

**EAST VAN TELEVISION:  
CREATING A CRITICAL PEDAGOGY TO EXPLORE  
CITIZENSHIP AND COMMUNITY VIDEO**

by

Corin Browne  
Bachelor of Arts, Simon Fraser University, 1999

PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

In the  
School of Communication

© Corin Browne 2007

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

Spring 2007

All rights reserved. This work may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by photocopy or other means, without permission of the author, with the exception of the DVD which may be screened without advance permission.

## APPROVAL

**Name:** Corin Browne  
**Degree:** Master of Arts, Communication  
**Title of Project:** East Van Television: Creating a Critical Pedagogy to Explore Citizenship and Community Video

**Examining Committee:**

**Chair:** Mr. David Murphy  
Lecturer, School of Communication

---

**Dr. Stephen Kline**  
Senior Supervisor  
Professor, School of Communication

---

**Mr. Stuart Poyntz**  
Supervisor  
M.A. School of Communication  
Ph.D. Candidate, Centre for the Study of Historical  
Consciousness, UBC

**Date Defended/Approved:**

December 14, 2006



**SIMON FRASER**  
**UNIVERSITY library**

## **DECLARATION OF PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENCE**

The author, whose copyright is declared on the title page of this work, has granted to Simon Fraser University the right to lend this thesis, project or extended essay to users of the Simon Fraser University Library, and to make partial or single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or other educational institution, on its own behalf or for one of its users.

The author has further granted permission to Simon Fraser University to keep or make a digital copy for use in its circulating collection (currently available to the public at the "Institutional Repository" link of the SFU Library website <[www.lib.sfu.ca](http://www.lib.sfu.ca)> at: <<http://ir.lib.sfu.ca/handle/1892/112>>) and, without changing the content, to translate the thesis/project or extended essays, if technically possible, to any medium or format for the purpose of preservation of the digital work.

The author has further agreed that permission for multiple copying of this work for scholarly purposes may be granted by either the author or the Dean of Graduate Studies.

It is understood that copying or publication of this work for financial gain shall not be allowed without the author's written permission.

Permission for public performance, or limited permission for private scholarly use, of any multimedia materials forming part of this work, may have been granted by the author. This information may be found on the separately catalogued multimedia material and in the signed Partial Copyright Licence.

The original Partial Copyright Licence attesting to these terms, and signed by this author, may be found in the original bound copy of this work, retained in the Simon Fraser University Archive.

Simon Fraser University Library  
Burnaby, BC, Canada



**SIMON FRASER**  
**UNIVERSITY** **library**

## **STATEMENT OF ETHICS APPROVAL**

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained, for the research described in this work, either:

(a) Human research ethics approval from the Simon Fraser University Office of Research Ethics,

or

(b) Advance approval of the animal care protocol from the University Animal Care Committee of Simon Fraser University;

or has conducted the research

(c) as a co-investigator, in a research project approved in advance,

or

(d) as a member of a course approved in advance for minimal risk human research, by the Office of Research Ethics.

A copy of the approval letter has been filed at the Theses Office of the University Library at the time of submission of this thesis or project.

The original application for approval and letter of approval are filed with the relevant offices. Inquiries may be directed to those authorities.

Simon Fraser University Library  
Burnaby, BC, Canada

## ABSTRACT

Community video production and the creation of a low-watt TV station is examined as a vehicle for youth to explore citizenship, democratic production, and community engagement. Using critical pedagogy as a theoretical framework, *East Van Television (EVTV)* brought together 10 youth and a researcher/ facilitator/ mentor. The project began with workshops on community media, visual mapping, and brainstorming sessions to explore neighbourhood stories and issues. Participants wrote a manifesto to position their ideas of community video and media democracy and created 10 short videos exploring their neighbourhood. After a community screening, the group built and erected a low watt TV transmitter and broadcast the pilot series. As a participatory, community based, critical media education project, EVTV provided an opportunity for youth to gain agency through the creation of a low watt station, and for the researcher to reflect on pedagogical practice and the role of technology within democratic media production.

### **Keywords:**

critical media education; community media; youth video production

## **DEDICATION**

This project is dedicated to my partner, John, who has supported me in ways too numerous to count. And to my son Quinn, who endured countless meetings with “my kids” and the perpetual presence of my laptop on the kitchen table.

I would also like to dedicate this project to the talented and inspiring EVTU participants. It has been an honour to work with you for the past years. I genuinely hope this is just the beginning.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to express gratitude and appreciation to the following people:

Steve Kline, my senior supervisor, who supported my project from the very beginning with his deep understanding of critical media education and confidence in my abilities.

