JEAN-PIERRE GOLAY

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INTERVIEWER: Marieli Rowe

BIOGRAPHY OF JEAN-PIERRE GOLAY

Jean-Pierre Golay, former director of the Centre d'Initiation aux Communications de Masse (CIC), Lausanne, Switzerland, pioneered media literacy programs during the Nazi era, uncovering the power of propaganda and introducing the first educational television programs in Switzerland. He is now retired and living in Madison, Wisconsin.

Note from JP Golay: The essay below is based on an interview by Marieli Rowe on August 28, 2011. The responses have been modified slightly for clarity and supplemented by translations or adaptations from the dissertation "Education Aux Medias" by Jean-Pierre Golay, written for the symposium of Lausanne, Switzerland, in June 1988.

Certainly avenues of mass communication provoke a certain level of anxiety in many people, if not all of us. On the other hand, the positive contribution of mass media to our society is considerable. Media Literacy is an attempt to get the most out of some contributions and to limit the power of others.

The reader might think sometimes that the author loses his focus to tell anecdotes having little to do with media literacy; the reader would be mistaken. Each of these "anecdotes" encourages you to look around, listen, question, discuss, take time to think.

They emphasize an essential feature of media education: the involvement of the media educator in all his life, all acts, all opportunities to decipher signs addressed to him by the media, even down to the most intimate resounding chords. For a dedicated educator, it's almost a way of life.
J.P. Golay   December 2011

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INTERVIEW TEXT

Selected Questions:

Why and how did you become involved in media education?

Are you talking about Hitler years?

Among the Swiss, what would you say are the major "bombs?"

When did you start thinking the need to be a part of education?

How did that develop into paying attention to radio and television? How did that evolve into your theory?

What made you think that this was not the right way to teach? Where did the change come from?

This was the very early evolution of watching the responses of children to visual stimuli and how teachers learned to make use of that in an educational way as an inspiration for a curriculum. That was a very early curriculum in visual literacy.

You started public television in Geneva?

Teaching younger kids, already, to make a choice?

Are there some milestones in the field that you'd like to mention? How far do you think the field has come? Do you think it has moved in the direction you think is best, why or why not? What would you like to see happen? You were able to do this with the parents outside of school. How did you penetrate the school system?

So you were able to institute a diploma in media education? As a specialty?

How do you feel about the state of the media in this country (USA)?

(Interview Begins)

Marieli Rowe (MR): Why and how did you become involved in media education?

Jean-Pierre Golay (JPG): I lived the crucial years of my youth and the beginning of my adulthood when Hitler was making his speeches, and Goebbels was writing them. I still hear the unforgettable voices of these theatrical performers. Even after they disappeared, there were plenty of occasions to hear and see them: memorial days, deaths of important protagonists of the tragic thirties, forties, and fifties, or the erection of monuments to the victims. All these were opportunities to broadcast the images of Hitler, Goebbels, and others. These images, unfortunately, show many followers applauding the speaker. One wonders if such a discouraging proportion of the population targeted by the Nazi propaganda would have fallen for such obvious traps if they had benefited from some media education. In hindsight, Goebbels and Hitler were clearly warping the truth, but escaped scrutiny because they knew how to activate responding chords, maintain propaganda dominance, and sustain lies.

> *If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it. The lie can be maintained only for such time as the State can shield the people from the political, economic and/or military consequences of the lie. It thus becomes vitally important for the State to use all of its powers to repress dissent, for the truth is the mortal enemy of the lie ... (Goebbels)*[1]

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[1]   Speech on January 9th, 1928 to an audience of party members at the so-called "Hochschule für Politik", a series of training talks for Nazi party members in Berlin.

Shamelessly, Goebbels wrote nineteen principles for propaganda; #14(a) encourages exploitation of <u>latent</u> motivation and energy ("*previously possessed"*).[2i] In their dreams and in their need for happiness, the audiences entertain that energy which the propaganda intends to annex.

This energy is stocked in everyone's dreams and anxieties.

Enough for now about propaganda. We will certainly discuss later in more detail how to act against the manipulations "à la Goebbels."

KNOW YOURSELF

Γνωθι Σαυτον

 JPG: A second topic in media literacy is a need for extensive knowledge of human beings, both children and adults. This quest for knowledge, while seemingly belonging to psychology, is actually essential to media literacy. To succeed in this quest, they need love, to love humans. After World War Two, I met many Germans and Austrians while co-organizing exchanges between German, Austrian, and Swiss children and students. They all came with their prejudices; both negative and positive depending on the orientation of their family, their teachers, or their church. ("Our" church minister had studied theology in Germany and was a professed Nazi.)

The exchanges were meant to help question and deter their prejudices. The children spent eight weeks together, four in each country.

"Delivering" my protégés to their temporary family meant interminable nights on slow trains; long, unrestrained conversations with people I would assumedly never see again in real life. After the last student left with his adopted family, I would go camping, sitting around a campfire, enjoying a total openness with strangers. Everyone carried their mini-tent on their backpack, but

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[2] *# 14 (a): "They must evoke desired responses which the audience previously possesses."*

they also carried their memories and remorse: they were dumbfounded by what they had done. We all needed the intimate confidence that anonymity can provide, and I lost myself in the intimacy of these companions who, it seemed to me, had fallen from the sky. I learned about them, but also about myself, sharing humanity to an extent I had never experienced before. This is also part of media education: an extended knowledge of the receiver, of his or her sensitivities.

