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Voice: Response to children's prime time TV programs

Sang Eun Lee

A Thesis

In

The Department

Of

Art Education

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada**

2001

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ABSTRACT

Voice: Response to children's prime time TV programs

Sang Eun Lee

This thesis is a description of my art making process, which has evolved from a theory of critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy encouraged me to reflect my own lived experience to be aware of social problems caused by hegemony. Considering my experience, studying in a foreign country, I was reminded of my ex-classmates' voiceless situation in Korea caused by the values of society: materialism and academic favoritism. I found myself being controlled by the values of society taught from my childhood. I also became aware of the importance of the teacher in supporting these values. Critical pedagogy emphasizes that teachers should have a critical eye, a caring heart; they should inquire about equality and justice and take action with courage and patience. Art education can give students an opportunity to be more aware of the society's hidden power through direct discussion of the images of society.

In this thesis research, I made an art lesson model using a critical pedagogical approach of three steps: naming, reflecting critically and acting. I used my art making process as an example of this approach. The problem that I named is that the messages on TV are not beneficial for children. I have made artwork portraying the unbalanced messages about violence and sexual relationships presented to children; I used the images from Youth Television (YTV), a cable channel in Canada. Self-reflection on my TV viewing habits and researches about children's TV made me realize the deep effects of materialism behind those stimulating images. In this lesson plan, through the research and the self-examination concerning this social problem, the students are encouraged to reflect on their experience about the values of society. Teachers with critical pedagogy will be essential, as guides, to help each student to find their own voice within a flood of messages of society.

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This thesis is dedicated to God who has led my way and has been with me for every moment of my journey.

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INTRODUCTION

Voice is a term that is often used in the theory of critical pedagogy. I was first introduced to the concept of critical pedagogy after encountering the ideas of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. I was attracted to his ideas of critical consciousness, the oppressed, the elite, and the need for action that leads to change. However, until I read Joan Wink's book, my knowledge about critical pedagogy was only a vague abstract idea, and I had hardly considered that there is a relation with my practice in art education. Reading Wink encouraged me to think about my own lived experience as a starting point for reflecting on social values; these social values may be based on unjust assumptions.

When I started to interpret my own experience using the insight given from the concepts of critical pedagogy, I was surprised by the fact that many standards from society had been accepted without questioning or doubt. I realized that these social values silenced many students, including myself when I studied in a foreign country. Because I recognized this and regained my voice, I chose "voice" as the title of my thesis. In this thesis, I introduce the process of how critical pedagogy affects my awareness of the social values especially in a school system; I also discuss how these realizations contributed to establishing my educational approach in art education based on critical pedagogy.

In this thesis, introducing my own lived experience in Montreal, I first explain the voiceless situation of students in school causing the teacher to convey society's values which could be unjust. The belief that teachers with critical pedagogy could empower the voiceless students leads me to think about what should be the nature of teacher, and art teachers' advantages for empowering their students. Concerning my own art making process about TV effects on children as an example, I connect the theory of critical pedagogy and the practice of art making. Based on my experience developing this art, I propose an art lesson as a model that starts with each student's own concern with specific social problems that they would like to address to improve society. As students explore their concern through various types of research, they strengthen their commitment. Students' findings from their research can lead students to an awareness of the values' of society behind the problems. Ultimately, this awareness generates the student's new thoughts and behaviors to make social change.

RETROSPECTION

I am an international student. I came to Montreal from Korea about four years ago. I chose to study abroad because I believed it would better prepare me for my goal for the future. I knew that seeking and achieving a dream would not be easy. Studying in a foreign country has brought a lot of struggles that I would not have faced if I had stayed in Korea. Before I started my

master's degree in art education at Concordia, I studied English for one year in ESL schools. Even though I had studied English for a year, the experience of my first semester at Concordia was so terrible, I could not speak. The following is a description of my experience on the first day in the first class.

Looking for a classroom, I was already panicking. "Where is the CB building? It is not the same one that I was in for the course registration. I don't want to be late for my first day... Okay, this is the room." I can't remember who was already there and whether we shared greetings or not. Anyway, I remember there were a lot of empty seats. "Where should I sit? I don't want to sit beside the professor, because usually the person beside the professor starts the introductions." With a little hesitation, I sat down in front of the door which is a kind of safe place that is hardly ever considered by the professor as a place to sit (at least in Korea). All of the other students appeared to have known each other for quite a long time. Soon, I realized that I was the only Asian in the room. "Oh, there she is." I had spotted the only person I knew in the room. On registration day, she asked my name and where I had come from. She smiled at me. "What a relief..."

A man who looked like the Kentucky Fried Chicken man entered the room. "He must be the professor. He looks kind. He looks like he never gets angry at students" After the professor came in, he told us to introduce ourselves to each other and to include what our area of interest was for research. "What?... How can I explain my research interest? I didn't prepare the sentences." Starting from the person in front of the professor, everyone had quite a long self-introduction time. At last it was my turn. "My name is Sang Eun Lee, I'm from Korea. Nice to meet you." Then I was silent. The professor asked what my research interest was. I was embarrassed. I could feel my face turn red. I can't remember if I answered him or not. I tend to forget moments that I don't want to remember.

The first class was actually better than my other classes that first

semester. In each class, I had to concentrate every second just to understand what the professor was speaking about in art education history. Whether I understood or not, I could not say anything because of my poor English. I was so scared when I had to speak. The brief time before and after class was my most detested moments because I did not have anyone to talk with. The kind girl that I had met on registration day had dropped the course because of her personal plan. Each day when I entered the classroom I said 'hi' in a small voice. Then I just sat down and listened to what other people were talking about to each other. When the class ended I went out of the room quietly. I wanted to say 'bye' to someone but usually I didn't have a chance.

Speaking English always has been a formidable task for me. I made a great effort to advance my English; I was always thinking of ways to improve my speaking. I asked people how they improved their speaking, I watched English TV, I wrote my diary in English, and sometimes I tried to pray in English. However, as far as relationships with other students went, I tried to make excuses: "I am not an outgoing person, so it's not easy for me to make friends. Other classmates are very busy, they have jobs and families to take care of." The problems diminished as time went on. I was able to talk a little bit more in the class without a professor asking me a direct question and the next year, two other Asian students came, so I was less afraid of the time before and after class.

ENCOUNTER: CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

Before I read the book, *Critical pedagogy-notes from the real world* (1997), this experience was lost at the back of my mind. It was a memory that I wanted to forget and avoid. In this book, Joan Wink explains the concept of critical pedagogy and the historical view using examples of her or her graduate students' experiences. Her experiences are mostly based on happenings in a bilingual school where teachers are English speaking and students are Spanish speaking. She relates episodes where students received unequal treatment by teachers due to racial prejudice. The Mexican students faced difficult situations caused by difference in race and language. I had sympathy for the children and I related their experiences to the difficulties I have faced as a foreigner trying to live with a different language and race.

Wink encourages us to look back on our own lived experiences and find meaning in them for the purpose of generating new understanding of self, others, and the world. According to Wink's own explanation, the concept of 'unlearning' is the way of generating new understanding from customary thoughts and habits. It is difficult to look at our own assumptions and where they are come from, because they are such a part of ourselves. When we examine our own experience, not that of others we can question those assumptions; then unlearning happen. 'Unlearning' is the shift in one's philosophy, beliefs and assumptions. We have to face to our belief is not

working and sometimes we have to admit we are wrong. Wink recollects that "many of my long-held assumptions have not stood the test of time"(Wink, 1997,p.13-14). Considering Wink's idea of unlearning from one's experience, I found that I was undergoing the stages of the critical pedagogy. This made me ask myself, "what about me? " and connect my being-thoughts, feelings, and problems, to the values of society. I have read many books and articles about critical pedagogy, however, I had never thought my experiences could relate to critical pedagogy. I did not think I belonged to either the oppressed or the power group. My interest in the theory of critical pedagogy was sparked by concern for today's children. Because I thought it was children who needed to be aware of the society's might-be-wrong-assumptions provided by mass media. I did not consider myself raised and living in those assumptions provided from every aspect of society not only from mass media. I am also the person who needed to be aware of hidden hegemony in society. It was a great transition as well as my relearning about critical pedagogy.

