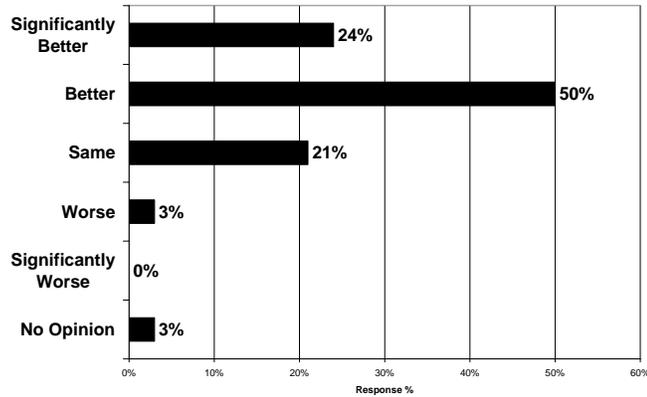


Chart 4: Personal Participation Compared to Other Upper Level Classes



All of the students felt that group viewing of the movies had a significant impact on class discussion or a positive impact (see Chart 5). Similarly, in regard to their individual participation, all but two of the students felt that viewing the movies as a class had a significant impact or a positive impact. The remaining two students indicated that viewing the movies did not impact their personal participation (see Chart 6).

Chart 5: Impact of Group Viewing Movie on Discussion

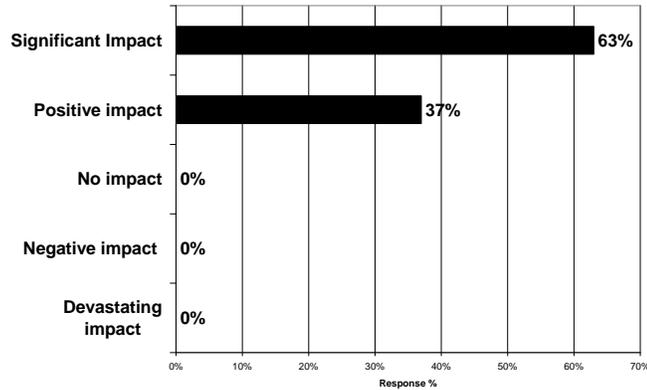
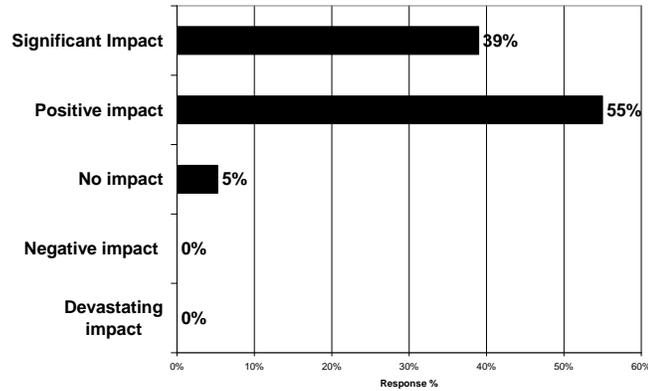


Chart 6: Impact of Group Viewing on Personal Participation



Overall, without reference to the movies, students were asked to assess the knowledge and understanding of business ethics and social responsibility that the students attained from the class. An equal number of students assessed their gain to be substantial or considerable. The remaining students described their knowledge and understanding gained to be average (see Chart 7). In regard to the impact watching the movies had on the gained understanding and knowledge of the issues, forty-five percent (45%) indicated a significant impact, fifty percent (50%) specified a positive impact and the remaining five percent (5%) felt viewing movies had no impact (see Chart 8).

