

Lights, Camera, Media Literacy!
QUIZ SHOW
House Subcommittee Statement
by Charles Van Doren

“I was involved, deeply involved, in a deception. The fact that I, too, was very much deceived cannot keep me from being the principal victim of that deception, because I was its principal symbol. There may be a kind of justice in that. I don’t know. I do know, and I can say it proudly to this committee, that since Friday, October 16, when I finally came to a full understanding of what I had done and of what I must do, I have taken a number of steps toward trying to make up for it. I have a long way to go. I have deceived my friends, and I had millions of them. Whatever their feeling for me now, my affection for them is stronger today than ever before. I am making this statement because of them. I hope my being here will serve them well and lastingly.

I asked (co-producer Albert Freedman) to let me go on (*Twenty One*) honestly, without receiving help. He said that was impossible. He told me that I would not have a chance to defeat Stempel because he was too knowledgeable. He also told me that the show was merely entertainment and that giving help to quiz contests was a common practice and merely a part of show business. This of course was not true, but perhaps I wanted to believe him. He also stressed the fact that by appearing on a nationally televised program I would be doing a great service to the intellectual life, to teachers and to education in general, by increasing public respect for the work of the mind through my performances. In fact, I think I have done a disservice to all of them. I deeply regret this, since I believe nothing is of more vital importance to our civilization than education.”