Concerned about my experience in the first semester, I simply thought about what I had learned as a speechless lonely foreign student that I wanted to forget. Then I rethought the same experience in relation to the values of society. This rethinking made me aware of the hidden curriculum in schools connected to the values of society, and also brought an amazing discovery for my belief system and attitude. I believed that this was my unlearning process. Wink said that unlearning is very difficult because it requires us to admit that

we are wrong and demands a change in our belief system as well as our actions. That is the experience of critical pedagogy.

In her book, Wink (1997) compares Carmen, a teacher who is implementing critical pedagogy and Rainey, a teacher who is not. They were both teachers in the same bilingual school in the southern United States. Even though the school was bilingual, "teachers spoke English, and students spoke Spanish. Teachers used English curriculum; the kids understood Spanish curriculum" (p.27). Teachers chose different words to describe students. English speaking students were called "normal" and "regular" (p.40), where as Latino, Spanish speaking students were referred to as "a terrible problem," and "not know[ing] anything" (p.30). Carmen used the context of the students' lives for her curriculum using the language that her students could understand. Carmen had always been around Mexican children and continually told other people how smart and loving they were. Rainey used the district-prescribed curriculum in English. She had never been around Mexican children and continually complained to other people about them and their behavior. The following chart explains how this example displays critical pedagogy.

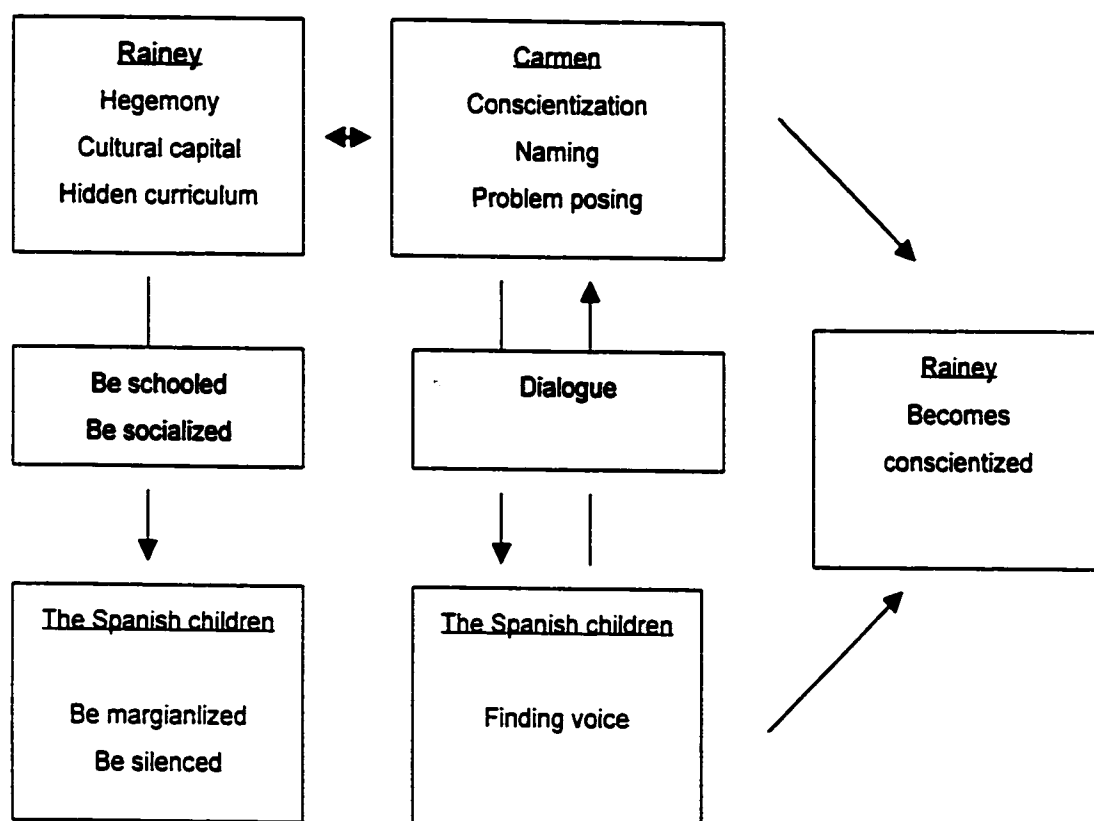


Figure 1. The comparison between Rainey's and Carmen's teaching approach

I will show how the left hands series of boxes reflect the dominant culture's approach. Wink (1997) points out that "Hegemony is the domination of one group over another with the partial consent of the dominated group"(p. 42), and "Cultural capital refers to the behaviors, values, and practices that are valued by the dominant society" (p. 33). "The hidden curriculum is the unexpressed perpetuation of dominant culture through institutional processes"(p.43). The teachers in the school, including Rainey, were giving the hidden curriculum under the hegemony of the dominant culture: English speaking. As Wink discussed, people are socialized by accepting society's

messages whether consciously or unconsciously (p.57) and schooled to think in traditional ways which are dominated by the 'voice' of one powerful group (p.55, 58). The Spanish children were schooled and socialized by a teachers' group, which had voice and power. In this situation, the children became *silenced and marginalized*. "To marginalize is to place someone or something on the fringes, on the margins of power. To be marginalized is to be made to feel less" (p.54). "Silencing is usually a quiet and insidious process. Sometimes those who are being silenced know it, and sometimes they don't"(p.57). Wink also indicates a certain pattern of silencing: "those who have more, silence those who have less; those who are from the dominant European American culture silence those who are from non-European American cultures; men silence women" (p.56-57).

Now, I will demonstrate how the middle series of boxes exemplifies the critical pedagogy approach. Carmen is a teacher who has the power of *conscientization, naming and problem posing*. *Conscientization*, a term from Paulo Freire(1974), refers to "learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and tak[ing] action against the oppressive elements of reality"(p.17). Wink(1997) interprets the conscientization as the power which moves us from the passivity of "yeah-but-we-can't-do-that" to the power of "we-gotta-do-the best-we-can-where-we-are-with-what-we've-got." Carmen perceived the educational contradiction based on social prejudice in the school and took action by changing her curriculum. She used Spanish and taught with

content from students' real lives, for example, learning the words related to a student's haircut. Naming is considered an open and honest talk about one's experiences whether one has power or not. Wink emphasized naming as taking place when "the non-dominant group tells the dominant group exactly what the non-dominant group thinks and feels about specific social practice"(p.53). Problem posing could happen in the process of looking for solutions to problems in our everyday lives. Problem posing brings people to ask questions many do not want to hear. Sometimes it is easier to problem solve than problem pose. In an educational setting, "problem posing brings interactive participation and critical inquiry into the existing curriculum, and expands it to reflect the curriculum of the students' lives" (p.48).

Carmen is able to *dialogue* with her students. Dialogue is "communication that creates and recreates multiple understandings. It moves its participants along the learning curve to that uncomfortable place of relearning and unlearning" (Wink, 1997, p.36). According to Freire (1974), dialogue cannot exist without a profound love for the world and for people; humility; an intense faith in humankind; hope; and finally, critical thinking (p.70-73).

Did Carmen make a difference in her students' lives? Yes. They were not 'problematic' or 'stupid' students any more. They became lovely and smart children. They were not silent because they no longer "felt less" and they were

no longer afraid. They found their voice. As well, Carmen made a difference for Rainey. She also followed Carmen's approach to the Latino children. Rainey started to use her limited Spanish to communicate with her students.

These students' and teachers' stories interpreted with a critical pedagogic point of view made me rethink my own experience in the first semester. Was the uncomfortable feeling that I had in my first semester caused only because I couldn't speak English well? No, I do not believe that is true. The reason I felt the way I did was because I was being marginalized as a result of my limited ability to communicate. I felt that I was not a vital part of the class. There was no reason for me to be there. It would have been better if I didn't show up to the class. I felt I was less. I was *silent*. Did this represent my being? Was I useless? In Korea, I had been a good student. I never had problems in my relationships with teachers. I was one who had a voice. Again, did my experience in Korea represent my being? Had I been worth more than my classmates? What happened to me between being in Korea and being in Montreal? I myself did not change. The society I belonged to had changed. In Korea I belonged to a society in which I had a voice. Later, I moved to a different society where my voice was not understood, then I became voiceless.