Chart 7: Overall Understanding Gained

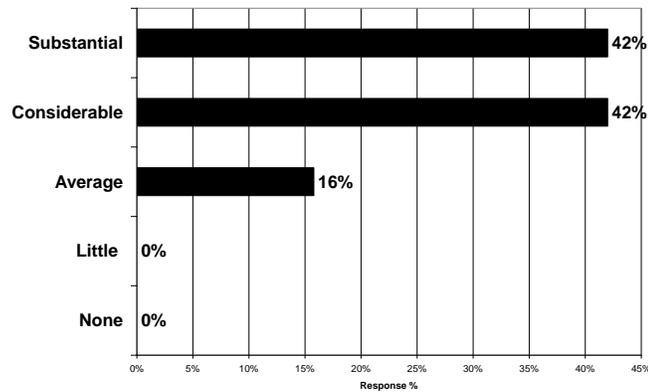
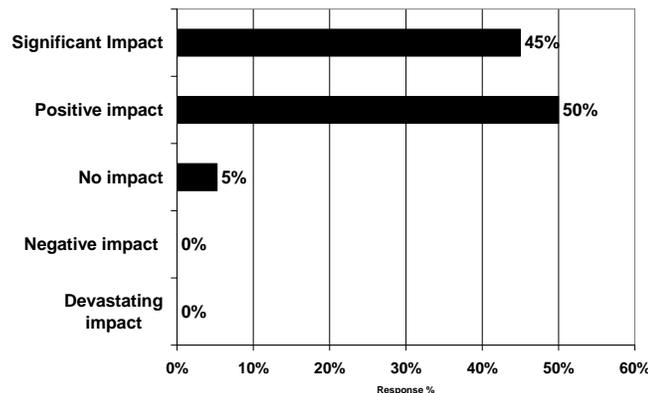
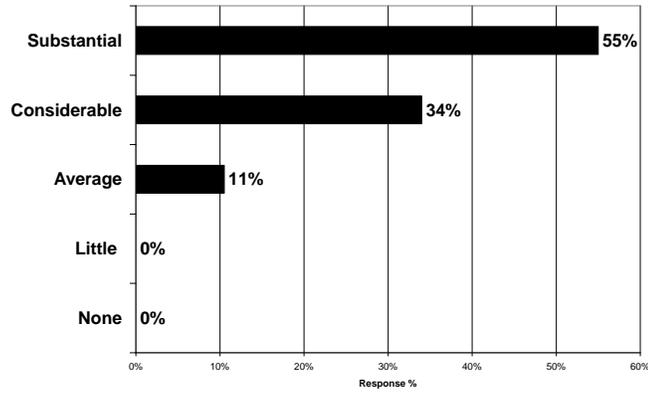


Chart 8: Impact of Movies on Understanding and Knowledge Gained

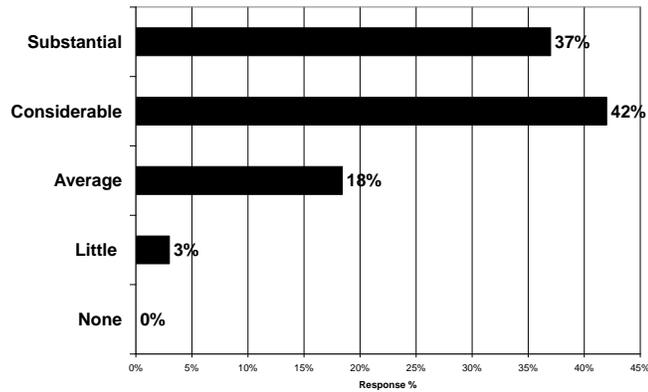


When asked about the level of responsibility students had for creating a successful learning experience in the class for themselves and their classmates, almost all students answered either significant or considerable. The remaining students stated that the responsibility was average (see Chart 9). When asked about their personal responsibility for creating a successful learning environment in the class thirty-seven percent (37%) responded significant, forty-two percent (42%) considerable and eighteen percent (18%) average (see Chart 10).

**Chart 9: Responsibilities Students Had for Successful Class**



**Chart 10: Personal Responsibility for Successful Class**



The overwhelming majority of the students agreed that the students as a group and the particular student as an individual had greater responsibility to create a positive learning environment in the class as compared with other upper-level courses they had taken. In regard to students overall forty-two percent (42%) said the students had significantly more responsibility and fifty percent (50%) stated more responsibility (see Chart 11). Individually, twenty-four percent (24%) felt significantly more responsibility and sixty-six percent (66%) responded more responsibility (see Chart 12).

**Chart 11: Class Level of Responsibility Compared to Other Upper Level Classes**

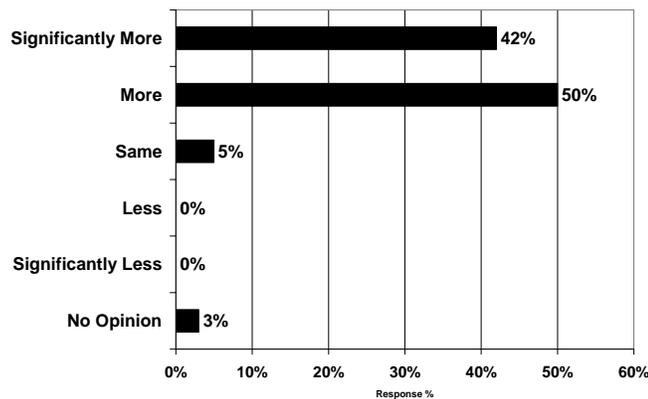
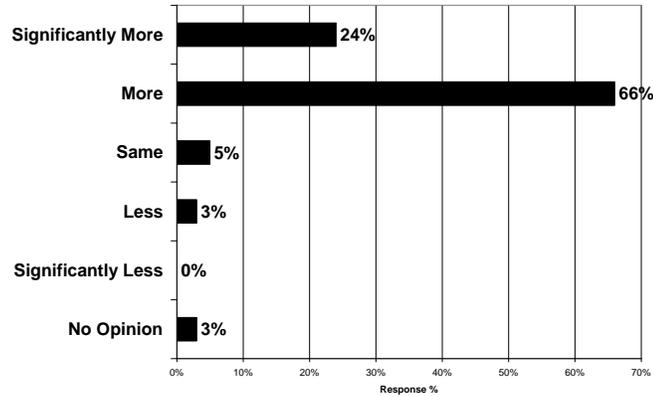


