**Avoid The Storm – Concept explanation**

The campaign ‘Avoid The Storm’ is an example of co-optive dialogue and confronts the issue of mainstream television media and the way it is being used incorrectly today. The slogan ‘Avoid The Storm’ relates to the idea of the ‘media storm’ and confronts television show Big Brother’s ‘The storm is approaching’ campaign slogan. Big Brother is a prime example of mainstream television programs that encourage self absorption and damage intimacies. The campaign Avoid The Storm aims to attack Big Brother and the mainstream television landscape. The three media that will be used for the campaign are printed billboards, an interactive website, and printed merchandise (Avoid The Storm umbrella, Avoid The Storm Pens). Once people reach the campaigns website they will be encouraged to take part in a challenge to avoid television for as long as they can. As part of the challenge they are asked to share their thoughts, progress and experiences (with others doing challenge) in the Diary Room. The Diary Room feature and website forum serves to promote meaningful dialogue between those doing challenge.

As a result of the challenge, members of society will help to lower ratings of television programs, allowing them to gain control of the television and the shows they watch. The campaign promotes meaningful dialogue and offers a way for people to change the television media landscape, so that is filled with valuable, meaningful intelligent programs that encourage healthy values and healthy relationships. Those who take part in the challenge can have a chance to spend the time they usually watch television on more important things, such as spending time with family and friends. The campaign also encourages dialogue and awareness about television media and how it impacts our lives. The forum on the website encourages this kind of discussion. The Diary Room chat feature on the website also encourages discussion- this feature mainly serves to provide a way for people to share their progress and thoughts on the challenge. The website forum is a more formal approach and offers a way for people to discuss the media and the television’s impact on our lives.

The ‘Avoid The Storm’ campaign is a good example of good advertising design because it has the ability to reach the public and engage them in something meaningful and something that will benefit their lives.

The campaign would be implemented in Melbourne, with billboards placed in public areas around city (such as train stations, Federation Square). The billboards, which encourage awareness and understanding about the media, would lead people to the campaign website. The first billboard, with the slogan ‘Who is Big Brother really watching?’ features an image of the Big Brother eye, with a mirrored surface where the pupil would be. The second billboard asks ‘what lies behind Big Brother?’, telling the audience to ‘see for yourself’ – (the pupil of this Big Brother eye would be transparent). The third billboard design would feature the slogan ‘Evict Big Brother’ and would show the Big Brother eye with the pupil/lens removed. The website would provide a brief description of the issue of television media today, referring to programs such as X-Factor and Big Brother. The website would then invite visitors to sign up, take part in a challenge to keep the television switched off for as long as they can (48 hours, 1 week, 2 weeks, 1 month, or longer). Those who take part in the challenge are encouraged to invite their friends and family to take part. The website would also provide a link to free merchandise – an Avoid The Storm umbrella (free when you sign up), and free Avoid The Storm pens. These merchandise would help to spread the word of the challenge and encourage more people to take part. As more and more people take part in the challenge, the ratings of shows like Big Brother would drop and the public would be one step further to gaining control of the remote and of their lives.

Developing this campaign has encouraged me to think about the effects of television media on people and their lives, relationships, self-esteem, values. I feel I have a deeper understanding of the way shows like Big Brother teach us to be self absorbed and critical of ourselves and each other, and how this damages our relationships.