

Visual Culture and Studio Practice?

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Abstract

This paper describes a number of classroom activities informed by the emerging paradigm of visual culture in the art classroom. It demonstrates the continuing importance of studio production and, thereby, both responds to critics of the paradigm, who have claimed it downplays studio, and provides exemplars to inspire teachers to develop their own visual culture informed art programs. Studio activities spring from considerations of consumerism and, more specifically, Barbie and the reality TV show *The Osbournes*. In addition, the model of the traditional studio where single artists work alone is made problematic by virtue of so much contemporary image making, both within and beyond the professional artworld, now being the outcome of collective effort.

Visual Culture and Studio Practice?

This paper describes a number of classroom activities informed by the emerging paradigm of visual culture in the art classroom (see Duncum, 2001; 2002a, Freedman, 2003a). Among other things, the idea of visual culture is

an acknowledgment that contemporary, high tech information societies tend to picture knowledge, attitudes and beliefs. It is through such cultural sites as television, the internet and videos, as well as environments like shopping malls, fast food restaurants and theme parks, that all of us – students and teachers alike – are now acquiring many of our major reference points for living (Sturken & Cartwright, 2001). Increasingly, ours is a picture-based society. The imagery of the professional artworld – both its archive of the past and its contemporary experimentation – are important for understanding visual imagery beyond the professional artworld. Yet it is the imagery outside the professional artworld – the imagery of corporate capitalism – that has come to hugely impact not only our economy but to dominate our consciousness. The idea of visual culture is a very inclusive one, incorporating both the imagery of the professional artworld and the imagery of corporate capital. A visual culture approach to art education seeks to incorporate both kinds of imagery in order for students to better understand the kind of imagery to which they are daily exposed, which they greatly enjoy, and by means of which they are working out how to live.

Over the past few years many art educators have contributed to the emergence of this paradigm and since it breaks significantly with the past, it has its critics. One of the criticisms leveled against it is that it has little or no place for studio activities (eg., Smith, 2003, Brown, 2003, Francini, 2002). Thus one of the aims of this paper is to respond to this criticism. Despite arguing for the central role of studio in a visual culture approach to art education (Duncum, 2002b, Freedman, 2003b), and the publication of many specific examples (eg., Condon & Blandy, 2003; Stuhr & Ballangee-Morris, 2002; Tavin & Anderson, 2003), including most of the articles in the Fall 2002 special issue of *Visual Arts Research* devoted to visual culture, some critics have argued that visual culture in art education at best downplays studio activities. It will be shown in this paper that while there may yet remain work to do on developing exemplary studio activities, much good work has already been accomplished. Thus, the second aim of this paper is to contribute to the growing literature that offers teachers practical examples of a visual culture approach in the classroom.

However, I will also want to question the traditional idea of the studio as a

model for today's classroom. This is why the title of this paper includes a question mark. Does the idea of the single, independent artist working alone in his or her studio accurately represent the way many professional artists work today? It certainly does not represent the working conditions of salaried or outsourced professionals – filmmakers, graphic designers, architects and so on – employed by corporate capital. Should the traditional artist studio, then, be the model for the hands-on making aspect of a visual culture curriculum in art education? I will explore this below.

None of the activities described below are intended to be used prescriptively. To follow them slavishly would be to run counter to the spirit of visual culture in the classroom, which, being respectful of the fact that the culture is student's own, is anything if not quixotic. Often, students will know more of the details of a cultural site than their teachers, and teaching becomes an act of reciprocity between teacher and student knowledge. Specific examples of visual culture are ephemeral, and adolescent cultures are ever morphing (Karpati & Szirmai, 2003), so that both specific examples of visual culture, and the particular subcultures from which students will be coming, will change from place to place and time to time. Nevertheless, the examples given below will hopefully be found useful by teachers wondering where they might start opening up their art classes to the rich but often perplexing and ideologically suspect visual culture through which their students are living their lives.