MR: This is so powerful and so very real because you lived it.

JPG: What I didn't realize at the time was the importance of dreams, fears, and anxieties (for example, hatred), of all our needs buried in our personalities; ready to provide us with energy and motivation, determinative of our response.

In many cases in Germany, fear of losing the social benefits brought on by the Third Reich, coupled with paranoia against the Jews, both spread under the guidance of dramatic speakers and accumulated into a mixture of fear and hatred (a "bomb," as I call it) that Hitler hoped to detonate when he proclaimed the "total war."

In response to the many stimulations addressed to the receiver, one might be seduced by misleading images of happiness. The frustration that accumulates from this unattained happiness leaves a latent residue inside the receiver, which can be reactivated by propaganda. This potential energy can push you to follow people who guarantee that they will protect you against bad things.

MR: Some reason for the propagandist to poke into.

JPG: The propaganda people have a big advantage: they know much better than most of us what our possible motivations are, which would push us to follow Hitler, or Ghandi, or someone else. As a consequence, if you want to effectively teach media literacy, you not only have to teach film language, communication techniques, and media economics, you also have to know where you stand personally. What is latent in you, that could be activated? Many people have a

"bomb" inside and they just need someone else, who already knows about it, to press the button for it to explode. That is what happened in Germany and Austria. It also happened in Switzerland. Americans too, responded to Nazi propaganda; though not so extreme or clear-cut. Americans are equally sensitive to propaganda, but their priorities are different.

MR: Are you talking about Hitler years?

JPG: Hitler's years, as well as other times. The potential energy of many Americans has been activated by intense advertisement about cars or cigarettes, for example. About many consumer items.

MR: Among the Swiss, what would you say are the major "bombs?"

JPG: There were Swiss who were clearly Nazi admirers, ready to take over if Hitler were to invade Switzerland. I knew someone personally, the "gauleiter", he was called, who was supposed to take over a big area around Geneva. This was a dangerous situation.

MR: It's interesting that you would say that Switzerland was in such danger. We have been told that Switzerland maintained its neutrality by accepting compromises, for example letting the Germans send prisoners through their tunnels in the Alps, "while looking the other way". I did not know that there were people actually in readiness to take over.

JPG: This last question about Swiss neutrality shifts our attention towards other fields of media literacy and provides us with a perfect example, which shows the difficulties of this new theme: information.

INFORMATION

Information can be gleaned through the "News," but also through advertisements (which block information at the same time), or through overly dramatized "Entertainment" which is disguised as news.

The field of information and news is probably the most difficult in media education. There is some hope, though, witnessing the increased resources available on the Internet and the improvement of the tools available to search the Internet. It is encouraging to see teenagers navigate on a computer in search of knowledge and understanding.

Three elements conspire to produce distortions and biased judgments; they might be summarized this way:

- Production, where events are treated in an entertainment style.
- Reception, where dramatization and speed are expected, by emotionally needy people.
- "Buried" Truth: Too often "truth" lies under tons of expensive and controversial documents, which an ordinary citizen cannot master, for lack of money, time, skills, or sometimes motivation. This situation privileges the "experts" and other consultants; our society becomes more and more dependent on them. The "Rapport Bergier[3]", meant to shed light on the behavior of Switzerland during WW2, is an extreme example.

It is clear that in introducing the topic of information/entertainment we have to include our needs for happiness and our anxieties. The images, sweet, dramatic, or both, that abound in the news often play on these emotions. Some of these images are easily identifiable as advertisement and decipherable; for instance, a young couple sitting in the meadow, enjoying love and freedom is easily identified as an advertising tool. Some images are more complex, though. For example a report on Prince William's wedding will elicit some emotional response, but in a much more ambiguous way.

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[3] The Rapport Bergier cost an initial input of $20,000,000 and published 11,000 pages

That complexity of information makes media education difficult in this area. There is no easy way to help people master the relationships they have with texts. In fact, news and rumors often obscure historical reality. For example, many people believe there was a treaty with Germany concerning the construction and the financing of the big tunnel [4] under the Alps, but have no way of proving it. The Germans were said to have partly financed it in return for permission to transport goods from Germany to Italy and vice versa. It was a controversial rumor that they would move soldiers in the cars. Some say they heard people speaking German and giving orders in freight cars when they were waiting in train stations. According to the Rapport Bergier if this happened, it was minimal.

It was rumored that Goebbels, Hitler, and many other national socialists had money in the Swiss banks -- a lot of money. It was in their interest that Switzerland didn't lose its neutrality, becoming an enemy to Germany and an ally with England. Hitler was said to have reasoned that it would cost too much to invade Switzerland. Rumor?

MR: The Swiss army was mobilized?

JPG: At the beginning, the Swiss army was weak; there were almost no bunkers for the army, no bomb shelters for the population. Only later were they built.

Propaganda was everywhere. To give you an idea, take this story of Swiss tanks in a Swiss propaganda film, made by the government to comfort the population. The film shows many Swiss tanks going across the screen over and over again, as if to demonstrate the Swiss army's strength, to reassure the people. However, one tank had a defect in paint allowing you to recognize it every four tanks, being shown in loop.