Chart 12: Personal Responsibility Compared to Other Upper Level Classes



All of the students, except one, indicated that group viewing of the movies and the related discussions increased their understanding of the course concepts; although the responses varied as to degree. Almost half marked significantly increased, a similar number denoted considerably increased and two students indicated minimally. One student expressed no opinion (see Chart 13). When the students were asked about whether there was greater impact on understanding of material based on viewing theatrical movies as compared to more traditional methods sixty-one percent (61%) felt significantly more, twenty-nine percent (29%) said more and eight percent (8%) believed the same. Again, one student expressed no opinion (see Chart 14).

Chart 13: Group Viewing & Discussion Increased Personal Understanding of Material

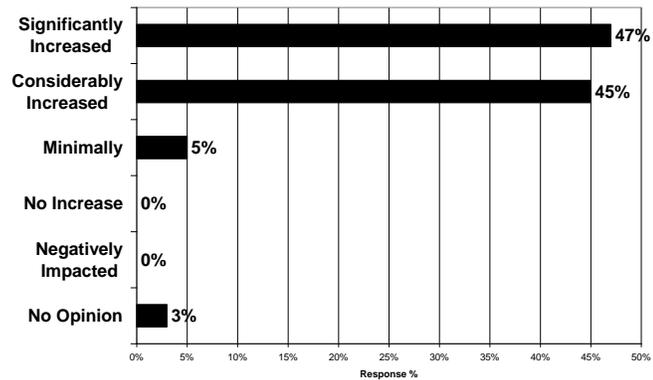
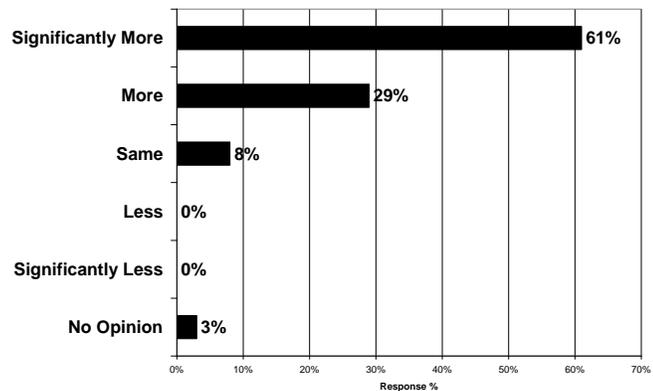


Chart 14: Impact of Group Viewing of Movies on Learning



Only one student in the class did not believe that viewing theatrical movies as part of the learning process positively impacted their classmates' enthusiasm for education. One student also indicated no opinion in response to this question. The remaining students believed that viewing movies positively impacted their classmates' enthusiasm for education (see Chart

15). When asked about the impact on their personal enthusiasm for education, similar results were attained. One student indicated no impact and another student indicated his/her enthusiasm was negatively impacted. The overwhelming majority stated that the experience positively influenced their personal enthusiasm for education (see Chart 16).

Chart 15: Positive Impact on Classmates' Enthusiasm for Education

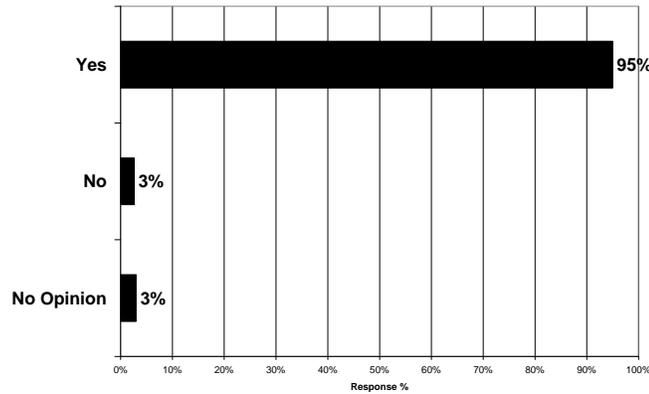
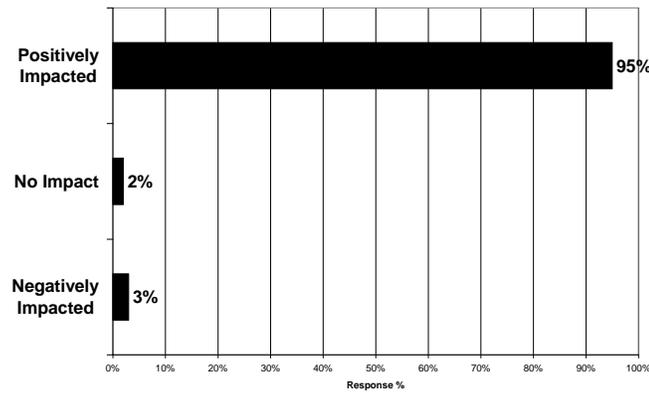