Consumerism

Rebecca Rohloff-Plummer, a high school teacher in small town in Illinois, USA, was disturbed by the extent to which her students appeared to identify themselves as consumers. [1] She knew that shopping is now a popular leisure activity, second only to watching television (Buckingham, 2000), although from a manufacturing point-of-view she knew that the purpose of commercial television is to deliver audiences to the manufacturer's products (Jhally, 1990). Even watching a television documentary or drama is to be treated as a consumer. She was also aware of how commercial companies were encroaching on her own territory. With the Coca Cola Company promoting its products by sponsoring reading programs in schools, the province

of teachers and parents had become the purview of a soft drink manufacturer (The Coca Cola Company 2000 Annual Report, p. 14). Also, schools are increasingly welcoming commercial enterprises onto schools grounds that are beginning to influence the curriculum.

Rebecca observed that her students appeared to buy into consumerism in an unreflective way. While often expressing cynicism about how they appeared to be regarded by advertisers, her students did not seem to understand to what extent they had accepted the advertisers view of them foremost as consumers. They often seemed to identify themselves primarily in terms of what they could afford to buy and their employment of the latest fashions.

Rebecca had her students spend an entire quarter collecting artifacts from their shopping experiences; they collected receipts, tags, labels and logos. The students then arranged these items into a mixed media collage on banner paper within the traced shape of their bodies. Using the image of their own empty, outlined body as a site of need and desire, the students explored, playfully and seriously, the role that entertainment and identity has upon habits of consumption. Students were generally surprised to discover the extent to which they had intimate knowledge of numerous products, both what they thought advertisers intended to signify and the range of interpretations the students employed. They were also shocked to discover the degree to which they participated in consumer culture, an observation that confirms Grauer's (2002) when she had adolescent students photograph their bedrooms. The evidence of their own photographs confounded students who had initially denied the influence of corporate products.

Through a studio activity Rebecca's students were able to grasp the impact of consumerism upon their lives in a way that could not have been accomplished through studying the issue or discussing it. By literally seeing themselves as consumers, the students were in a good place to proceed with study, discussion, and making their own choices regarding their identity.

Barbie and Perfection

Audrey Rizio, a master's in art education student at the University of Illinois, had long been a Barbie fan when she discovered the same fascination

among students she taught. Just a child's toy when first introduced in 1959, Barbie is now a brand name for movies, songs, and numerous products, as well as an identifier of a certain kind of female stereotype (Handler, 1995). While still a relatively inexpensive child's doll, she - she is never an it - is also a high priced collector's item for adults. She plays numerous roles while simultaneously never appearing to change (though over the decades she has responded to social changes). She is both ordinary and a celebrity. She is certainly big business. With the average US girl aged between 3 and 11 owning 10 Barbies, and an estimated half million adult collectors world wide, Barbie is the world's most popular toy, generating 1.9 billion US dollars in annual sales over the past few years (Barbie.com).

As a fan herself, Audrey was aware that for many girls Barbie is a means to sort out what might be available to them in the future. While initially the roles were limited, including getting married and being a mother, future possibilities have long included numerous professional roles. This includes now Barbie as an art teacher, complete with color wheel, brushes, paints, easel and palette accessories.

Above all else, Barbie offers an ideal. As Brandt (1999) writes, "For burgeoning adolescents who could find fault with every inch of our bodies, there was something reassuring about Barbie's perfection." (p. 53).

Audrey wanted to explore the notion of perfection. What did it her adolescent students consider ideal, and how did Barbie contribute to this? She began by having her students examine Barbie's proportions and then draw them up life size. Her students discovered that if Barbie was a real person she would need to be seven feet tall with the following approximate measurements: 39-20-34. They estimated that she would weigh about 110 pounds, and given these proportions would likely have to walk on all fours. A real Barbie, they found, would be incapable of standing up, let alone walking on two feet.

Audrey then had her students examine other ideals of female perfection. They examined statues of Venus from Ancient Greece, women of the Romantic period, and other contemporary ideals such as Brittany Spears and Pamela Anderson. The juxtaposition of ancient and modern ideals caused astonishment, as did the examination of recent magazine covers where it

was found that digital manipulation seemed commonplace. They found examples of celebrities that had been given bodies that were not their own but conformed more closely to current ideals. At this point her students seemed ready to discover how easy it is to manipulate imagery themselves. Audrey introduced them to PhotoShop, including the use of the paintbrush tool, smudge tool, eraser tool and clone tool. Each student selected an image of their own choice - it was usually a celebrity - and Audrey had each of them write down their intentions regarding how they would manipulate before they began. Students were quickly attuned to how easy it is to change the appearance of someone, turning the most prosaic subject into an ideal of perfection or, alternatively - and this proved great fun - turning an ideal into something gross.