But let's go back to the topic of education and information. Even if there is no fast way to help people deal with the area of information, there are useful partial solutions. Maybe because they

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[4] The only report that could be traced was broadcasted vt tge BBC. A "witness" had seen a train full of German soldiers in Zurich train station. No other witness, This station is totally unlikely to have been chosen to hide a train.

look too limited, as we will see in an example, these healthy practices are not often publicized, but too often abandoned in favor of protective recommendations. These work like the Chinese saying: give a fish (recommendation), you feed for one day, but show how to fish (media education) and you feed for life. Recommendation, as protection, has been too often a negative, or elitist approach. "Don't go see this film; it is a B-list." Too many Media educators, for too long, have been struggling to impose recommendations and ratings.

MR: I think it all starts with a negative approach. In those early years, I really think it has to do with negativity. It has to do with the power of the media.

JPG: It was somewhere in the mind of the educators to prevent "bad" messages from being heard. That's not to say that it was totally wrong; it should have been really just a first step. Several people thought we needed media education to first eliminate the risk of contamination. They didn't think they could postpone their drastic intervention and let the students decide…

To summarize the "protective conception", compare with the long term education programs that the most conscious educators were aiming at:

- to train in their students (starting at age four-five) the aptitude to perceive and process signs very fast (see "Discovery of the Image, p. 20)
- to experience and learn knowledge about the mass media (partly by practice)
- to discover their own dreams and own anxieties (their responding chords), etc.

…in other words, to provide the students with new tools, enabling them to regain autonomy, make their own judgment, according to the values they had chosen. Unfortunately, some educators preferred to go their docile, inherited recommendations way, sometimes called paternalism.

MR: And then seeing the positive side of it was an additional thing that came soon after?

JPG: Quite soon for some, although it took longer for others. An evolution started in the sixties. The protective approach became only a small part of the educational activity. The media literacy teachers weren't satisfied anymore just to sort "good" films from "bad" ones. Some educators, inspired by the leading ideas which arose in Europe known by many as the "spirit of 1968", strove to evolve. But many people: parents, school administrators, traditional conservators continued to support a paternalist approach, if supporting any at all.

We were disappointed by other groups; even if their main concern was related to ours (for example people preoccupied by the gap between the two cultures, low and high). Often marginal, these groups preferred to go their own way, many of them without coherence and success, rather than attaching themselves to our unifying, encompassing, solid, system of thoughts.

Here is an example of one activity introducing the students to the sometimes very subtle, but very important distinction between fact and opinion.

Each student should have:

- **A** photocopy of an article interesting and understandable for her/his age;

- **A** blue color pencil;

- **A** red color pencil;

- **A** short ruler.

The students (and the teacher?) underline in blue all expressions of journalist's opinion, in red all expressions of fact.

Here are questions that usually surface while checking the result;

*the students do not always reach a consensus; is a "dissident" necessarily "wrong"? (The teacher has the responsibility to have the students practice open-mindedness and to hunt prejudices, like in Discovery of the Image, P. 20)

*Does the divergence correspond to a different experience? Give an example.

If the journalist reports the opinion of someone else, or quotes someone? Which color should be used? Etc. etc

*At the end of the game, the newspaper article usually looks rather red or rather blue. What does it signify about the journalist?

*Is a "blue article" acceptable on a first page? On an editorial page?

This exercise is a perfect lesson in the student's maternal language: it teaches vocabulary, expression of nuances, etc. If you want to penetrate the school system, you have to imagine as many activities as possible that are good for the media literacy teacher, but also excellent for other topics of the normal school curriculum.

In the meantime some teachers were still trying to raise standards and expectations by promoting good films. Nothing wrong with this, but quite often, they started by showing how bad the low culture movies were. They promoted traditional elitist culture. This was very damaging, because it alienated an important part of the audience.

MR: Education is supposed to be a positive learning experience, indeed.

JPG: If not, it might widen the gap between the two cultures.

MR: When did you start thinking the need to be a part of education?

JPG: Part of my luck was that I first taught in an area, La Vallee de Joux (a valley in the Jura Mountains in the Swiss Canton Vaud) where people were not dumb, unskilled, or ignorant. They

were watchmakers and professionals. They had confidence in themselves. They weren't like those in many other areas, who think that they are bad or of a low level. In La Vallee de Joux, they were confident because they had all of those skills which allowed them to create a very fine collection of watches. It was a positive environment. I could start where they were.

MR: How did that develop into paying attention to radio and television? How did that evolve into your theory?

JPG: It didn't come in one day. And I have my bicycle to thank for that. As I mentioned before, I was teaching in a college and I organized bike tours in France, mostly, with students 15-17 years old, Then, of course, when you travel halfway to Paris, to Franche-Compte (a region in Northeast France), to Nevers (a town in Northeast France), and back to La Vallee De Joux, you spend a lot of time talking and discussing over meals, during breaks, and at night. The students shared their thoughts with me. They told me what they watched or what they listened to. For me, it was a discovery. We spent about fifteen days camping together.

MR: This was in the 1950s?

JPG: Yes. It was.

MR: It sounds like you learned how to listen to where their thinking was; to reach them that way. I gather, since they were the receivers and since the receivers are part of the communication, if you want to be a qualified media literacy teacher, you have to know how the receiver functions.

JPG: My parents were both teachers. They interested me very much, because they were caught halfway between the low and the high cultures. They had been in L'Ecole Normale Pour Instituteurs (advanced graduate school for teachers). They got some knowledge and some culture out of that kind of school, but they also got the habit to accept and memorize ready-made judgments, endorsed by the responsible pedagogues: prejudices. "Victor Hugo was a great guy."