Thinking about myself in those different situations, I am reminded of the gloomy faces of some of my ex-classmates in Korea. They usually had bad grades in the class or were economically poor. They were considered

'problematic' or 'dull' students. They did not get the teachers' attention. They were seen as less important than others in the class. They had no voice. I never imagined their voiceless situation was because of the hegemony of the schools that were controlled by a value system dependant on money and intelligence. I felt pity for them because I thought that they were not 'normal'. Were they really not normal? If so, I am also not 'normal' here. Were the Spanish children in Wink's book problematic or stupid? No, they were lovely and smart children to the teacher with the power of conscientization and dialogue. I found my judgement of others had been affected by what I had seen and learned in my classes; this judgement had been influenced by teachers.

A teacher's belief system is very important to his or her students. Through their teacher's eyes, children may judge the worth of their own being and the worth of others. Unconsciously, it becomes a part of their value system. That is a massive power of the hidden curriculum. This can be very stressful for teachers; they have to be very cautious of their actions and words. Yet, isn't it a great opportunity? When I think of the tremendous effects of a teacher on students, I am filled with ineffable joy. Even though society is controlled by the value of the dominant group, at least one teacher with conscientization can create a place without hegemony.

THE NATURE OF THE TEACHER

I would like to further develop what the nature of teachers should be. In her conclusions, Wink (1997) discovers her answers in the balance between a caring heart with a critical eye, and following the path of action with courage and patience. I agree with her conclusion. For me, the movie "What Women Want" shows the relationship between a caring heart, a critical eye and action taken with courage and patience. In the movie, Mel Gibson's character unexpectedly has the power to hear what the women around him are thinking. One day, he hears the thoughts of a woman working in his company. She has very low self-esteem and fears her continuously meaningless life and job. She is being marginalized. Only he knows her mind because of his magical power. One rainy day, she doesn't come to work. He is the only person who notices her absence. The other people in the company are not even aware that she exists. Gibson's character fears that she might have killed herself. He begins a tireless search for her address (which is not easy because nobody knows her) and ends up searching all over the back streets of Chinatown, being exposed to the severe rain in the process. For the sake of comparison, it can be said that he has a critical ear instead of a critical eye. Without his critical ear, this caring would not have happened. Without a caring heart, a critical ear would not have made him act. Without his actions, the girl could have died.

A critical eye, a caring heart and resulting action with courage and

patience, all of these components are important for teachers who are using critical pedagogy. The concepts of equality and justice are significant in practicing critical pedagogy as well. This definition from a teacher, Lily from Wink's book, will give a clear vision of what teachers with critical pedagogy should do:

Critical pedagogy is a process of learning and relearning. It entails a sometimes painful reexamination of old practices and established beliefs of educational institutions and behaviors. **Critical pedagogy causes one to make inquiries about equality and justice.** Sometimes these inequalities are subtle and covert. The process requires courage and patience. Courage promotes changes and democracy provides all learners equal access to power. (Wink, 1997, p.60, bold by Lee, S. E.)

I strongly agree with this definition; It seems (in Wink's book) to "just fall from heaven" (p.59). With a critical eye and a caring heart, we teachers should inquire about equalities and justice in ourselves, in our classes, in our schools, in the society we live in, and in the world. Then we need resulting action with courage and patience. This could apply to teachers of all subjects.

THE APPLICATION FOR ART EDUCATION

What would be a specific way of doing critical pedagogy for art teachers? Yokley (1999) wrote "the power of the arts simultaneously promotes and limits freedom in all countries and cultures by revealing, confronting, subverting or

supporting prevailing belief systems or ideologies. Critical, ideological, and political encounters with visual and verbal interpretations of art and visual imagery of popular culture affords students that involvement” (p.18, 20). Art itself shows the values of a particular society. Therefore, art teachers have special and greater opportunities for direct dialogue with students about the values of society.

Recently, some educators (Albers, 1999: Cary, 1998: Garoian, 1999: Jackson, 1999: Levin, 1999: Mckenna, 1999: Yokley, 1999) have attempted to place this critical pedagogy into the context of curriculum in art education. For these educators, reflection on artworks, in order to perceive the power in society, is fundamental for doing this. Even though these educators assume the same form of criticism (reflecting on artworks), their focus can be roughly divided into two models: One is the criticism of visual works from either pop culture or fine art and the other is criticism of students' artworks. For example, using a theory of critical pedagogy, Yokley provides an art lesson based on discussion of two self-portraits by Frida Kahlo and Leonora Carrington. In this lesson, the students made their self-portraits using items which reveal and represent themselves, to help them understand semiotic signs in artworks. However, according to Yokley, this is done for the sole purpose of a 'springboard' for the main lesson. Yokley (1999) said “The Kahlo and Carrington works afforded opportunity to discuss issues of gender, colonialism, racism, classism, elitism, and ethnicity. Students made in-depth political

connections that resulted in a critique of systems of power and of capitalism itself" (p.21). In this exercise, the students examine the power of society. However, for me, just examination of the values of society without the connection in their own lives seems to stay in a level of reflection, which is not enough to finding real *voice*. Freire (1974) states *the true word* is made up of reflection and action. Without action the word becomes what Freire calls 'verbalism'. Without reflection the word becomes 'activism,' Freire's term for an action with lack judgement. With both reflection and action, the word can transform the world (p.50-51). Through reflection and action we go in *voice*.

I believe that a discussion about artists' works would be suitable as a 'spring board,' and the students' artworks as a place stimulating both reflection and action, should be a main lesson in art education with critical pedagogy. By examining my own previous art making, I would like to think about art lessons that might foster self-examination using an examination of the values of society by spontaneous art making. In my case, art education was and still is a very important way to find my voice. Through making my *self-portrait in Montreal*, I expressed the uncomfortable situation of being an 'other' in a foreign society. Through photographing everyday self-portrait, I got the solarization image print that conveys the feeling of subtle sorrow. Combining an element of unreadable alphabet (I typed Korean sentences under English code), this self-portrait work described the feeling of isolation and disconnection in a society which has different language system. This is a part of my artist's statement for the work:

An unreadable alphabet represents the feelings of isolation and disconnection that one faces in a society which has a different language system. Even though my earliest self-portraits were not created by the leitmotif of loneliness from being the Other in a different culture, I can not deny that 'being the Other in a different culture' has been the reason for the emotion I had experienced, but it was not loneliness. I was raised with six siblings and had always dreamt of the freedom of being alone. In Montreal I have enjoyed being alone; however, I have been stressed by being a person who has aphasia and dyslexia. By typing Korean sentences under English code, I made sentences that can provide this feeling to the viewers. (Lee, 1999)

This work was born as a result of a very important critical comment made by one of my classmates. At first, in that studio class, I showed my classmates some pictures of Montreal and some of my self-portraits. Paying attention to the fact I took photos of various famous places of Montreal, but without people, and the fact that the faces of my self-portraits are lurid, my classmate perceived 'loneliness' as my photos' leitmotiv. That made me consider the feeling of 'being the other' in my subconscious and I concluded that the reason for my 'loneliness' was because I was like a person who had *aphasia and dyslexia*. I could not speak what I want to tell and I could not properly read even a newspaper without a dictionary. Also, referring to the 'male voyeuristic consumption,' she questioned me about the intention of the 'erotic' and 'exotic' poses of my self-portraits that I had not recognized at all. At the time I did not think about this point very deeply at all, because I had not intended for all of that to be portrayed. However, now I can admit that those poses could have been influenced by my familiarity with those kinds of images from pop culture.