However, Audrey wanted her students to go beyond acquiring facility with a computer program; to stop there would be merely to reproduce normal, traditional studio practice with a new media where skill not thought was the focus. She wanted her students develop a critical understanding. She wanted her students to synthesize their developing ideas about Barbie, conflicted ideas about bodily perfection, and the ease with which images can be manipulated, and she wanted them to clarify and extend their understandings. The students began by visiting the official Barbie Internet site where they found numerous hyperlinks to related products and retail outlets. By searching for other Barbie sites, students found numerous fan clubs, related toys, and articles on Barbie. Following Audrey's directions, the students created a hypertext/hyperlink dialogue, that is, a record of their journeys. This, however, was only a preliminary to creating their own Microweb. Rather than simply writing down the process of navigating through information, students were now asked to download images and information to create their own site. For this purpose, Audrey introduced them to Flash (other teachers have used Storyboard). Students created their own combinations of images and texts, downloading from such diverse material as fan explanations about the attraction of Barbie, fan material from movie stars, the annual sales figures from the official Barbie site, Barbie movies and songs, and pictures of Barbie in different roles and with skin tones. This material was then hyperlinked to further information about the different roles Barbie assumed and her variety of

ethnic origins. To this material students also added their own perceptions, both written and drawn. The students worked in small groups but the groups shared ideas and sites as they were discovered. After completion, each group explored the webs that other groups had created, finding that although they had often used the same sites, quite different hyperlinks often had been established and quite different interpretations made.

Through engaging in this research-cum-studio activity, Audrey's students gained a much more deeper understanding of ideals of bodily perfection than they would have left to undertake research alone. By producing a hyperlinked website they owned the knowledge they discovered because the website allowed them the space with which to collect information, process it, edit it, and respond to it in their own way.

TV and Reality

Sherri Polaniecki, a junior high schoolteacher in Mahomet, Illinois, found that her students were fascinated by the reality TV show *The Osbournes*, which debuted on US television in March 2002. And she quickly became hooked herself. She and her students were not alone; with a viewing audience of six million people per week, the show enjoyed the highest ratings in MTV's 20-year history. Within weeks of the show first airing no less than 325 products related to the show were in development, including a calendar, bobble heads, action figures, a line of underwear, and the Osbourne vomiting bulldog. For 2002 sales were projected at 200 million dollars (Waddell, 2002).

The program shows edited, live scenes from the daily lives of the family of Ozzy Osbourne, an aging heavy metal rock star infamous for outrageous onstage performances. Sherri believed that her students enjoyed the program because of its interplay between the familiar and fantasy, between seeing celebrities living ordinary lives, though also lives that were lived consciously through the ever-constant presence of the media. She quickly saw that the program presented a slice of life that arguably presented a mirror of what families now mean, especially when considered in light of previous apple pie sit-com families like *The Brady Bunch*. By contrast, the Osbourne family are chic but blunt, where bleeping can occur every few seconds. Ozzy himself, stammering and incoherent, the legacy of decades of drug abuse, is

anything but a traditional role model. In one episode, Kelly, one of the daughters, herself a budding rock star, deflects questions about her father sacrificing animals before dinner and whether she believes in Satan. In the second series Ozzy renews his marriage vows to Sharon, his wife of 20 years, despite Ozzy's 14 trips to rehab. The family is bizarre but the program is fundamentally socially conservative. It is also a vehicle for merchandising in which, for example, Ozzy can spend 10 whole seconds pouring Diet Coke.

Sherri began her program inspired by the Osbournes doing what her students were doing in their own time, discussing the program, but with her as guide. She asked questions like: What are the themes that emerge from the show? What intentions might be inferred by the makers of the program? and how do dialogue, camera angles, and lighting work together to influence perceptions? Sherri found that many students had already formed opinions on the characters and their behavior in the show, and by calling these into question she attempted to encourage students to look beyond surface viewing. Through discussion it became apparent that students viewed the program in a variety of ways and that there was not one true reading. Students were forced to reconsider their opinions. They also became aware their peers noticed details they had overlooked and that what went into the program was very much more complex and apparently planned than they had previously thought. Sherri asked her students to make lists of why they enjoyed the program, and it came as a revelation to students that there was a very diverse range of pleasures their peers enjoyed.

