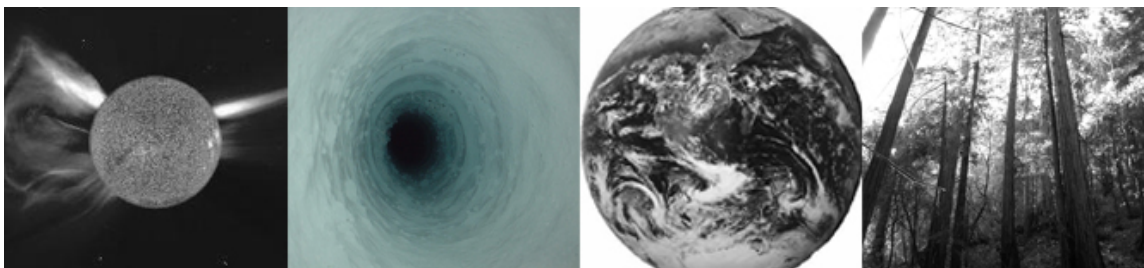


Environmental Sciences And **CREATE** Seminar Series



Science in the Media – An Oxymoron?

Richard Zurawski, PhD (cand), Mount St. Vincent University

“They never open their mouths without subtracting from the sum of human knowledge.”
Thomas Brackett Reed

“Never let the facts stand in the way of a good story”
Anon Newsroom quote

These two quotes illustrate the massive problem that we have today when it comes to the media and how it interprets the science that we get from our science researchers. Studies tell us that the public gets 80% of its science information and education from the nightly news. Yet studies also tell us that the modern media reporters, producers of content and assignment editors have virtually no backgrounds or understanding in any of the sciences. And when it comes to ranking the importance of coverage in the news, broadcasters rank science news as dead last. As a result science events are least likely to receive coverage and when science does show up in the media its coverage is invariably skewed by journalistic method, spectacle and anthropomorphizing. Media considers science so unimportant that in 2008 CNN fired its entire staff of 100 science reporters and just this past December the New York Times reassigned all its environment reporters because it will no longer cover environment stories as a separate topic, with dedicated environment reporters. As a result pseudo science from vested interests has run rampant throughout all media, distorting science, alienating scientists and misleading the public. The twin evils of media consolidation and vertical integration has straggled science coverage and the public has become disengaged is science stories. It truly has become an era of Media Mediocrity.

All are welcome.
Thursday, **March 21, 2013**
1:15 – 2:05PM
Physical Sciences Centre 2045