In this case, the comments I received came from a classmate who had studied feminism as her major, not a teacher. In higher education, classmates are a very important source for further and deeper discussion about the self and the values of society. The role this student played could be considered the same as that of an art teacher when implementing critical pedagogy in a class at any level.

Albers (1999) mentions that "through students' artworks, educators are more able to identify how students see their world and how their visual constructions of meaning reveal their own beliefs about social locations such as gender, race, class, and sexual orientation" (p.6). Like the previous example of my own life, most of the students' problems would be based on their experiences in society, whether they recognize it or not. Art teachers with critical pedagogy could encourage the students to express their feelings or problems through their art works and help them read the hidden hegemony in their works and question whether or not the same hegemony absorbed by each student. The students would be encouraged to do this even though it would be not always a pleasant experience. I believe that even without the exact use of political or social art works, and with the help of a teacher with critical pedagogy, the process will be carried successfully through to the reflection stage so that students can see the problems expressed in their creation.

To apply problem-posing education, as Freire stated, means to name, to reflect critically and to act. We could also apply this to art making. Depending on a person's point of view, the steps of critical pedagogy could be differently applied. Someone could consider the process of naming, reflecting critically and acting to identify a social problem and then make an artwork about it. However, I think the process should involve self-examination that would bring about a change of one's belief system and behaviors. The naming process means to perceive the situation that has been existing and that could be problematic. Reflecting critically means to know more about the problematic situation objectively. Acting is more focused on self-examination that leads to change one's mind and behaviors.

The following is an example of how I would envision the process of naming, reflecting critically, and acting in an art lesson.

TO NAME: An art teacher could question students directly asking, for example, "What is the most serious problem in this society?" or "what makes our lives in society better?" These questions lead students to consider the problems that are related to society. The perception of these problems will be the subject of each student's art making. The students can share their own thoughts about social problems as well as create a visual presentation for the situation. The form the visual presentation will take could be very liberal. It could be documentary type pictures or collage works. A camera or a video

camera would be a useful tool for naming the problems. Artist's art works or visual images in pop culture are also a good source for the perception of problems.

TO REFLECT CRITICALLY: Depending on the students' answers, students could work on this step in several groups. Working as groups has advantages of hearing various opinions in a short time period. This second art making process needs the students' philosophical considerations of the social phenomenon and, if it is necessary, scientific, historical, or social research of the area. This research could provoke deep consideration of the problem. Collaborative artwork would be possible.

TO ACT: In the same context (society's value system) that they have been working on, the students will be encouraged to make a third artwork by self-examination. This is a shift from a macroscopic point of view to a microscopic point of view. This is the place of relearning and unlearning. For example, if someone pointed out the problem of dishonest politicians, he or she could examine the cases of their own dishonesty. For example, why do students cheat? Is this proof of the existence of society's hegemony within the students? Whether they recognize the connection or not, their behavior is affected by the truth that a high score means more power. As a result, the students who cheat on their exam have an unfair advantage over the students who do not cheat. With an extended consideration for the social problem, they

will have a chance to think about how their everyday lives are affected by the values of society, and to express in their own artwork their solution which involve the change of their thoughts and behaviors.

Through these processes of creation, knowledge could be easily transformed into important values in students' thoughts and lives. I believe art education is a very powerful tool for doing critical pedagogy. This art education lesson is intended to help each student name the hegemony in society and reflect critically with research, as well as to act through the creation of artworks with the process of self-examination. As a whole, art making will help the students develop a self-initiated critical process of naming, critically reflecting, and acting for change of oneself and society, outside of art classroom.

THE EXAMPLE OF MY ART MAKING

I believe my experience in art making will give an idea for an art education lesson plan in relation to critical pedagogy. Here, I will write about the process of my photography works by using the visual images from children's TV programs, which reflect the values of society in children's culture. This art making process follows the method of the previous art lesson using the process of critical pedagogy: naming, reflecting critically, and acting to overcoming the problems of society. This specific process which deals with images of violence and sexual behavior would be more appropriate for adults

who are parents or who are working in the area of mass media or education. It could also be used for students in high school or post-secondary education.

To Name: Children Today

In this stage of my art making, I wanted to give the sense of how closely related TV is to children's environment and the effect it could have on children. I took pictures of children intensely watching TV as well as them posing with the TV to show that it is a part of the close and familiar environment. I had read about how a child's attention span is very short, less than 15 minutes. However, when I saw my niece, nephew and other children watching TV, I was surprised by their serious faces being immersed in what they were watching. Their attention span was not short at all. From the time the TV programs started until they finished, the children did not move from in front of the TV set; they even wanted to watch more. I tried to take pictures of children from various races so that I could better represent Canada's ethnic diversity. I asked them to watch whatever they wanted to (in one case the child was playing a video game). Not surprisingly, TV was always the center of their home.

What made me start thinking about the children's culture? Ashton-Warner's book, *Teacher* (1986) taught me that concern for student's real lives and the needs that arise from them should be the starting point for an educator. Through her experience teaching Maori children in New Zealand, Ashton-Warner learned that traditional British methods of teaching were not effective

as they did not relate to the lives of Maori children in relevant ways. I agreed with her and as an educator, I continually considered what today's urban children were most interested in and what was most relevant to them.

This is consistent with the commonly repeated statistic which shows the close relationship between TV and children:

"1) number of minutes per week that the average child watches television:

1,680

2) percentage of children ages 6-17 who have TV's in their bedroom: 50

3) hours per year the average American youth spends in school: 900 hours

4) hours per year the average American youth watches television: 1500 hours"

(On line: http://action.enviroweb.org/system/media/tv_facts.html)

According to Schneider (1987), the situation has not changed much since 1987 when a survey suggested that by the time a child graduates from high school, he or she will have spent more time in front of the television set (17,000 hours) than in a formal classroom (11,000 hours)(p. 4). I have taught elementary school children in Sunday school since I came to Montreal four years ago. The children I teach usually talk about the shows or movies they watch and who their favorite pop-stars are. They enjoy using the Internet and playing video games. Today the use of Internet may account for the decrease in time spent watching TV. Therefore I concluded that the multimedia such as TV, movies, videos, video games and the Internet have a profound impact on

an urban child's everyday life.

Brown (1993) suggests two models of how the media affects an audience's attitudes and values. Firstly, Brown describes the social learning model by Bandura. The social learning model is derived from a classic learning theory and posits that humans learn by watching others and that they will engage in behaviors they see rewarded. Secondly, Brown explains cultivation analysis, as formulated by Gerbner and his colleagues, which predicts that people who view television more frequently than others are more likely to adopt the worldview offered by television (p.20-21). No matter which model is applied, the indisputable truth is that TV provides role models for children. Because, as the above statistics indicate, children spend more time watching TV than communicating with their parents or studying in school.

In terms of critical pedagogy, the process of my art making and research let me to *name* TV as a "dominant" force for children. Children are mesmerized by TV and receive insidious messages from TV. It has more power, and children have less. Children socialized by TV have become *silenced* by TV. TV has the *voice*.