One of the major themes of their discussion was the often fine line between reality and fiction, or alternatively, the carefully constructed nature of mediated reality. Since there seemed no better way to understand this concept than for the students to construct their own reality TV show, Sherri had them make their own short videos. Before they began, however, she had them look closely at a short sequence of *The Osbournes* and then short sequences of other related TV genres. They looked at typical sequences from talent competitions (*Star Search*), dating programs (*Blind Date*), practical joke programs (*Candid Camera*) and survival programs (*Fear Factor*). Students identified and made lists of the different techniques used, including the typical length of shots, camera angles, lighting, camera movements, and

the use of music and dialogue. Then, to further clarify the techniques used on *The Osbournes*, she had them watch a clip from a documentary film. In particular, the students considered how a program that was alleged to offer a slice of reality was similar to but also different to a documentary. In what ways or to what extent did *The Osbournes* conform to the genre of the documentary. Throughout, the animating question was: how real is *The Osbournes*?

Students then formed themselves into production teams. Each team consisted of two or more producers, directors, camera people, and editors. The producers developed specific criteria for the program, creating sets of guidelines for items they wanted to appear in the show, including merchandizing. They considered the length of segments and the balance between different parts of the program, especially between interviews and action sequences. The directors figured out how to structure filming based on the producer's guidelines. They scheduled the camera people for each segment and suggested techniques and specific responsibilities. For their part, the camera people were responsible for dealing with the technical aspects of getting the necessary footage and working with the video equipment. The editors, in turn, used computer-editing software - Adobe Premiere in this case - to edit the video. At various times, all the students were to perform as actors. This is because the students chose to make their own reality video of the experience of being in an art class. Time was set aside for lessons in a more traditional art curricula with a rotation of students missing normal studio time to work on their part of the video. During days that necessitated full student participation in the traditional curricula, a camera was set up on a tripod in an area of the artroom and filming took place in addition to the normal lessons. Later, when the video had been edited, discussion ensued about the process and what they had learned about the breakdown of responsibilities and the decision making process involved in a collaborative image-making enterprise.

Students worked collectively. They keep process journals in which they recorded their concerns about teamwork and joint decision-making. American students are used to working independently, so that the experience of working in a team proved to be a challenge for some students. However,

the collective effort by which the video was created actually mirrored professional practice in most image making contexts. Those who produce the imagery of corporate capitalism are typically highly specialized and work in teams. Even much of the art of the professional artworld, involving as it does, complex technical processes, involves collaboration with technical specialists. Sherri's classroom reality TV show, then, is actually closer to the kind of practical artmaking than typically takes place in artrooms today where students work independently on their own projects. Far from downgrading the value of practical, hands-on image making, Sherri's classroom is more up to date than what usually happens in the art classroom.

Conclusion

Studio practice remains central to a visual culture approach to art curriculum, but it may not always involve the same kind of studio activities that we are used to. It is bound to involve new media, in preference to pre-industrial revolution media such as clay and painting. The studio is also bound to involve a more contemporary understanding of studio than the lone artist working in their garret; rather, it is likely often to involve collaborative team effort where students adopt specialized roles and learn from each other. And as each of the examples above illustrate, studio is unlikely to be pursued purely for the sake of acquiring skills and technique or for expressing individual perceptions. In a visual culture approach to art curriculum studio becomes an exploration of ideas and a form of social critique much in the way that a great deal of contemporary practice within the professional artworld has become. A visual culture approach to art curricula does not downplay studio practice; it adopts a contemporary model of studio practice.

Notes

1. The three teachers mentioned in this paper were graduate students in the art education program at the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign during the Spring of 2003.