I'm not saying he's not. But you were somewhat forced to think so because it was the standard in this school tradition.

MR: Like this is right, and this is wrong? This is good and this is bad?

 JPG: It was a habit to label something, with some positive aspect. But, you weren't the source of judgment. It was imposed on you. It was the correct answer for the test.

MR: What made you think that this was not the right way to teach? Where did the change come from?

JPG: I think it came from the kids. They were good kids, they had energy, they didn't need to follow official guidelines; they were somewhat independent. They proposed to me a different image. The different image made me question many other widespread opinions. In other words, I was willing to question everything you get from the crowd around you, the standard opinion. I learned this from the kids, rather than from my education at University.

MR: As a result of that, you developed your own goals. What were those?

 JPG: I thought all these theories through, but the approval by the minister of education was still requested. I needed a school to apply my ideas, with adequate instructions for the teachers, in order to carry out the programs that I would prepare. I never thought I could do it outside the school system. I kept inviting the parents; I needed their support and understanding. I still needed to do something for parents in the evening, showing movies and some other things. I tried to associate the audience to the discovery of a movie. For example, as minimal equipment to help, I had little lights attached next to the screen and I would tell the parents to pay extra attention to the meaningful elements in the film, like close-ups, style, lighting, sound effect, etc. that would be announced by the little lights.

When I wanted them to notice this or that, I would press a button, which turned on a little light. I would use the light sparingly, only when something special in the art of filmmaking appeared on the screen. After a while I let the audience proceed on its own to a native lecture of a movie. The parents had never thought that a movie could be looked at so seriously, so efficiently, that it would be such a pleasure to extract a meaning from what was available on the screen…

The support of the parents was very important to me. People came back and they were happy to feel like they were starting to grasp something important-- not all, but some.

MR: You were able to do this with the parents outside of school. How did you penetrate the school system?

JPG: I did, systematically, by showing films and discussing films, only films at the beginning. We were "reading" them as we were reading novels or plays in lessons of French literature. Still a little paternalist?

I learned that the Secretary General of the Ministry of Education was interested in movies too. He was happy to promote "good" things, and still interested in opening up of the students. While inspecting the schools, instead of pointing his finger at insufficient results, he gave to the students a recital of bassoon, creating an unusual relationship between administration and students.

Jean Mottaz summoned me to his office and asked me to explain what I had in mind. He said that we needed the guarantee of other educated persons, to be more credible. He added to the team a professor whose passion was literature and theater, and an art teacher (who didn't stay long). He told us to write some kind of curriculum. It was a fantastic opportunity. I did my best. The Secretary was somewhat curious and involved about this and I suspect that he thought "Golay is crazy! but his project is valuable." I was in my thirties.

We hired more part-time teachers. More and more we shifted from "talk about media" to "experience production" with tape recorders, printers, varied tools.

We bought a television studio, then a second, with a console for mixing, some special effects, a blue box, three cameras, sound and proper lighting equipment. The State remodeled for us (we completed the work ourselves) a three-story house with a studio, we hired an engineer who installed, repaired, and built children-adapted equipment.

So it was better than I ever hoped.

I started with programs easy for the children and for the teachers, investing more time and attention in them, as well as time for evaluation. We prepared activities relatively easy to create and to apply in the classroom. The main objective was to increase the aptitude and speed of young children to notice and decipher signs in mass communications. To be accepted and used intensively, these programs had to be useful too for the teachers teaching the traditional curriculum (enhanced vocabulary, speaking and writing). It's called *Discovery of the Image.*

We prepared many slides with a lot of different images; they were games. We also recommended that these games be used to teach French, the mother language of the children; that helped make our program more acceptable to teachers and school authorities. In these games, for example, we have a slide showing a sink filled with dirty dishes; you have another kitchen sink in reserve and technical support that is bright and clean, like you can only see in advertisements. The kids are supposed to say what they see. The game has 12 slides and is called "Qui viendra ici?" ("Who will come here?")

Of course most of the children would say: "Mommy." But some would say "Daddy" and that would provoke a lot of laughter. This laughter and what the teacher would do in response to it was very important. It was a crucial opportunity to introduce stereotypes to the children (without necessarily introducing the word), and to start breaking them. Anyway, the teachers also became

more conscious that they had a huge responsibility, to try to open the children's eyes. In our example, the teachers were expected to say that in some families, the father does the dishes because the mother works outside, as a teacher maybe.

I was authorized to hire teachers to work for us 50% of their time and 50% in their class; this way, they kept in touch with the realities of the classroom. We had access to several classes with two teachers. They worked in our big house with adequate equipment and technical support. They made more photos, more games.

The teachers who systematically used the different activities recommended by "Decouverte de l'Image" had equipped their students with a series of basic skills, each guaranteeing a richer, faster interpretation of images.

Activities involving music and sound offered a similar but less developed program on sound.

Classes or short seminars were organized to prepare the teachers, introduce new programs, and improve answers.

We started an evaluation of the effects of our program "Decouverte de l'image (Discovery of the image); it included about 700 children and was very encouraging.

Of course a lot of teachers jumped on our offer, because the lessons and material were already prepared. We had an important loan system, using "one or two day delivery." It seems that all the teachers had to do was to show the slides and let the children say what they saw. In fact, they had an important responsibility, as shown in "Discovery of the Image."