Chart 16: Impact on Personal Enthusiasm for Education



All but one student would either definitely, probably or possibly take another course using a similar film format. The other student said that he/she probably would not take another course using a similar format (see Chart 17). The students were then asked if they would recommend taking the *Business Ethics/Business and Society* class to their friends if it were taught again using the same format. Eighty-four percent (84%) of the students responded definitely, eleven percent (11%) answered probably, three percent (3%) marked possibly and three percent (3%) indicated probably not (see Chart 18). Almost identical responses were made to the question whether or not the *Business Ethics/Business and Society* course should be taught using theatrical movies in the future. More than eight out of ten said definitely, sixteen percent (16%) said probably and the last student said probably not (see Chart 19).

Chart 17: Likelihood of Taking Another Movie-based Class

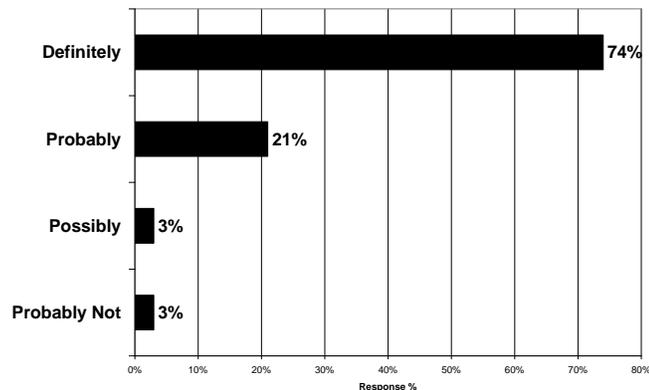


Chart 18: Recommend Movie-based Business Ethics Class to Friends

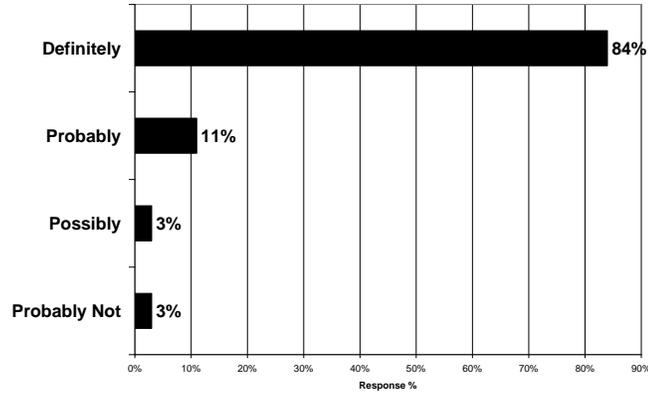
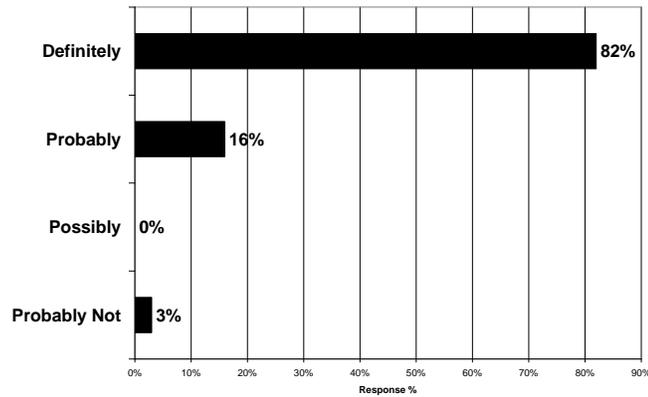
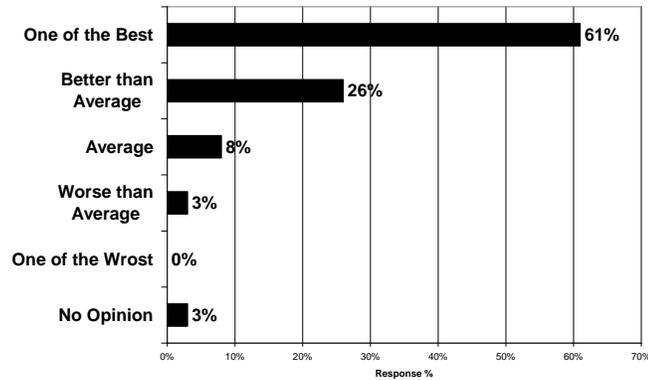


Chart 19: Should Future Business Ethics Classes Use the Movie Format



Students were asked to compare *Business Ethics/Business and Society* with other upper-level courses they have taken. One student felt that it was worse than the average class, three students thought it average, approximately one-quarter of the students felt it was better than average and the majority deemed it to be one of the best.