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視覺文化與創作實務？

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摘要

本文介紹藝術教室中，根據新興的視覺文化範式所設計的課堂活動。文中說明畫室創作仍然重要，一方面回應論者對這個範式輕忽創作的批評，另一方面也提供具體的例子，以啟發教師自行設計視覺文化的藝術課程。文中介紹的創作活動，源於對消費者文化的考量，尤其是芭比娃娃及紀實電視節目 *Osbournes*。此外，藝術家獨自創作的傳統畫室模型，如今已出現困難，因為當代影像創作實在太多，包括藝術專業領域及非專業領域，都已經成為集體合作的成果。

視覺文化與創作實務？

本文介紹藝術教室中，根據新興的視覺文化範式所設計的課堂活動（參見 Duncum, 2001; 2002a, Freedman, 2003a）。視覺文化的觀念有許多意涵，其中之一是當代高科技的資訊社會對於知識、態度、信念普遍抱持的認可。我們所有的人（包括學生和教師），現在都是透過電視、網路、影帶等等文化場域，以及購物中心、速食餐廳、主題樂園等等環境，建立生活中許多重要

的「參照點」(Sturken & Cartright, 2001)。我們的社會愈來愈依賴圖像，藝術專業領域的意象（包括過去的傳統及當代的試驗），對於瞭解藝術專業領域以外的視覺意象極其重要。然而，對我們的經濟影響最大、甚至主宰人的意識的，卻是藝術專業領域以外的意象，也就是企業資本主義的意象。視覺文化的概念，是全面的概念，結合了藝術專業領域的意象，以及企業資本主義的意象。視覺文化的藝術教育，強調將這兩種意象結合，期使學生更瞭解日常生活中所接觸的意象，這些意象既受學生歡迎，也對他們的生活產生重大的影響。

過去幾年來，許多藝術教育人士致力提倡這個範式，而由於新的範式突破了傳統，所以也招致批評，其中包括在視覺文化的藝術教育中，創作活動幾乎毫無地位（例如 Smith, 2003, Brown, 2003, Francini, 2002）。因此，本文目的之一就在於回應這個批評。儘管有學者倡議在視覺文化的藝術教育中，創作具有關鍵的角色 (Duncum, 2002b, Freedman, 2003b)，也有許多著作提出具體的實例（如 Condon & Blandy, 2003; Stuhr & Ballangee-Morris, 2002; Tavin & Anderson, 2003），包括《視覺藝術研究》2002年秋季號視覺文化特刊的多數論文，但仍有部分人士批評藝術教育中的視覺文化大幅減低了創作活動。本文說明在設計創作活動範例方面，雖然還有待加強，但目前也已經有不少的成果。因此，本文第二個目的就在於為相關文獻再添一些視覺文化教學法的實用範例，供藝術教師參考。

然而，對於以傳統創作做為今日課堂活動模式的說法，我也要提出質疑，因此我在論文標題中加上了問號。過去藝術家在畫室裡獨自創作的方式，是否真能反映今日許多專業創作者的工作模式？至少受雇於企業、領薪水或承接外包工作的專業人士，工作條件並非如此，諸如製片、平面設計師、建築師等等。所以，是否應以傳統畫室做為藝術教育中視覺文化課程的實作模式？下文就此提出探討。

以下描述的活動，絕不是要做為標準公式；如果照單全收，反而違背了課堂中視覺文化的精神，也就是文化是屬於學生自己的，教師必須尊重。對於一個文化場域，學生往往比老師更瞭解細節，因此教學就成了師生「教、學相長」的互惠活動。視覺文化的具體例子稍縱即逝，青少年的文化瞬息萬變 (Karpati & Szirmai, 2003)，所以視覺文化的實例及學生所屬的次文化，也會因時、因地而改變。然而，希望下面所舉的例子對於教師仍有幫助，做為

踏出第一步的參考，更容易進入這個豐富但備受爭議的視覺文化，因為視覺文化與學生的生活已密不可分。

消費主義

美國伊利諾州一個小城市的高中教師Rebecca Rohloff-Plummer，對於學生普遍都能接受「消費者」的角色，感到很憂心。^[1]她知道購物消費是很普遍的休閒活動，僅次於看電視 (Buckingham, 2000)，只是從生產製造的觀點來說，她也知道商業電視的目的，就在於吸引觀眾購買產品 (Jhally, 1990)。即使電視紀錄片或戲劇節目，仍然把觀眾當做消費者。她也很清楚自己的專業領域同樣被廣告公司一點一滴侵入了，可口可樂公司贊助學校的閱讀計畫，做為促銷產品的手段，於是教師、家長的領域就成了飲料製造商的影響範圍 (《可口可樂公司2000年報》第14頁)。此外，學校也愈來愈歡迎企業進入校園，課程因此逐漸受到企業影響。