The program was mostly created for children ages 5-10, but some teachers successfully adapted photos to the age and interests of students aged 17.

Grossly summarized, the basic skills are:

INVENTORY Aptitude to quickly perceive all symbols available in an image

SIMILARITIES/DIFFERENCES Memorize recall, compare, infer.

EFFICIENT READING Intuition, experience telling which symbols to drop, which significant ones to process.

INTERPRETING Identifying stereotypes, by comparing with other experiences, other data.

EDITING Appreciating the continuity of a story and the interaction of components of a sequence.

SELF-ANALYSIS AND AWARENESS, NOT REJECTION

Numerous obstacles might prevent or disturb the functioning of the above-mentioned skills; there is perhaps an intellectual laziness responsible? There are perhaps certain cases where a general lack of tonus exists, a profound fatigue which leads to an uncontrolled intake of the media, called passive consuming. But almost always the phenomenon is more complex and quite different from this supposed passivity.

Our personality is stimulated and guided by numerous motivations, desires or fears whose origins might sometimes be innate, but are more often the result of personal history or the effect of our socio-cultural milieu.

Among them are the attraction of the unknown, the fear of death, to be rejected, the need to be welcome, feel superior, to be integrated in a community, sexuality, fear of boredom and monotony, insecurity and other dependencies: all kinds of forces, often contradictory which lead us toward certain messages, to certain depictions, with such an intensity that beguiled by a fantasy or fascinated by an anxiety, we lose control and give ourselves up to its attraction.

An increased awareness allows us to perceive what attracts fascinates, repels us. Thus it might enable us either to restrain from unconsidered acceptance of the fantasy images (a protective approach), or to decide to accept their presence in us; awareness should not necessarily mean rejection. Imagine surrealism without them.

We can do it by closely examining images especially created to cater to our needs and fears, which are then made visible.

MR: This was the very early evolution of watching the responses of children to visual stimuli and how the teachers learned to make use of that in an educational way as an inspiration for a curriculum. That was a very early curriculum for media education.

JPG: A MEDIA LITERACY ACTIVITY: *"Rip Up Ads"*

The educational method practiced in this part of the curriculum is based upon a physical involvement, a muscular memory (rip up, move parts of advertisements, file them "physically", post them on the walls), and upon a psychological reaction (rip up, not delicately cut). The physical involvement of the body happens through simple acts of handling images: tearing magazines ads and separating the two parts of the page, making piles accordingly. This physical involvement is indispensable for a lasting integration of the knowledge, which otherwise remains only theoretical.

Basically, the activity "Rip up Ads" consists of one technique:

Tear out from magazines many pages with examples of advertising in which one sees, on the one hand, the brand name or a photo of the product, and on the other hand an euphoric image (happy people, idyllic couples, social success) or the contrary (abandoned love, overworked mother), or a situation to avoid, thanks to some miracle vitamins.

I kept making some experiments in classrooms. I had so much fun working with the children. We decided to bring in lots of advertisements [5] and to separate the names of the product from their image. The image could show a young man and a young woman smoking a cigarette. We would tear the ads, not cut them with scissors, because with scissors you cut the contour with respect; when you rip up, you feel powerful, brutal. You are the maestro. It is very important.

We put the ads on the walls of the class, maybe 150 images of dreams. I remember particularly one: it showed young people forming a circle and having a good time. Another girl arrives and enters the circle carrying a Coke bottle. Everyone welcomes her, It means that if you bring Coca Cola, you will be well received by your peers, your social problems will be solved. Success thanks objects: materialism.

Then we thought that we could play with the cards on the walls. Why not put together all the young couples on the advertising page in two unequal parts to separate this idyllic (or catastrophic) depiction from that of the product or its brand name. Make two separate piles, one with the images, one with the brand names.

Then you may exhibit, side by side, six to ten idyllic images of the same "happiness," for example ten very attractive couples romping in a meadow.

Or, using the available brand names, one can mimic advertising and create new associations, new pairs of image=brand name.

Remember however that advertisement does not just tell things; entertainment programs do not just help us spend time. One will see that the depictions are interchangeable, since one could equally sell soap, cigarettes or drinks with the same dream. We started to think that we could play more with these cards. Why not put together all of the young couples? We did. It was satiating. There were so many images of love! An endless parade. We then went one step further.

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[5] Waiting rooms in dentists' and doctors' offices were raided by students, to the surprise of the staff in charge. To be good, the students should ask for permission.

We decided to "exchange." We took the image of the young couple or of the young girl with the Coca Cola. We took it from the page where it was, and we put it with another brand name. It worked just as well. There was no difference, in fact the young couple enjoying life works as well for pimple cream, Coca Cola, or Diet Pepsi. So, it materializes the presence of the latent energy. This experiment shows that there is no necessary relationship between the image of happiness and a product. It's interchangeable.

Some advertisements are surrealistic, they offer very interesting images. Of course, surrealism is a complex art movement, which often depicts dreams or fears, along with written messages. Many fairytales carry our fears. Remember the little boy who is caught in the forest by a witch who intends to bake the kids: Hansel and Gretel, Snow White, etc.

One can also practice a complementary task: take ten different ads selling the same kind of product (chocolate or insurance), but using ten different dreams. It becomes obvious, even to children, that there is no correlation between the two parts of the ad; that a skilled "communicator" is playing with our needs and fears, our motivations.

