54. Clearly, most popular films and television shows are superficial and/or include a certain amount of violence or obscenity. Just as clearly, popularity leads to commercial success. But can we conclude that these productions are overly influenced by commercial interests? Perhaps not, since some popular films and television shows are neither superficial, obscene, nor violent. Closer scrutiny, however, reveals that most such productions actually support, not disprove, the thesis that commercial interests dictate movie and television content. One would-be threat to the thesis can be found in lower-budget independent films, which tend to focus more on character development and topical social issues than on sensationalism. Recently, a few such films have supplanted Hollywoods major studio productions as top box-office hits. Does this mean that profit potential no longer dictates the content of films. No. it simply suggests that the tastes and preferences of the movie-going public are shifting. A second ostensible challenge to the thesis can be found in companies such as Disney, whose productions continue to achieve great popularity and commercial success, without "resort to an appeal to baser interests. Yet it is because these productions are commercially successful that they proliferate. The only cogent challenge to the thesis is found in perennial television favorites such as "Nova." a public television show that is neither commercially

supported nor influenced. However, such shows are more in the nature of education than entertainment, and for every one program like "Nova" there are several equally popularand highly superficialprograms. With few exceptions, then, commercial success of certain films and television shows is no accidental byproduct of popularity. it is the intentional result of producers efforts to maximize profits. 100Test