



## LESSON PLAN:

### POLICING THE AIRWAVES: THE DEBATE OVER INDECENCY

**Worksheet:** Analyzing the sides of the indecency controversy

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Complete this worksheet based on your reading of the article “Policing the Airwaves” and the supplemental NewsHour transcript “Indecency on the Air”. **Short Answer:** *Please write your answers to the following questions in complete sentences in the space provided.*

1. Review the following quote by Rep. Heather Wilson from the supplemental NewsHour transcript of “Indecency on the Air”.

*“You knew what you were doing. You knew what kind of entertainment you’re selling, and you wanted us all to be abuzz, here in this room and on the playground and my kids’ school, because it improves your ratings. It improves your market share. And it lines your pockets.”*

-Rep. Heather Wilson

In your opinion, is she right? Does indecent material that appears on-air attract more viewers or listeners out of curiosity or shock value, thus increasing profits? Or not? Explain your view.

2. Read the following two quotes from the supplemental NewsHour transcript “Indecency on the Air”.

*“I think a parent has the ultimate ability to take any channels that somebody finds [objectionable] and say I don’t want them in my home. All you need to do is tell your cable company or satellite provider I don’t want that channel.”*

-Mel Karmazin, FCC Chairman

*“Congress should require cable and satellite operators to offer a la carte programming.”*

-Sen. John McCain, Senate Commerce Committee Chairman

What are these two quotes implying about whose responsibility it is to “police” the indecent material that may appear in broadcasts? Do you agree with this implication or not? Explain.

**Fill-in-the-chart:**

**Worksheet Page 2**

Fill in the chart below based on what you read in the articles. Then explain in the final section your opinion on the FCC's recent actions.

Arguments for implementing higher fines	Your opinion of these arguments
Arguments against implementing higher fines	Your opinion of these arguments
Examples on television or radio that would could be considered "indecent" or "obscene" that you've seen or heard (explain briefly and identify the show)	Your opinion of these examples

Based on your analysis above, summarize your overall position on this controversy. Are you for or against higher fines and increased regulation for indecent programming? Explain your views.