Rebecca 發現學生似乎全然接受消費主義而沒有任何反省，一方面對於廣告商的手法、態度多所不滿，另一方面卻接受了廣告中對消費者的觀點而不自覺。學生的自我定位，往往取決於自己買得起什麼商品、是否跟得上最新的時尚潮流。

Rebecca 與學生以半學期的時間，從購物經驗中收集各類物品，包括收據、標價牌子、品牌商標、識別標誌等等。然後學生利用這些物品，將海報紙剪成人體的形狀，在紙上創作混合媒材拼貼。學生以身體輪廓的意象做為需求與欲望的場域，探討娛樂與認同對於消費習慣有何影響。這樣的探討既好玩也嚴肅，學生一般都沒想到，自己對於無數的產品竟然如此熟悉，包括廣告所要傳達的訊息，以及學生所能想到的詮釋兩方面。學生也很意外自己參與消費文化竟如此之深，證實Grauer (2002) 要學生將自己的臥室拍照，所得的觀察確實不假。學生面對自己的照片，都覺得難以相信企業商品竟如此深入他們的生活。

透過創作活動，Rebecca 的學生得以瞭解消費主義對其生活有多大的影響，這樣的領悟，只靠研究或討論這個議題是無法達到的。學生真正將自己「視為」消費者，才確實開始研究、討論他們的角色定位，進而做自己的抉擇。

芭比與完美

伊利諾大學藝術教育碩士生Audrey Rizio從小就喜歡芭比娃娃，後來發現她的學生對芭比一樣著迷。1959年芭比問世之初，只是個小孩子的玩具，如今已成了知名的品牌，出現在電影、歌曲和無數的商品中，也是特定女性形象的指標 (Handler, 1995)。賣給小朋友的芭比娃娃雖然售價仍然不算太貴，但她（是「她」絕不是「它」）同時也是成年人的收藏珍品，身價不凡。芭比扮演著無數的角色，但同時又似乎永遠不變（雖說幾十年來她也隨著社會潮流而改變了形象）；既是普通人，也是名流，更是龐大的市場。美國三歲到十一歲的女童，每人平均擁有十個芭比娃娃，全球估計還有五十萬成人收藏家，所以芭比是全世界最受歡迎的玩具，過去幾年中年銷售額達19億美元 (Barbie.com)。

Audrey自己也是芭比迷，所以她很清楚對於許多女孩子來說，芭比是探索自己未來可能成為什麼角色的一種途徑。一開始的角色比較有限，包括結婚、做母親，但現在早已經涵蓋無數的專業角色，其中也包括美術教師的芭比，有全套的色輪、畫筆、顏料、畫架、調色盤等等，一應俱全。

芭比最重要的就是給孩子一個理想，正如Brandt (1999) 寫道：「對於成長中的青少年，身上每一寸地方大概都可以挑剔，而芭比的完美讓他們得以維持夢想。」(53頁)

Audrey想要探討「完美」的概念，在那些青春期的學生心目中，「理想」是什麼，芭比對於這個理想又有什麼影響？一開始她讓學生檢視芭比的身材比例，然後畫成真人大小。結果學生發現，芭比如果是真正的人，身高必須要210公分，三圍 39-20-34，體重大約50公斤，而以這種體型，大概得手腳並用在地上爬著走。所以結論是，一個真正的芭比根本站不起來，更別說用雙腳走路了。

接下來Audrey讓學生檢討其他有關完美女性的理想，從古希臘的維納斯、浪漫時期的女性，到當代的美女人物如Brittany Spears、Pamela Anderson等人。比較古今的理想之後，有些觀念令學生意外，他們本來也沒有注意到最近的雜誌封面中，將影像做數位處理竟然如此普遍。學生發現有些名人的影像經過「移花接木」，換成了更符合當代理想的身體。到這個時候，學生已經察覺到，他們自己也可以輕易操縱影像。於是老師開始介紹影