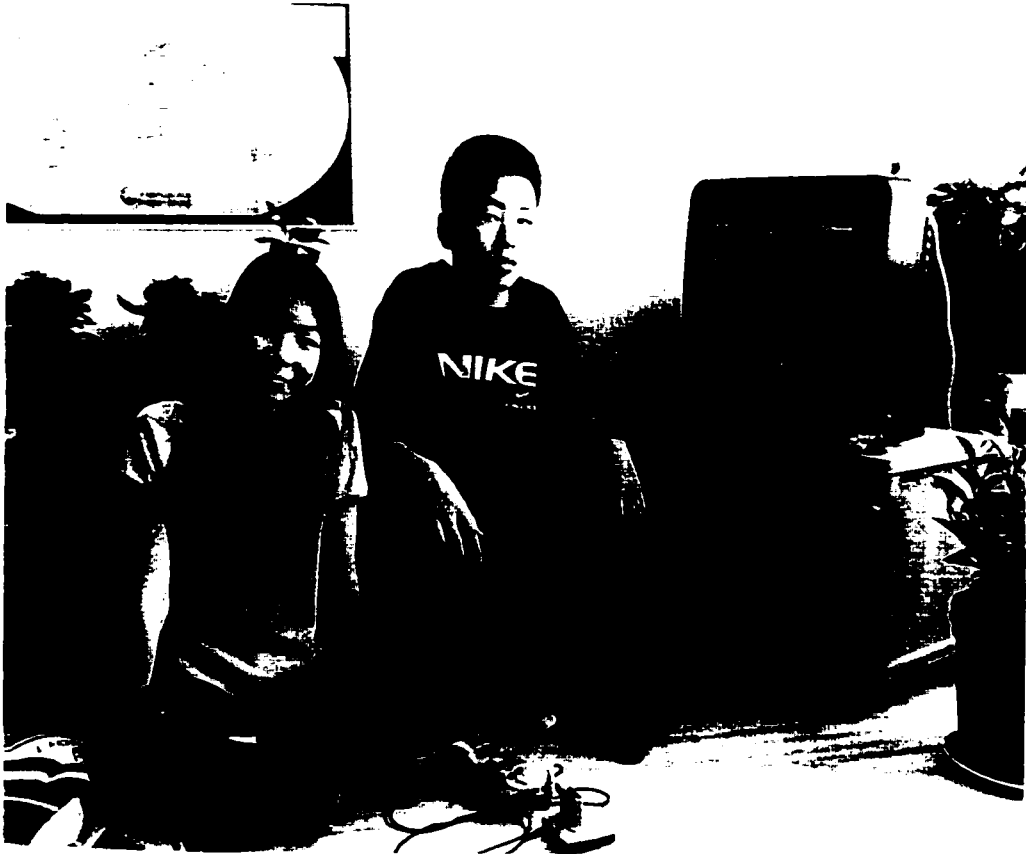


Figure 2. Photograph of two children with TV: Work 1 (18 x 22.5 cm) in naming process

On March 3rd, I visited the home of a 12-year-old girl and a 14-year-old boy. When I arrived, the 14-year-old boy was playing a Pokemon video game. Soon, his sister joined the game. I did not want to interrupt them, so I took pictures of them playing the video game, not watching TV (Figure 2).



Figure 3. Photograph of a boy and his mother with TV: Work 2 (18 x 22.5 cm) in naming process

On March 9th, I took pictures of a 5-year-old boy. When I went to his home, he was watching a Japanese animation video, 'Doraimon'. His grandmother had videotaped some episodes of this TV program and sent it to him from Japan. I knew the video tape because whenever I visit his mom, who is my friend, he is usually watching that videotape. Despite the fact that he has seen this program repeatedly, he was annoyed by the fact that I was taking pictures of him and interfering with his watching the program. His mother helped me to take pictures of him by holding him, but he just continued watching the videotape (Figure 3).

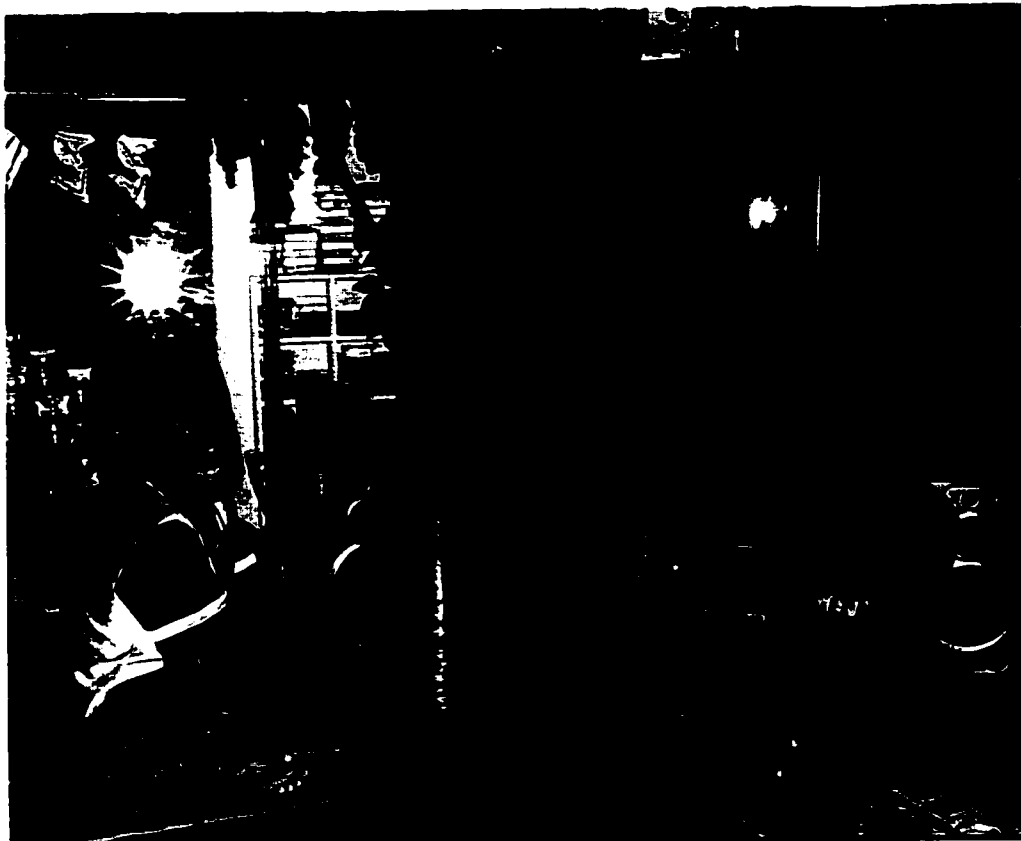


Figure 4. Photograph of two children with TV: Work 3 (18 x 22.5 cm) in naming process

On March 22nd, I took pictures of a 6-year-old boy and a 4-year-old girl. When I visited their home, they were watching a YTV program, 'Pokemon'. While I was taking their pictures, the program changed to 'Digimon'. This particular home was quite dark so I had to use a flash. It is reflected in the picture (Figure 4).



Figure 5. Photograph of two children with TV: Work 4 (18 x 22.5 cm) in naming process

On April 6th I visited a 13-year-old girl and an 11-year-old girl's home. It was snowing the day I visited their home, so it was pretty dark. I had difficulty measuring the correct exposure, because I used a borrowed camera with a broken measure system to take the pictures instead of using my own camera (Figure 5).

To Reflect Critically: YTV programming

I *name* that TV has *voice*, however, what are the words? I monitored YTV, the children's channel in Canada, since it best represents children's TV culture. I chose to view YTV because even though YTV is a cable channel, it is commonly watched by children. According to the *Montreal Gazette* (Makay, 2000, February 13), more Canadian children watch YTV than any other channel; an estimated 2.1 million children between the ages of 2 and 11 tune in for at least 15 minutes a week.

Children's TV programs are not the only source of mass media for children. Children are exposed to massive amount of messages of society through viewing other types of TV programs, movies, videos, video games and the Internet. However, I focused only on images seen on the children's TV channel since those shows are targeted specifically at children. Also, one point of consideration in looking at children's programs is that adults produce children's TV programs. It would be assumed then that whatever is being shown on these children's TV shows is seen as appropriate viewing by the adult producers.

-YTV Monitoring and Effects of TV violence on children

Firstly, I had monitored YTV between January 31 and February 9, 2000. At that time, I videotaped YTV everyday from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The reason I chose that specific time was because the elementary school students

get out of school at around 2:30 p.m. so I presumed those hours would be prime time for children to watch TV. As familiarized as I am with children's TV programs, I was shocked by what I discovered after watching YTV programs for children. I found that even the TV programs intended just for children contained a lot of negative messages including violence, stereotypical sexual images and scary, disgusting scenes. I could not help but question whether the contents of these TV programs would be okay for children.