Chart 20: Rate Movie-based Business Ethics Class to Other Upper Level Classes



Students were also asked to provide detailed comments. The only negative comment was “I do not like the use of movies. I prefer a more traditional format for learning.” Other student comments are included in Appendix 4.

### OTHER OBSERVATIONS

In addition to the survey, some personal observations were made. On the first day of the class the theatrical movie format was explained to the students. As stated above, students were told that there would be no break during the class session. At University 1 night classes have twenty minutes of break time built into the class. At University 2 no break is built into the class time. Not one student objected to this announcement.

Almost half of the class sessions at University 1 went long. Not once did a student make a comment that class time was over or started to put their books together to leave before class ended. It usually was the professor looking at the clock and noticing it was about fifteen minutes beyond the end of class. No student complained about the extended classes. On a couple of occasions when the movie was extremely long, the students were asked in advanced to plan to be late. No one commented negatively.

Blackboard discussion boards at University 1 were used weekly in the class. For the most part, newspaper articles containing ethical issues were the basis of the discussions. However, on three occasions the movies viewed in class provided the basis. These three discussion boards were the three most active discussion boards during the semester.

The changes that were made in the format between Universities 1 and 2, as explained above, appeared to have no negative impact on class discussions. The discussions, in class and on discussion boards, at University 2 were just as active and beneficial as those conducted in the classroom at University 1.

### CONCLUSIONS

At both universities, the same four specific outcomes were identified in regard to using movies as the basic pedagogy for *Business Ethics/Business and Society*. Those outcomes were:

1. Motivate students to more actively participate in class discussions;
2. Develop a sense of responsibility in the students for the success of the class;
3. Increase understanding of the concepts presented in the course; and
4. Improve the students' enthusiasm for education.

Based on the survey conducted and reported above and the anecdotal evidence, it appears that all four desired outcomes were achieved. The students truly responded in a favorable manner to the use of films as the primary teaching methodology.

Of course, the survey size was small and therefore more study will need to be completed. The plan is to continue teaching *Business Ethics/Business and Society* using movies. Each semester, the survey will be given to the students. The results will be tracked over time to see if the responses are consistent.

However, there is little reason to believe that future results will differ significantly. Except for one student, the use of theatrical movies was well received and beneficial to the students. Definitely, two thumbs up!

**APPENDIX 1**  
**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

**1 How would you rate the over-all quality of the class discussion in Business Ethics class?**

Very Good / Good / Average / Poor / Very Poor / No Opinion

**2 As compared to other upper-level courses that you have taken, how would you rate the overall class discussion in BUSINESS ETHICS CLASS?**

Significantly Better / Better / the Same / Worse / Significantly Worse / No Opinion

**3 How would you rate YOUR PERSONAL participation in the class discussions in BUSINESS ETHICS CLASS?**

Very Good / Good / Average / Poor / Very Poor / No Opinion

**4 As compared to other upper-level courses you have taken, how would you rate YOUR participation in the class discussions in BUSINESS ETHICS CLASS?**

Significantly Better / Better / the Same / Worse / Significantly Worse / No Opinion

**5. What impact do you think the group viewing of theatrical movies about ethical/corporate responsibility issues had on the class discussion?**

Had a significant impact on the discussion / Had a positive impact on the discussion / Had no impact on the discussion / Had a negative impact on the discussion / Had a devastating impact on the discussion / No Opinion

**6 What impact do you think the group viewing of theatrical movies about ethical/corporate responsibility issues had on YOUR participation in the class discussion?**

Significant impact / Positive impact / No impact / Negative impact / Devastating impact / No Opinion

**7 Overall, how would you rate the understanding and amount of knowledge on the topic of business ethics and corporate social responsibility you gained from BUSINESS ETHICS CLASS?**

Substantial / Considerable / Average / Little / None / No Opinion

**8 What impact did viewing and discussing theatrical movies have on the amount of understanding and knowledge of business ethics and corporate social responsibility issues you gained from BUSINESS ETHICS CLASS?**

Significant impact / Positive impact / No impact / Negative impact / Devastating impact / No Opinion

**9 What level of responsibility do you feel students had for creating a successful learning experience in BUSINESS ETHICS CLASS for themselves and other students?**

Significant / Considerable / Average / Little / None / No Opinion

**10 What level of responsibility do you feel YOU had for creating a successful learning experience in BUSINESS ETHICS CLASS for themselves and other students?**

Significant / Considerable / Average / Little / None / No Opinion

**APPENDIX 1 (cont.)**  
**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

**11 Compared to other upper-level courses you have taken, what level of responsibility that students in BUSINESS ETHICS CLASS had for creating a successful learning experience?**

Significantly More / More / The Same / Less / Significantly Less / No Opinion

**12 Compared to other upper-level courses you have taken, what level of responsibility did you have in BUSINESS ETHICS CLASS had for creating a successful learning experience?**