像編輯軟體 PhotoShop，瞭解「畫筆」、「塗抹」、「擦拭」等各項工具如何使用。每位學生自己選擇一個影像（通常是名人），並寫下他們打算如何加工處理，然後再動手操作。學生很快就瞭解，要改變一個人的外表多麼容易，最平凡的人可以變成完美的典範，或是反過來，最完美的形像也可以變成醜八怪。

然而，Audrey 不希望學生僅止於熟悉一套電腦軟體：如果只是到此為止，就僅僅是重複正常、傳統的創作活動，只不過用了新的媒體，重技巧而不重思想。老師要學生培養的是批判的深度思考，她讓學生整合對芭比的認識、互相衝突的「美人」標準，以及操縱影像何其容易；她要學生釐清、延伸自己的理解。學生第一步是瀏覽芭比的官方網站，網站上有無數的超連結，可以連結到相關產品與零售據點。學生搜尋其他芭比網站後，發現了無數的芭比迷團體、相關玩具，以及有關芭比的文章。在老師的指導下，學生建立了一個超文本／超連結的對話，也就是他們的日誌記錄，但這只是建立學生迷你網站的第一步。老師不只要學生寫下他們搜尋資料的過程，更要他們下載圖片及資料，建立自己的網站。因此老師還教他們 Flash 軟體（其他老師也用過 Storyboard）。學生自己結合圖片與文字，從網路下載各種不同的資料，例如芭比迷說明為什麼喜歡芭比、相關的電影明星資料、芭比官方網站的年度銷售數據、芭比電影與歌曲、不同角色與膚色的芭比圖片等等。這些資料又連結到其他資料，例如芭比出現過的各種角色、代表的不同族群；最後再加上學生自己的看法，包括文字及圖畫。學生是分組作業，但各組之間也彼此交換意見及查到的網站。完成後，各組互相瀏覽別組設計的網站，發現雖然有些資料是相同的，但進一步的超連結與個人心得卻非常不同。

透過這樣的研究加創作，學生對於完美身材的觀念有了深入的瞭解，遠超過只做研究的收穫。而建立超連結的網站，也讓學生保有他們所發掘的知識，因為網頁空間讓他們得以用自己的方式收集資料，再加以處理、編輯、回應。

電視與現實

伊利諾州馬荷梅特市的初中教師 Sherri Polaniecki，發現她的學生對紀實電視節目 The Osbournes 非常著迷。這個節目是 2002 年 3 月在美國首播，Sherri 自

己也很快就迷上了。不只是她和學生，這個節目每星期有600萬人收看，創下MTV節目20年來最高的收視率。節目播出後不久，就開發出325項相關商品，包括月曆、點頭娃娃、動作玩偶、各式內衣，以及Osbourne嘔吐牛頭犬。2002年的銷售額估計為2億美元 (Waddell, 2002)。

這個節目是記錄已過氣的重金屬明星Osbourne一家四口的日常生活。Ozzy Osbourne在舞台上常有驚人的演出而備受爭議，Sheri認為學生喜歡這個節目，是因為內容兼具紀實與幻想，看到明星日常的一面，雖然片中人物也很清楚自己隨時都在攝影鏡頭下。她很快就瞭解到，這個節目多少反映了現代的「家庭」型態，尤其是相較於過去典型情境喜劇式的家庭，例如The Brady Bunch。相較之下，Osbourne一家卻時髦而不假修飾，每隔幾秒鐘就有人高聲尖叫；Ozzy本人口齒不清、語無倫次，他是數十年來藥物濫用的代表人物，完全不是傳統的模範。在一集節目中，Ozzy的女兒Kelly（她自己也是搖滾新秀）對於她父親用餐前是否貢上牲禮的問題避而不答。在第二季節目中，進出勒戒中心14次的Ozzy，向結縭20年的妻子Sharon再次表明感情。他們一家人都異於尋常，但節目中的社會觀基本上是保守的。這個節目也是廣告的工具，例如Ozzy用了整整10秒鐘倒健怡可樂。