I started to research the effects TV has on children. The concern about TV was not new. Since television became the center of our culture, the negative effects of TV have been a popular topic for research (Berkowitz, 1984: Cook, Kendzierski, & Thomas, 1983: Eron, 1982: Eron, & Huesman, 1986: Pearl, Bouthilet, & Lazar, 1982: Philips, 1983). Through searching the sources about TV's effects on children, I found identical conclusions from many researchers stating that television violence contributes to learning and imitation of aggressive attitudes and behaviors, to desensitization to (or more acceptance of) real world violence, and to fear of being victimized, leading to mistrust of others and possible purchase of weapons for protection in many viewers (Wilson et al., 1997: [On line] www.mediascope.org/pubs/icc.htm : [On line] www.Cybervillage.com/ocs/viopage.htm). These effects can be seen in both children and adults.

The following studies show that the effects on children can be much

more crucial. Huesmann and Eron (1986) suggested that aggression is learned in childhood and becomes more impenetrable to change as the child grows older. They concluded that early exposure to television violence stimulates aggression, and that early aggression is one of the factors that is related to criminal behavior later in life. Huesmann, Eron, Lefkowitz & Walder studied a group of youth over a 22- year period. This study collected data comparing the relationship between aggression and television viewing when the subjects were 8, 18 and 30 years of age. The researchers found evidence of a longitudinal effect that spanned the 22 years from age 8 to age 30. For boys, early viewing of television violence correlated with self-reported aggression at age 30 and added significantly to the prediction of serious criminal arrests accumulated by age 30. These effects occurred independently of social class, intellectual capacity and parenting variables (1984: cited in Wilson et al., 1997, p.12). Berkowitz, Parker & West also found that children who read aggressive comic books were more likely to choose words with aggressive connotations to complete sentences later presented to them by the experimenters than subjects who had read neutral comics (1973:cited in Wilson et al., 1997, p.13).

-YTV Remonitoring and The increase of Japanese animation and sexual content

Secondly, with an intention for making photography work, I randomly remonitored and videotaped children's TV programs on YTV between the

hours of 4:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. from the dates of January 17 to January 31, 2001. This time, I extended the time to 11:00 p.m. because YTV presents the same programs at different times during the week, meaning that what I record late at night may have been shown earlier in the day.

Comparing the research of the years 2000 and 2001, distinguishable changes seen in YTV are the increase of Japanese cartoons such as Digimon, Gundam Wing, Sailor Moon, and Monster Rancher and of programs aimed at youth such as Crush and Live Through This. This is not a simple movement for children. The inclusion of Japanese animation that are based on fighting means that children can see more violent content. The increase of youth programs focused on relationships between heterosexual individuals means that children can see more sexual content.

With this awareness of the increase of violence and sexual images, I wanted to reflect on this situation using my photography works. Since violent and sexual images are the subject of my artwork, I needed to determine what would be considered violent and sexual behavior. A clear definition of these is important.

In relation to TV violence, there are many different ways in which researchers have defined violence. Gerbner (1980:cited in Wilson et al., 1997, p.37) suggested that it is the overt expression of physical force against self or others; a compelling action against one's will on pain of being hurt or killed; or

actually hurting or killing someone. Greenberg and his colleagues (1980: cited in Wilson et al., 1997, p.38) used a broader definition including verbal expression as well as physical violence. Clark & Blankenburg (1982: cited in Bouthilet, Lazar & Pearl) defined violence as physical acts or the threat of physical acts by humans designed to inflict injury on people or damage to property. Summarizing these definitions, I have come up with three categories of equal importance when examining TV violence: physical harm to a person, violent verbal expression, and damage of property. I have chosen to apply Clark and Blankenburg's definition to analyze the TV violence here because my thesis using photography works is focused on visual violence not verbal violence.

Turning our attention to sexual images in media, Greenberg and his colleagues (1993) used the following, which is quoted verbatim, to classify sexual content in media (p.313-315).

Classifications	Example
1. Prostitution = Any portrayal of pimps, solicitation, and the selling and, buying of sex.	1) A women prostitute approaches a car to offer her sexual services to a man in it. 2) A statement such as "she used to do business down there" regarding a former prostitute. 3) A man receives money for sexual services given to a woman.
2. Rape = A forced act of intercourse. It is usually accompanied by assault or threat. Can also include attempted rape.	1) A husband forces himself on his wife. 2) A man forces another man to have intercourse. 3) An implied act of intercourse which involves violent behavior that is not accepted by both partners. 4) Any reference made to past or future rapes.
3. Homosexuality = Any	1) A woman kisses another woman on the mouth.

expression of sexual behavior or intimate relationship between two people of the same sex, other than rape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Two men caress each other. 3) Reference such as "He knows I'm gay." 4) There is an insinuation that two men are having a sexual relationship with each other.
4 & 5. Intercourse married and unmarried = any instance of implied or explicit intercourse between heterosexuals, with the exception of rape. Married and Unmarried refer to the couple involved in the sexual act and their relationship with each other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Reference such as "we went bed together," "they had an affair," "they were lovers," "I slept with her" [...] 2) Any references to past affairs, including any reference to illegitimate children [...] 3) Any reference to getting pregnant such as "it's his campaign to get me pregnant." 4) A portrayal of a couple getting into or out of bed that includes intimacy or reference to sexual behavior. 5) Reference to rejecting sexual intercourse [...]. 6) "Messing around with" is generally not enough by itself.
6. Petting = Sexually stimulating behavior – more intense than kissing, touching and simple hugging, but not including sexual relations that are codable under other act categories.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A man is surrounded by several women who are pawing at his body. 2) A young boy and girl are lying on a couch in a passionate embrace. 3) A wife gives her husband a chest massage while kissing him.
7. Long kiss = Passionate kiss that does not involve other petting behavior.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Long "French" kiss. 2) Only include[s] kisses that are long and have sexual quality to them....
8. Other = Any other sexual behavior or reference that may be considered illegal or intimate sex that does not fit into the above categories.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Any mention of contraception. 2) Any mention or portrayal of group sex. 3) Any mention or portrayal of oral sex. 4) Any mention of virginity if not classifiable under acts of sexual intercourse. 5) Any mention or portrayal of masturbation.

Table 1. The classifications of sexual images in media by Greenberg and his colleagues

All of these examples are considered sexual content. With the exception of prolonged kissing, most of these examples are not frequently used in today's children's TV programs. However, there is a definite increase in sexual content as shown by the difference between my first research on children's TV

in 2000 and my second research in 2001. For example, in 2000, *Student Bodies* commonly showed long kisses between high school students. In 2001, in addition to *Student Bodies*, the show *Live Through This* shows intercourse in a bed or a car and the show *Crush* makes the viewer imagine sexual acts by the guests' conversations. This is only an example that a year difference brought. If we consider the difference between previous younger generations and today's younger generation, we could find a definite increase of change not only the frequency of sexual behavior but also the degree of it. In previous younger generation, intercourse before marriage was not acceptable and if this happened, it was considered a shameful thing. However, in younger generation of today, intercourse between two unmarried people seems generally to be accepted. Then, in the next younger generation, couldn't intercourse between secondary students be generally acceptable throughout society? These thoughts remind me of the desensitization as one of representative negative effects from television and the cultivation analysis which predicts that people who view television more frequently than others are more likely to adopt the worldview offered by television by Gerbner and his colleagues. We can hardly say that the continuous increase of sexual content on TV is not connected to the increase of sexual acts in real lives.

Furthermore, the stereotypical images of women in children's programs should be considered in relation to pornographic images of women depicted as an object not a respected human being. Check (1989: cited in Dyson, 2000,

p.59-60) contended that both sexually violent pornography and degrading, dehumanizing pornography convey the message that women enjoy abusive and antisocial behavior. This leads to increased callousness towards women on a personal level and less receptiveness to their legitimate claims for equality and respect. In children's programs, women are often portrayed with exaggerated breasts and buttocks, wearing very short skirts and trying to seduce men. These sexual images of women are not the same as those of the pornography from Check's study, however, these images are objectifying of women. Is this acceptable? Novak (1975), stating TV as a molder of the soul's geography, remarks "television might tutor the unformed mind and teach it 'how to think'" (p.10). These stereotypical images of women in the children's programs could cause the children's misleading preconceptions of women.