Remember what was just said: advertising, does not just sell things; entertainment programs do not just help us spend time in a pleasant way. They both carry with them models of success, styles, or ways of living; they contribute too to form adolescents' and adults' opinions on virility, femininity, normality.

How it is possible to reveal these hidden pressures and allow real choices? According to personal values.

Miming or showing what will really happen to the characters represented in the ads, after the official sequence, has been photographed, would add useful contributions and reinforce the previous acquisitions. The activities aiming at more awareness do not mean that dreams, fantasy, or fears have to be identified and fought, that they should be over controlled and disappear. It

would be a terrible mistake. It would be a sad amputation of important components of a personality, as well as a source of pleasure.

Thus our curriculum asks for a complementary positive approach. For example, through images by Bosch, Magritte, Art Brut artists, through music from Tibet or Pink Floyd, Peter Gabriel and others. These encounters familiarize young people's minds and esthetic sensitivities, to the normal coexistence in each of us of dreams, needs and fears of fundamental nature, even metaphysical.

MR: This was the very early evolution of watching the responses of children to visual stimuli and how teachers learned to make use of that in an educational way as an inspiration for a curriculum. That was a very early curriculum in visual literacy.

JPG: It was the first one, I think. Does it matter? I don't think so. No.

At about the same time, several media literacy educators were invited to meet every year in Ludwigshafen for an annual seminar. Among other topics, there were presentations of programs for young children. The two representatives of the BBC, who were among the most active and intelligent participants, were interested in the work done in our Center. They asked for permission to publish our curriculum (Discovery of Image is only part of it). We were working quite alone; The interest of our British colleagues was encouraging and exceptional, in an area where competition and jealousy were more frequent than collaboration.

Almost all participants were focusing on a dream: to produce a curriculum. So the British published our programs in the late 1950s.

While we were enjoying a kind of international recognition, I had to face difficulties in our canton, thanks to the "liberals". In our French-speaking area, we call liberals the far conservative (liberty to do business as pleased?). In our classes, legal, administrative, commercial, political questions were introduced. I must say that these topics were not what attracted most the students,

even if they have important direct consequences on the production of mass media. We had a few successful programs that were promoting understanding and positive criticism, encouraging analysis of the different modalities used for financing the media. The impact of these modalities was more interesting and easier to understand when the students had to find money (advertisement?) for their own project: a newspaper, a radio interview, a TV play, a parody of an advertisement. The students had to take into account their client's reactions. Then they would role-model, "Play" at being producers, negotiating fees for ads with local businesses.

One of our preferred goals, we had constantly in mind, was to help viewers and listeners to retrieve some autonomy and power, coveted by the mass media. It was the supreme benefit expected from media education, in a society threatened by castration. Our goal wasn't precisely what the liberals had in mind, nor what they would pay for. When some forward looking schools decided to introduce some media education, the liberals became more aggressive. It was clear that the fight would become more bitter. Once the weekly "rendez-vous" with the radio and the television was lost, so was an instrument connecting parents and school. Once the prestige of institutions like public television and Instruction was withdrawn, a vicious circle was established, the "beginning of the end." Parents, once more, had to face alone the problems of education and television. After many ups and downs, the five [6] French-speaking cantons, which had united for a while, in order to give to their schools a decent tool, were in many cases left to their own resources, which meant, to not much. Vaud, for example, lost its Centre d'Initiation aux Communications and almost everything we had created. The "Télévision Educative" and the "Radio Educative", that we had managed to envision, invent, propose, develop and make attractive to the other French-speaking cantons, and even more miraculously, acceptable to the Radio-Télévision Suisse Romande; this almost inconceivable association of partners, the "Television et l'Instruction publique", (Public and Instructional Television) dissolved for reasons

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[6] Fribourg, Genève, Neuchâtel, Valais,Vaud.

that could have been overcome, if faith had prevailed. It was a well engineered murder of a precious institution.

MR: The education system in Switzerland is not federal?

JPG: It was not centralized. What was federal was small. It had two main tasks: 1) to make sure that all Swiss children would receive a minimal schooling, most of the time provided by their canton or the local community.

And 2), to -"Manage" the"Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale" (EPF, or ETH) in Zürich. The Cantons were eager to keep their identity and their hand on their schools.

But when parents would move their family to another Canton, it was always a catastrophe. In some Cantons, they started history with Egypt, in others with local history. Some students would never study some material; others would have to repeat programs. To synchronize and standardize the curriculum of their schools, the French-speaking Cantons created a "Secretariat a la Coordination des ecoles romandes" (1969), with a Secretary general, an office, some authority. In addition to the responsibility for synchronized curriculums, the Secretary who had worked for the Television, was in charge of the "Television educative" (educational television) for the five Cantons. He did a good job and contributed to several projects..

MR: You also had another problem with language.

The German speaking Cantons never associated and they never had a real media program, partly because the head of the department for "Youth" was protective and elitist.

MR: Did you have some goals in mind by this time?

JPG: I was filled with the appetite for improvement. I always thought that if we could do something on public television, we would reach a lot of people. And if we could provide on television and radio examples of lessons, it would be great. We started with "pilots." For

example, the work done by the radio station about the hijacking of a plane in Mogadishu (the capital of Somalia). It was a big event, especially after the Israelis freed it.