Significantly More / More / The Same / Less / Significantly Less / No Opinion

**13 Overall, how much do you think that group viewing and discussion of theatrical movies in BUSINESS ETHICS CLASS increased your understanding of the concepts presented in the course?**

Significantly Increased / Considerably Increased / Minimally / No Increase / Negatively Impacted / No Opinion

**14 As compared to other upper-level courses you have taken, how do you think that viewing and discussing the theatrical movies impacted the understanding of the concepts presented in the courses when compared to more traditional methods of presenting class materials?**

Significantly More / More / the Same / Less / Significantly Less / No Opinion

**15 Do you think that viewing theatrical movies as part of the learning process impacted your classmates enthusiasm for education?**

Yes / No / No Opinion

**16 Do you think that viewing theatrical movies as part of the learning process impacted YOUR enthusiasm for education?**

Positively Impacted / No Impact / Negatively Impacted / No Opinion

**17 If you had the opportunity to take another course (that you were interested in) using a similar theatrical movie format as BUSINESS ETHICS CLASS, would you take the course?**

Definitely / Probably / Possibly / Probably Not / Definitely Not / No Opinion

**18 If BUSINESS ETHICS CLASS was taught again using theatrical movies as it was this semester, would you recommend to your friends that they should take the class?**

Definitely / Probably / Possibly / Probably Not / Definitely Not / No Opinion

**19 When BUSINESS ETHICS CLASS is taught in the future, should theatrical movies continue as the primary methodology?**

Definitely / Probably / Possibly / Probably Not / Definitely Not / No Opinion

**APPENDIX 1 (cont.)**  
**SURVEY QUESTIONS**

**20 Rate BUSINESS ETHICS CLASS to other upper-level courses you have taken**

One of the best / Better than average / Average / Worse than average / One of the worst / No opinion

**APPENDIX 2**  
**BUSINESS ETHICS MOVIE LIST**

All My Sons	It's A Wonderful Life
American Dream	Jerry Maguire
Antitrust	John Q.
Apartment, The	Legally Blonde 2
Associate, The	Matewan
Barbarians at the Gate	Miracle On 34th Street
BarberShop (I and II)	Mr. Deeds
Big Business	Ms. Evers' Boys
Big Kahuna, The	Nandi
Blue Collar	Net, The
Boiler Room	Nine to Five
Bread and Roses	Norma Rae
Casino	North Country
Changing Lanes	Office Space
Citizen Kane	Other People's Money
Civil Action, A	Paper, The
Class Action	Pelican Brief, The
Clerks	Player, The
Coca-Cola Kid	Proof of Life
Dealers	Roger & Me
Death of a Salesman	Runaway Jury
Disclosure	Salesman
Distinguished Gentleman	Save the Tiger
Erin Brockovich	Secret of my Success, The
Firm, The	Serpico
Fountainhead, The	Silkwood
Glengarry Glen Ross	Startup.com
Grapes of Wrath, The	Super Size Me
Gung Ho	Swimming with Sharks
Head Office	Tin Men
Hitch	Trading Places
Hoffa	Two Weeks Notice
How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days	Wall Street
Hudsucker Proxy	Wheeler Dealers
In Good Company	Working Girl
Insider, The	

**APPENDIX 3**  
**COMPARISON OF UNIVERSITIES**

	<u>University 1</u>	<u>University 2</u>
Type	State regional	State regional
Locale	Rural	Rural
ACT Scores		
Over 18	61%	64%
Over 24	11%	13%
Total undergraduate students	2988	3291
Male students	26%	44%
Female students	74%	56%
Minority students	25%	41%
Student/Faculty ratio	16:1	17:1

## APPENDIX 4

### STUDENT COMMENTS

I think I was able to grasp the concepts presented in the class more easily because the movies presented each week.

I found it amazing that a simple movie could reveal as many issues as discussed in class. To me movies have always been for entertainment. I now find myself looking at movies differently.

For myself, I find that I now view movies differently. Prior to this class, I viewed movies only for entertainment. When I watch movies now, I find that I am looking for ethical issues. I thought it was a great concept, and I applaud you for thinking out of the box.

I believe that having the class view the movie together then discuss the issues is a creative approach. It helps put the chapters in real life settings.

I loved the class! Real-life situations on ethical and unethical business practices were analyzed and discussed. Students participated and voiced their opinions. Great teaching format.

This is a great way to teach.

Helped for visual info and to relate discussions back to events discussed.

The movies allowed for a fun learning environment that really did motivate students to discuss the ethical issues contain within.

I really enjoyed using theatrical movies. I think it was a great way to help understand some business concepts because you do not always understand well by reading.