After finding the negative effects of TV on children and the definitions of violence and sexual content, I made an the artwork made up of all the violent and sexual scenes from one day of children's prime time TV, February 16th, Friday, (5:00pm – 9:00pm). The following chart lists the programs of that day.

TITLE	TIME(pm)	GENRE
Pokemon	5:00-5:30	Japanese adventure animation
Digimon	5:30-6:00	Japanese adventure animation
Dragon Ball Z	6:00-6:30	Japanese adventure animation
Monster Rancher	6:30-7:00	Japanese adventure animation
Sailor Moon	7:00-7:30	Japanese adventure animation
Hit List	7:30-9:00	Video countdown show

Table 2. YTV programs on February 16th, 2001

I randomly chose the day; it was Friday. On that day, YTV showed 5 Japanese animations and 1 pop song chart show from 5:00pm to 9:00pm. I only took violent and sexual images from the Japanese cartoons. 'Hit list' basically showed music videos of popular songs. In the music videos, there was some sexual description such as O-town's "Liquid dreams", however, I wanted to focus on Japanese cartoon images.

Japanese animation has a typical story line. The story often includes an adventure of someone looking for something important such as seven Dragon Balls, the rainbow crystals, the phoenix and pokemons, as well as battles with an enemy who also wants to have the important thing or who wants to destroy the earth. The appearance of monsters can be traced to Japan's religious faith which promotes the existence of spirits in all things. These cartoon stories are made by the latent approval of the power dichotomy between a dominant group which always wins and a dominated group which is always defeated. Children could think that power is decided by winning or losing a fight; they could learn to have no mercy for the weak. They could learn competition rather than harmony and concern for each other. Also in terms of sexual images, the scenes focused on the images of women's bodies from various camera angles. This made me question the producers' intention. The following chart indicates the violence and sexual content in the Japanese animations on Friday, February 16th 2001.

TITLE	VIOLENCE	SEXUAL IMAGE
Pokemon (last 15 minutes)	Battle between pocket monsters Explosions Evil side trying to steal	Framing the lower half of bodies (a short skirt)
Digimon	Battle between digital monsters Battle including children and digimons Destroying things	
Dragon Ball Z	Battle between people Stealing a car Destroying cars	
Monster Rancher	Battle between monsters Battle between evil monsters and good monsters with people	A woman warrior's clothes
Sailor Moon	An attack on a little girl by an evil monster	The exaggeration of bust, short skirts, girls' nude during their transformation

Table 3. YTV Japanese animations on February 16th, 2001

I took 259 pictures from these TV programs and used 100 8"x10" images for the work (see Figure 6). In those images from TV, the pictures of children's hypnotized faces are placed. A transparent net using the fishing line from the cartoon images describes the situation of children being caught in a net of TV (see Figure 7). Through making this piece of photography work, I found out exactly what images TV is conveying to children. Those images of fights such as hitting, punching, kicking, throwing and using weapons and the stereotypical images of women's body and clothes could insidiously and unconsciously affect children's mind and lead to behavior imitation.

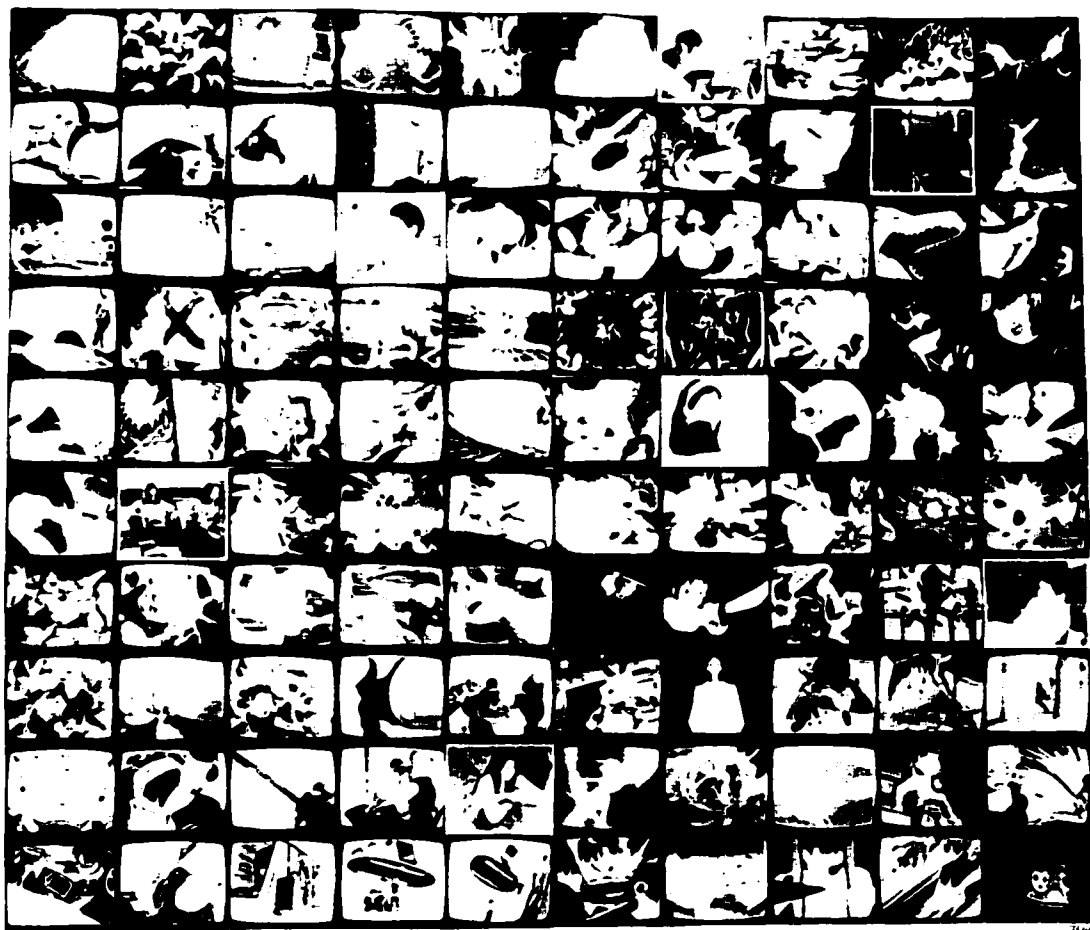


Figure 6. 100 Photographs from YTV programming on February 16th, 2001 (5:00pm – 9:00pm):

Work in critically reflecting process (180 x 225 cm)



Figure 7. A part of Figure 6

To Act: Children in Society controlled by Materialism

Passing through my previous research and art making, I established that TV has a dominant voice over children and I reflected critically that this voice consists of violent and sexual words. Immediately, one question comes to my mind. It is very obvious that children are effected by TV programs and according to majority of researchers, it could be harmful for them; then, what has been the action to solve this problem?

The guidance of parents, media education in schools and leaving children alone with an optimistic view that TV makes children prepared for the “real world” are the three main responses to the negative effects of TV on children. The most repeated solution is the aid from parents. Ledingham (On-line:www.media-awareness.ca/eng/med/home/resource/famvinc.htm) advises parents to: 1) monitor what their children are watching 2) establish rules for watching TV 3) provide a list of acceptable programs and 4) purchase an electronic TV control device. However, it is common that most parents with children over the age of 13 do not interfere with what they watch. According to the report from BJK&E Media Group of Manhattan (1997, On-line: http://gabrielmedia.org/news/3p_kidstv.html), more than 40 percent of children in the United States ages 6-11 have TV sets in their bed rooms. In this situation, the parents’ attempt to monitor TV programs their children watch is not likely to be effective.

Media education is another solution for the negative effects TV has on children. Buckingham (1993) introduced the aims of media education which have often been defined in terms of developing students' critical abilities to empower themselves as well as liberate them from the ideologies which the media is assumed to impose upon them (p.142). Singer (1998) divided the general goals of media literacy into two areas:(1) understanding the technical nature of the medium and (2) understanding program content in terms of literacy devices. Developing students' critical abilities is a good start, however, the critical abilities themselves cannot set children free from the negative effects of TV.