I got in touch with the chief of information in the RSR (Radio Suisse Romande)(Francophone Swiss Radio). He was great; I asked him to tell us step by step where he got information and confirmation of information. We also discussed the power of radio that causes people to believe something nine times out of ten. As a listener you have no way to check if the information was true. That's when we introduced the idea of a second source of information. We were ready to start an educational radio television department in Geneva.

MR: You started public television in Geneva?

JPG: The main television shows were already there, as well as the studios and the personnel. We started the educational television. It was always a program about how television was made. For example, we went to a factory for high precision metal works. We imagined that two producers of television would report about the factory. One of the two was a little more socially involved and he showed images accordingly -- for example, they had just finished a huge tank for milk and there was a defect inside. So the supervisor asked a worker to enter into the tank with a huge hammer. What we saw and heard was a terrible noise. The other director was rather conservative and an admirer of the powerful industry. He showed the marvelous sparks when they were welding something. It was a fantastic image; he showed also the men receiving their paychecks. We helped the students understand that there wasn't only one point of view. They discovered too that some images have influence on others, that their power might bias the reception of the entire report: vivid sparkles are more impressive than envelopes containing modest salaries. In the present case, both images, the sparks and the envelopes, were supposed to enforce the same point of view. What if the images each support a different point of view? We also did something similar on the radio, usually for younger kids.

MR: Teaching younger kids, already, to make a choice?

JPG: Yes, it was as diverse as possible. For example, one activity in response to a radio program was for the kids to write fairy tales.

MR: I think it's the enthusiasm that you have.

JPG: That is probably visible in some of my programs. The most important for me was to estimate the amount of energy and power accumulated in my young receivers in response to the stimulations aimed at their responsive chords by advertisement professionals or surrealist artists. I worked on this energy and power using a lot of advertisements and surrealism because both propose images inspired by fears or dreams. If we can help young people recognize these fears or dreams in themselves, identify them as forces pushing in, experience repulsions or attractions which are skillfully presented on glossy paper, and if they appreciate playing with representations of these repulsive or attractive images…we'll have gone a long way.

MR: These days, they are doing this all with the Internet. They are doing match-ups on the computer with video editing. The students have control over images.

 JPG: They like the control.

And now for the most educative, the most fun, the most memorable instrument employed to control images, even to create meaningful communications…

As a Finale, I present l'Atelier Vidéo (Video Workshop), a teaching experience that I consider a model for us and for others, because it combines the right proportion of "experiencing" and "reflecting", of intuition and awareness. Identifying the effects of tools used to create a television show is an easy part of this education if you introduce "hands on" practices. Verbal information could never compete with the speed and the depth of the "hands on" experience.

The assistant at the students' disposal might, if necessary, ask a few questions calling attention to these particularly impressive features.

Here is how the Atelier Vidéo operates:

The class decides what its production will be: a parody of adult's news, or a serious model of news for adolescents. Functions are attributed exclusively to the students; some might build accessories for a minimalist stage (sometimes in collaboration with the art teacher); others might sometimes pre-record sounds (in collaboration with the music teacher).

It is a fantastic opportunity for the teacher to work on a community spirit for his or her class. (Someone should make a film about that.)

The equipment (and the functions) are:

> 2 cameras for the stage,
>
> 1 camera to introduce documents, photos on films, digital photos, films 8mm (obsolete), C8Ds, computers, etc.
>
> 1 console for mixage image
>
> special effects   - blue box
>
> console for mixage sound
>
> microphones
>
> lights
>
> accessories - etc.

The characteristics and effects of some tools are more blatant than others; it is easier to start with these: zoom, fading out - fading in, etc. ; creating images activating the resounding chords

(anxiety or drama). This is an opportunity to test these tools. Warning-- stereotypes are lurking around the corner! The power of the first notes of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony might be eroded; what about compared to the dance of the dinner rolls in Chaplin's deserted cabin? (See teacher's role, next page. With an appropriate question, he can help his students eliminate a poor symbol).

As with most of the acquisitions of knowledge, media education must repeat the same things, or variations on the same theme. That is why you, the readers, find a repeated preoccupation with several activities: teachers hunting for easy acceptance of stereotypes (Remember the sink full of dirty dishes, etc.)

The way the Video Workshop operates is very important. It decides if the studio is a gadget or an educative tool.

The procedures we choose help to avoid gadgetry and are practical.

In this program, TV studios are available to classes or groups of children or teenagers. The young producers, who have imagined and prepared their program before arriving at the studio, have an opportunity to shoot whatever they wish.

All jobs have to be taken over by them: manning cameras, image and sound consoles, direction on stage, blue box, etc.

The children use the studio for a day or half a day. When they arrive, they are shown how the equipment works; then they practice and try it out. After one hour they start recording. The teacher watches them but does not intervene. Later on, he/she will have the very important task of helping the children think about what they just experienced and take advantage of it.

The topics are freely chosen by the young people. They have been advised not to merely reproduce another show which had already taken place at school, like a concert or a theatre play.

Unless their program is about a specific music or musician, they are not allowed to use music from records, but have to create their own soundtrack with instruments or other sound effects. Probably the most important requisite is that their program must be aimed at "someone", at a particular audience, so that they experience the entire process of communication, from producer to receiver.

How does such an activity contribute to media education?

It does so obviously by increasing knowledge about production, especially about the equipment, the tools of communication and their effects. It helps one understand why one might be drawn toward (ab)using certain techniques: zooming, fading, "blueboxing", colors and other means of creating illusions. It illustrates the limits of these tools and techniques whose use must be authentic.