Using movies to discuss the issues and concepts in the textbook was a very creative use of that medium. Movies are usually thought of as vehicles for entertainment. Viewing these movies for this class enhanced the learning experience. Watching these movies as a group also enhanced the learning experience. Group members were better able to discuss the ethic and social responsibility issues than if we had only used the textbook information. More classes that are being taught today should use movies whenever possible in order to enhance a student's learning experience.

I enjoy discussing different issues anyway, so this just reinforced some things for me.

Improved the experience.

I feel that viewing the movies helped to clear up many issues that were presented in the book, because the movies provided a working example of the main topics of each chapter we studied.

I fell these movies helped us actually visualize the ethical issues.

## ENDNOTES

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- <sup>1</sup> Jill Robinson (b. 1936), U.S. novelist. As quoted in *American Dreams*, part 1, by Studs Terkel (1980).
- <sup>2</sup> Andy Warhol (1928–1987), U.S. pop artist. Quoted in Victor Bokris, “The Education of Andy Warhol 1937- 45,” Warhol (1989).
- <sup>3</sup> Marjorie Rosen (b. 1942), U.S. film critic. *Popcorn Venus*, preface (1973).
- <sup>4</sup> Conrad Ostwalt, “Religion and Popular Movies,” *The Journal of Religion and Film*, Vol. 2 No. 3, December 1998. [www.unomaha.edu/~wwwjrf/popular.htm](http://www.unomaha.edu/~wwwjrf/popular.htm).
- <sup>5</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>6</sup> Ellen Ott Marshall, “Making the Most of a Good Story: Effective Use of Film as a Teaching Resource for Ethics,” *Teaching Theology and Religion*; April 2003, Vol. 6 Issue 2, p. 93.
- <sup>7</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>8</sup> Aiex, Nola Kortner, “Mass Media Use in the Classroom,” ERIC Digest D147.
- <sup>9</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>10</sup> Ruth Harper and Lawrence Rogers, “Using Feature Films to Teach Human Development Concepts,” *Journal of Humanistic Counseling*, Dec. 1999, Vol. 38 Issue 2, p. 89.
- <sup>11</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>12</sup> Lynn Kuzma and Patrick Haney, “And . . . Action! Using Film to Learn about Foreign Policy,” *International Studies Perspective* 2001 Vol. 2, p. 33.
- <sup>13</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>14</sup> Matthew J. Paris, “Integrating Film and Television into Social Studies Instruction.” *ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education*, Bloomington, IN (<http://www.ericdigests.org/1998-2/film.htm>). Matthew J. Paris is an Information Specialist for the ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education at Indiana University's Social Studies Development Center in Bloomington, Indiana.
- <sup>15</sup> *Id.*
- <sup>16</sup> Dorris, Anna Verona “Educating the Twentieth-Century Youth,” *Clearing House*, Vol. 69 Issue 2, p. 77, Nov/Dec 95. The article was initially published in Volume 5 Number 4 (December 1930).
- <sup>17</sup> Paul B. Weinstien, “Movies as the Gateway to History: The History and Film Project,” *The History Teacher*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (Nov. 2001), pp 27-48.
- <sup>18</sup> Keri S. Diez, Francis T. Pleban and Ralph J. Wood, “Lights, Camera, Action: Integrating Popular Film in the Health Classroom,” *Journal of School Health*, Vol. 75, No. 7 (September 2005), pp. 271-275.
- <sup>19</sup> Norlyn B. Hyde and Elizabeth Fife, “Innovative Instructional Strategy Using Cinema Films in an Undergraduate Nursing Course,” *ABNF Journal*, Vol. 15, No. 5 (September/October 2005), pp. 95-97.
- <sup>20</sup> Robert L. Sexton, “Using Short Movie and Television Clips in the Economics Principles Class,” *Journal of Economic Education*, Vol. 37, Issue 4 (Fall 2006), pp. 406-417.
- <sup>21</sup> *Wall Street*. Produced by Edward Pressman and directed by Oliver Stone. 126 min. 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, 1987. DVD. Rated: R.
- <sup>22</sup> *It's A Wonderful Life*. Produced and developed by Frank Capra. 125 min. RKO Radio Pictures, 1946. DVD. Rated: Not rated.
- <sup>23</sup> The grant was for \$1,500. In addition to purchasing the fifty movies, a combination television/VCR/DVD player and a quality set of noise reduction headphones were purchased for the library. The DVDs and videotapes were placed on reserve in the library, so students would have access to them. Also a DVD player was purchased for the classroom.
- <sup>24</sup> Blackboard is an online class management system that allows for professors to create surveys that can be anonymously completed by the students in the class. Only registered students in the class have access to the class materials. Blackboard will allow the professor to see which students responded to the survey but not any particular student's responses.
- <sup>25</sup> The sources include websites such as: [www.screenit.com](http://www.screenit.com), [www.kids-in-mind.com](http://www.kids-in-mind.com) or [movies.yahoo.com/moviemom](http://movies.yahoo.com/moviemom). These sites give a detailed review of the content and allow the student to make a decision regarding offensiveness.
- <sup>26</sup> *Hudsucker Proxy*. Produced by Ethan Coen and directed by Joel Coen. 111 min. Warner Brothers, 1994. DVD. Rated: PG.
- <sup>27</sup> *Bread and Roses*, Produced by Rebecca O'Brien and directed by Ken Loach. 110 min. Alta Films, 2000, DVD. Rated: R.