According to Buckingham, "children are already capable of displaying considerable critical sophistication in their judgement of the medium "(p.143). My previous research project also proved what Buckingham said. I did qualitative research observing the response of six children ages 9 to 14 who watched two children's TV shows which contained a considerable amount of violent images. They were able to judge what they considered to be violent, as well as whether or not the content of the TV shows was true or false. It is valuable for children to have the ability to discern what they are watching, but the underlying problem is that children would still rather watch shows containing violent and sexual content over sound, educational programs. Check (1989: cited in Dyson, 2000) found that young people ages 12 to 17 tended to be the primary consumers of pornography, and that 37 percent

expressed an interest in watching sexually violent scenes such as rape, torture, and bondage (p.86). Sometimes I went to a movie theatre with my students in church and whenever we went there, we argued about the choice of a movie. They mostly wanted to watch 13+ movies such as 'Scary Movie' and teen movies even though they are all under the age of 13. It could be compared to smoking. Even though children have the critical awareness –smoking is bad for health- they do smoke. Media education in itself cannot make children free from the negative effects of TV.

It is believed by some that exposing children to violence on TV prepares them for the “real world” which is cruel and violent. What is the “real world”? I know murder happens, but is it as common as what TV and movies are showing? I have lived 28 years, and I have never seen a severe beating or murder in person, but just one night of watching TV exposes me to several homicides. It is true that the media is a reflection of our society, but it is more like a reflection from a concave or convex mirror: severely distorted. It is dangerous for children to base their perception of themselves and society on the distorted reflection that the media offers them.

None of the above actions can stop TV's negative effects on children. Parents are definitely limited when it comes to controlling what their children watch on TV. Even though children have the ability to be critical, they are more interested in watching stimulating shows and movies which give a distorted

reflection of society. What would be a fundamental action to solve this problem? One method is for all the producers of children's TV programs to not make those kinds of programs. A second solution is for all the audiences to reject the violent and sexual programs. It sounds simple, however, these would never happen. This is not just a matter of producing violent shows and watching the shows. This is about the human being's fundamental desires and the controlling of the desires to make money, which is the strongest force in this society.

I know it is difficult to avoid the temptation of seeing these kinds of images. When I search channels with a remote control trying to decide what to watch, those types of scenes definitely capture my eye. I was sensing the contradiction within myself more strongly, as my concern about the negative messages on TV was growing. I know watching these images could bring bad effects for me, but like children, I want to see them. It is an irresistible force. For me, that is the reason that those kinds of images are continuously increasing in mass media and even in children's programs. Schneider (1987), the influential buyer of children's programs in the United States, elucidates that the television business operates on three principles: to keep the audience up, the costs down, and the regulators out. He said that the industries first mission is not to inform, educate or entertain, but rather to entice viewers to watch the commercials (p.5). He confirms that making money is the purpose of the industry, and I am sure that is a reason behind showing the stimulating scenes.

A producer wants to keep the audience's attention, and using a code of violence and sex is effective. I know it is a business and that making money in and of it self is not a bad thing, but society is becoming more desensitized to those images. That behavior is being accepted as the norm. It is definitely a social problem.

In my third art making, finding the social problem caused by the values of society controlled by materialism, I make a collage using photography works which are images of children's faces and TV images (see Figure 8). The images of children and the inverted images of TV are arranged in contrast. Photocopies of money surround those images. In the center of the collage is placed a mirror, which is trapped with a net. For viewers, the mirror is a space to be a subjective being in those situations in society controlled by money. The situation is not separated from the viewer's every day life.



Figure 8. Collage combined with money, TV characters and children's images: Work in acting process (90 x 67.5 cm)

In the long run, through these art makings, I concluded that today's teachers' important role should be to encourage the students to make better choices and to empower their spontaneous will for self-control. Society is trapped in a vicious circle based on human desires. I do not believe this would suddenly stop because of our actions, but I can control my own desire for instant pleasure starting from turning off or switching the channel. Today's children live in a world of many choices such as the thousands of sites on the Internet and cable channels, and a lot of movies from video rental stores. When they have power to reflect critically on those sources, they will have more chances to make better choices. When they have power of self-control, they can act on their choices. I believe this is the process that Freire talked about in the idea of *the true word* which is made up of both reflection and action. The power of change comes only from the true word.

CONCLUSION

To close my essay, I will retell the fairy tale of 'The Emperor's New Clothes (1996),' with my own adaptation (in bold).

Once upon a time there was an emperor who was very vain. One day, the emperor decided that he would like a new suit of clothes. It so happened that in the court at that time there were two wicked men. They told the emperor that they could make him a suit that was unlike anything that had ever been made before. "It is made of a new material." said one, "so fine that it only the truly intelligent can see it." This sounded like just what the emperor was

looking for. He asked them to begin at once. And so the performance began. The two tailors were given a room in the palace in which to work and every day they asked for more money to buy the thread and cloth they needed. In fact, they did not buy anything at all, but kept the money for themselves. At last the day came for the first fitting of the suit. The two wicked men pretended to hold something up before the emperor. "Isn't it lovely?" they gushed. "We are particularly pleased with the button holes. Can you see?" the emperor hesitated. He could see nothing at all. But he did not want to appear stupid. "It is quite beyond words," he said slowly. "I can't find expressions to do it justice. I can truthfully say that I've never seen anything like it." Then the tailors pretended to try the suit on the emperor. He was wearing nothing at all! After several fittings, the suit was announced finished. The emperor was to appear that day in a Grand Parade through the city. The city streets were full as the emperor appeared. There was a small silence. No one wanted to appear stupid. Soon everyone was cheering the Emperor's costume (1996). In the crowd, little children watched the Emperor's Parade and heard what the adults were saying. They believed the king's clothes were beautiful; they thought that being naked was beautiful. After the Parade, every child wanted to be naked like the emperor. The adults in this country were worried about the naked kids, saying they were insane.

I believe that most people know the real ending of the original story: there is a child who recognizes the Emperor is naked. However, children in the real world are more like the children in the version of the story I have rewritten. From their very young age without the ability to judge, children absorb how adults think and act. when misconceptions by adults prevail in society, children live their lives following those concepts. We need to educate the children to be critical enough to see the truth, the Emperor is naked, and brave enough to say, "The Emperor did not have any clothes on." This is the reason why we

need critical pedagogy in education.

I experienced the power of critical pedagogy when I rethought my personal experience in a foreign society. With a critical mind, we can perceive our experiences and other's experience in relation to the values of society. Saying, "The Emperor did not have any clothes on" requires us to perceive the problematic situation. This perception enables us to name the problem. Through reflecting critically on the problem, we have the power to take actions towards solving the problem. With a critical eye and a caring heart, teachers can inquire about equality and justice within ourselves, our classes, our schools, the societies we live in, and the world. As a result, we need to act with courage and patience. For today's children to find their voices, the role of teachers with critical pedagogy is crucial.

Through art lessons focused on social problems, art teachers could help the students compare their own values with the values of society and to reflect critically on them. I developed a model for an art lesson applying the concepts of critical pedagogy: naming, reflecting critically, and acting.

In my own art work I went through a process of critical reflection, the same process I am proposing art teachers integrate into their teaching. In my art work, the problem that I named is that the messages on TV are not beneficial for children. I have tried to make my artwork portray the unbalanced

messages about violence and sexual relationships in YTV, a cable channel for children. Self-reflection on my TV viewing habit and the research about children's TV made me recognize the deep effects of materialism behind those stimulating images. Through these stages, I was able to move from superficial knowledge to knowledge which affects my will, and to personally reflect on the value systems in society.

Similarly, in the lesson plan I propose, the students are able to reflect their experience on the values of society through research and self-examination concerning the social problem. However, even though each student's work may not portray the social problem, the work reflects his or her own thoughts, contradictions and problems; therefore, with a teacher critical pedagogy as a guide, each student is able to see the relationship between the phenomenon and the power behind it. These are the reasons I believe using critical pedagogy in art education is essential in *finding voice*. I am convinced that lessons plan developed from this model will help the art teachers who have considered the need to empower today's children.

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