於是Sheri受這個節目啓發，決定讓學生做平常已經在做的事情，也就是討論節目內容，但是現在加上了老師的引導。她提出許多問題，例如：節目中浮現哪些主題？製作人可能的目的在哪裡？對話、鏡頭角度、燈光等效果，對於觀眾的感受又有何影響？Sheri發現很多學生對於節目中的人物及其言行，已經有自己的看法，她提出這些問題，是希望學生能超越表面，更深入思考。透過討論，大家發現每個人對這個節目的態度各不相同，也沒有「標準」答案。學生被迫重新思考自己的觀點，也意識到有些同學看到一些細節，自己卻沒注意，而節目幕後其實有許多複雜的規劃，並不是他們原先所想的那麼簡單。Sheri要學生列出喜歡這個節目的理由，結果也發現每個人喜歡的地方相當不同。

他們討論的一大主題是真實與虛構之間，或是人爲操縱的真實，往往難以分辨。而要瞭解這個概念，最好的方式似乎莫過於讓學生自己拍攝紀實的電視節目，因此老師決定讓學生自己拍短片。但是在開始以前，她先讓學生仔細分析Osbourne節目中的一小段情節，以及其他相關電視類別的畫面。

他們看了典型的才藝比賽 (Star Search)、約會節目 (Blind Date)、整人遊戲 (Candid Camera)，以及劫後餘生的節目 (Fear Factor)。學生從中找出不同的技巧，包括各景的長度、鏡頭角度、燈光、鏡頭如何移動、音樂及對白等等。然後，為進一步比較The Osbournes所用的技巧，老師還讓學生看了一段紀錄片：尤其是比較所謂的「紀實」節目與紀錄片有何異同。The Osbournes與紀錄片類的節目，有多少相同之處？中心的問題就是，The Osbournes究竟有多真實？

接下來學生分成數個製作小組，各組包括製作人、導播、攝影師、剪輯各兩名以上。製作人決定節目的要求及所要涵蓋的內容，包括商品廣告，也要考量各段落的長度與平衡，尤其是訪問與動作的段落。導播則根據製作人的原則，決定如何進行拍攝工作，包括排定各段落的攝影師、要採用的拍攝技巧、各人的責任等。攝影師要負責拍攝的技術面，拍下足夠的畫面，解決器材方面的問題。最後剪輯人員要利用電腦剪輯軟體（這個班級是用Adobe Premiere），剪成完整的節目。所有學生都要擔任演員，在不同時候負責演出。這是因為學生決定以美術課為主題，將他們的經驗拍成紀實節目。時間安排仍是根據一般的藝術課時段，各組學生輪流利用上課時間進行拍片工作。在需要全班學生共同參與傳統課程的時候，則在藝術教室裡架設攝影機，將正常的上課過程拍攝下來。最後，畫面剪輯完成後，全班再共同討論拍攝過程、分工合作的心得，以及製片業集體的決策過程。

學生都是集體合作，也做了流程記錄，寫下有關團隊合作及共同決策的問題。美國學生比較習慣獨立作業，因此分組合作的經驗，對部分學生來說是相當的挑戰。然而，集體合作卻是大多數製片環境中的工作模式，為企業資本主義拍攝影像的人，更是高度專業分工，必須靠團隊合作。甚至專業的藝術創作，往往也涉及許多複雜的技術，需要依賴技術專家的合作。因此Sherri班上的紀實電視節目，更接近真實的藝術創作，不像一般的學生藝術作業模式只是個人獨立作業。Sherri的課程不但沒有貶低影像創作的實作價值，反而比一般藝術課程更符合專業的實況。

結論

在視覺文化的藝術教育中，實際創作仍然是一大重心，但不一定只沿襲過去常見的畫室創作活動。而且必然會運用新媒材，不再只限於工業革命以前的

媒材如陶土、油畫。畫室也必然會涵蓋當代的觀念，藝術家不再獨自創作，而可能需要集體合作，更走向專業分工、彼此學習。正如上述的各個例子所顯示，創作往往不再完全只為習得技巧或表達個人的觀感。在視覺文化的藝術教育中，創作成為觀念探討、社會批評的一種形式，這也是當代專業的藝術圈愈來愈普遍的情形。視覺文化的藝術教育並不減低創作實作，而是改採當代的創作模式。

附註：

- 1 本文提及的三位教師，為伊利諾大學2003年春季的藝術教育課程研究生。

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