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- <sup>28</sup> *The Insider*. Produced by Michael Mann and Pieter Jan Brugge and directed by Michael Mann. 157 min. Touchstone Pictures, 1999. DVD. Rated: R.
- <sup>29</sup> *Antitrust*. Produced by Keith Addis and directed by Peter Howitt. 110 min. MGM, 2001, DVD. Rated: PG-13
- <sup>30</sup> *John Q.* Produced by Oren Koules and Mark Burg and directed by Nick Cassavetes. 118 min. New Line Cinema, 2002. DVD. Rated : PG-13
- <sup>31</sup> *The Distinguished Gentleman*. Produced by Leonard Goldberg, Marty Kaplan, and Michael Peysner and directed by Jonathan Lynn. 122 min. Buena Vista Pictures, 1992, DVD. Rated: R.
- <sup>32</sup> *Erin Brockovich*. Produced by Danny DeVito, Michael Shamberg and Stacey Sher and directed by Steven Soderbergh, 131 min. Columbia Pictures, 2000. DVD. Rated: R
- <sup>33</sup> *Startup.com*. Produced by Chris Hegedus, Jehane Noujaim, D.A. Pennebaker and directed by Chris Hegedus and Jehane Noujaim 103 min. Artisan, 2001. DVD. Rated: R.
- <sup>34</sup> *Barbarians at the Gate*. Produced by Raymond Stark and directed by Glenn Jordan. 107 min. HBO Home Video, 2001, DVD. Originally aired *Barbarians at the Gate*, Produced by Raymond Stark and directed by Glenn Jordan. 107 min. HBO, 1993. Rated: Not rated (TV Movie)
- <sup>35</sup> *Boiler Room*. Produced by Jennifer Todd and Suzanne Todd and directed by Ben Younger. 120 min. Warner Brothers, 2000, DVD. Rated: R NOTE: According to one source there are approximately 150 uses of the F-word.
- <sup>36</sup> *Roger & Me*. Produced and directed by Michael Moore. 91 min. Warner Brothers, 1989, DVD. Rated: R.
- <sup>37</sup> *The Associate*. Produced by Frederic Golchan and directed by Donald Petrie. 113 min. Buena Vista Pictures, 1996, DVD. Rated: PG-13
- <sup>38</sup> *The Paper*. Produced by Brian Grazer and Frederick Zollo and directed by Ron Howard. 110 min. Universal Pictures, 1994, DVD. Rated: R
- <sup>39</sup> *Proof of Life*. Produced by Tony Gilroy, Charles B. Mulvehill, and Taylor Hackford and directed by Taylor Hackford. 135 min. Warner Brothers, 2000, DVD. Rated: R.
- <sup>40</sup> WebCT is an online class management system that allows for professors to create surveys that can be anonymously completed by the students in the class. Only registered students in the class have access to the class materials. WebCT will allow the professor to see which students responded to the survey but not any particular student's responses.
- <sup>41</sup> *Two Weeks Notice*. Produced by Sandra Bullock and directed by Marc Lawrence. 101 min. Castle Rock Entertainment / Warner Brothers, 2002. DVD. Rated: PG-13.
- <sup>42</sup> *Silkwood*. Produced by Mike Nichols and Michael Hausman and directed by Mike Nichols. 131 min. 20th Century Fox / ABC / ABC Motion Pictures, 1983. DVD. Rated: R
- <sup>43</sup> *Runaway Jury*. Produced by Gary Fleder, Christopher Mankiewicz and Arnon Milchan and directed by Gary Fleder. 127 mi. 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, 2003. DVD. Rated: PG-13.
- <sup>44</sup> *North Country*. Produced by Nick Wechsler and directed by Niki Caro. 126 min. Warner Brothers, 2005. DVD. Rated: R.
- <sup>45</sup> *In Good Company*. Produced by Paul Weitz and Chris Weitz and directed by Paul Weitz. 110 min. Universal Pictures, 2004. DVD. Rated: PG-13.
- <sup>46</sup> *Jerry Maguire*. Produced by Cameron Crowe, James L. Brooks, Laurence Mark and Richard Sakai and directed by Cameron Crowe. 139 min. Columbia TriStar / Sony Pictures Entertainment / TriStar Pictures. DVD. Rated R.
- <sup>47</sup> *Other People's Money*. Produced by Norman Jewison and Ric Kidney and directed by Norman Jewison. 101 min. Warner Brothers, 1991. DVD. Rated R.