Participants also learn about language and style, using short cuts, more close-ups, or a faster rhythm, for example. It not only helps them to understand, but also to appreciate the way messages are conveyed through professional channels.

It reinforces the aptitudes they have acquired through the program "Image Reading Skills," because they are obliged to translate into visual symbols an idea they have in mind, reversing the procedure.

The way Video Workshop (VW) operates differs from the way professionals do. VW does not allow final editing (which anyway would be terribly difficult to do with twenty children watching and/or being bored). At VW the students record each sequence as many times as they want, but after each try, they have to examine it carefully and decide if they want to keep it, or try again. But trying again for a more expressive shot means, at VW, erasing the previous attempt which the new shot will replace. Such a constraint is hard to take, the decision provokes

discussion, attempts to persuade, in other words, intense observation and verbalization of the reasons to keep or to replace. Hard to take, but beneficial to the educational purpose.

There is another positive effect of this experience, especially when they try to produce a parody of commercial TV, but also anytime they try to get in touch with the receiver, to move her/him. They are invited to pay more attention to the sensitive spots, to the "motivations" they think exist in the receiver of their message. To some extent, such an attempt to move the receiver by activating his/her motivations increases the students' awareness of their own motivations, which is precisely the aim of our activities with ads and Surrealistic painting.

Last but not least, the way we proceed has another effect. On the one hand, they learn to imagine, produce, shoot, and record; on the other hand, they have to watch what they have just recorded from the other's point of view, which means somehow to be in another's head or heart. They get used to a kind of positive schizophrenia: they shift from the role of the producer to the role of the receiver.

Numerous testimonies give us evidence that the young people who have experienced the "Video Workshop" keep this "schizophrenic" attitude while watching ordinary commercial programs. They keep in mind a more active awareness of the production equipment and team; they pay more attention to and process more intensely the message, either for their own sake, for pleasure, or both. "We watch about the same stuff as before," they say, "but we watch it differently."

Such a program, of course, has other important positive effects. For example:

■ an opportunity for the young producers to express themselves through a system of symbols which allows them to succeed sometimes better than in the traditional school system;

■ an opportunity to check the effectiveness of a particular visual language and the possibility of communicating their point of view;

- an opportunity to check adult reactions to their language and its content;

- sometimes just to take revenge on the TV set…

State of Media Education

And now two words about collaboration or competition between Media Educators around the world.

MR: You see people claiming ownership for things that were already in the air anyway.

JPG: There is so much to do. I don't see any reason to fight for a crumb of bread while there is plenty of polenta. I got used to it, but for a while I didn't understand that we would walk so separately when there is much to do.

MR: …Are there some milestones in the field that you'd like to mention? How far do you think the field has come? Do you think it has moved in the direction you think is best, why or why not? What would you like to see happen?

JPG: When I left Lausanne (Swiss town on north border of Lake Geneva) upon retirement, the institution was really booming. We had a house, we had a studio, and we had time to prepare the teachers. To be a teacher, you go to a special school. Later you may specialize in some area of teaching, for example, teaching handicapped children. Some of the additional education for the teachers was compulsory on attending our series of classes. That was a good way to add media education to their curriculum.

MR: So you were able to institute a diploma in media education? As a specialty?

JPG: Yes. More precisely, the candidates for an additional diploma had to attend a class and obtain a certificate. It was important that the teachers experience first the activities they would

expect from their students. This would better position the teachers to guide their students in media education.

However, there have been some tough times in the field, due partly to reduction of funding, but more likely because of the influence of conservative thinking (less intervention of the state, a return to more traditional subjects like the three "Rs"). I heard that the curriculum is not reinforced anymore, that it is up to the teacher whether to teach it or not.

MR: It has been disbanded?

 JPG: It's still on the books, but the people who have been hired to replace me and to continue are often downgraded by the administration. They do use media in teaching things, but it is completely different. They have, for example, photos; but not photos to raise questions about objectivity or control of information. They use photos to show, for example, how a leg of a bee has little hooks. Media Education is an endangered species**.**

MR: It's using the media to teach, rather than teaching how to use the media. I'm sorry to hear that. Apparently it hasn't moved in the right direction. How do you feel about the state of the media in this country (USA)?

JPG: I occasionally talk with teachers about media education. Some do a good job. I'm very realistic now, so I don't expect anything. But I still have some hope.

MR: I share your pessimism but also your hope.

JPG: *AFTERTHOUGHT - A Note on Cynicism*

Some years ago, I wrote: "I would like to mention one of the effects of Media education which might have detrimental effects on teenagers: cynicism.

Media education, particularly because of its revelations about producers and the infringement of ethics, about the information hazardous path, or about the receiver's vulnerability, might lead to a cynical attitude toward media, toward the concept of information and therefore toward the idea of involvement in citizenship. A typical occasion is information provided on digital retouching and its abilities of manipulation.

No doubt, other factors would contribute to the buildup of cynicism: personal experiences, looking at adults, sensational reports by the press about scandals or weaknesses of government people. Media education accounts for only an additional drop, but the risk is sufficient to have the educators be very cautious not to add through skeptical behavior or irresponsible criticism, an additional effect to the existing tendency of teenagers to see the world with disillusioned eyes."

The risk of producing or encouraging the detrimental effect of cynicism is so serious to me that I think it is well founded to devote these last cautionary words to it and worth your attention to hear (read) it.