Stuart Poyntz, my secondary supervisor, who has been a friend, mentor, co-conspirator and sounding board for the past eight years.

Dave Murphy, my chair and friend, who, 10 years ago, taught me how to use a computer mouse and has been teaching me video related things ever since.

Michael Collins, my father-in-law and copy editor, who helped me banish “also” from my vocabulary, and helped me to clarify my argument and almost enjoy the writing process.

patti fraser, my friend and fellow community artist whose experience and genuine understanding of community based education work is an inspiration.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Approval</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>iii</b>
<b>Dedication</b> .....	<b>iv</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b> .....	<b>vi</b>
<b>List of Tables</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>List of Acronyms</b> .....	<b>viii</b>
<b>Introduction to the East Vancouver Television Project</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Part One : Theoretical Perspectives on Critical Media Education</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Media Education, Youth and Democratization .....	4
Canadian Context .....	9
<b>Part Two: The East Van Television Project</b> .....	<b>17</b>
Personal Inventory : Selections from Prior Media Education Projects .....	17
Designing the EVT TV Project (2005-2006): Knowledge for the People .....	27
<b>Part Three: Evaluation- Critical Reflection on our Praxis</b> .....	<b>38</b>
Youth Impact .....	39
Community Impact .....	47
Contributions to Media Education.....	51
Conclusion.....	56
<b>Appendix A: Recruitment Brochure</b> .....	<b>60</b>
<b>Appendix B: Project Timeline</b> .....	<b>63</b>
<b>Appendix C :WISE Hall event poster</b> .....	<b>66</b>
<b>Appendix D: Proposed Pedagogical Design Table Of Contents</b> .....	<b>68</b>
<b>Appendix E: Pilot Broadcast Line-up</b> .....	<b>69</b>
<b>Appendix F: 10 steps to Starting Your Own Pirate TV Station</b> .....	<b>72</b>
<b>Appendix G: Video transcriptions</b> .....	<b>75</b>
<b>Appendix H: East Van Television DVD</b> .....	<b>78</b>
<b>References</b> .....	<b>79</b>



## LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.0: EVTV Line-up.....	33
Table 3.1: Timeline of EVTV Community events.....	48
Table 3.2: EVTV Alternative Media Coverage. ....	49

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<i>AMES:</i>	Access to Media Education Society.
<i>CBC:</i>	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Canada's public broadcaster.
<i>CRTC:</i>	Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission
<i>EVTV:</i>	East Van Television, the title of the low-watt community television created by the youth involved in this project.
<i>GIFTS:</i>	Gulf Island Film and Television School
<i>ICTV:</i>	Independent Community Television, a Vancouver-based community access media organization.
<i>NFB:</i>	National Film Board of Canada
<i>SVFI:</i>	Summer Visions Film Institute for Youth, a summer youth digital video program run by the Pacific Cinematheque and Templeton Secondary School.

## **Introduction to the East Vancouver Television (EVTV) Project**

TV is a severely underutilized medium with one-way communication taking place. Broadcast network to vegged out viewer. Stop being the vegged out viewer. Cut the cable, up with the rabbit ears, write some stories, make some programs, get your ass off the couch. Because EVTV has opened up the airwaves. (EVTV Rant, 2006)

This study is about the East Van Television project which was undertaken in the Grandview Woodlands (Commercial Drive) neighbourhood of Vancouver from January 2005 to August 2006. EVTV originates from my ongoing media education projects with young people through the Pacific Cinematheque and Templeton Secondary School. As a result, a core group of media savvy young people who already had training to act as mentors in the instruction of youth media production were readily available to take part in the EVTV project. Having taught these young people media production, I was keen to create a project that encouraged them to meaningfully engage their neighbourhood within their video-making practice. EVTV was conceived as a participatory research project. From the outset, it was understood that the young participants were expected to participate meaningfully in all aspects of decision-making.

It is important to emphasize that, together with this academic report which provides theoretical perspectives on a critical media pedagogy, combined with an account of how the project unfolded and critical reflections on the process, the submission for my MA project includes my video exploring the process of EVTV and the videos produced by the young participants. These videos, those of the other youth participants and myself, are key components to the EVTV project and should be reviewed in conjunction with the write-up.

## **PART ONE: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON CRITICAL MEDIA EDUCATION**

Since the early days of television, there had been optimism for the medium's far reaching potential and ability to democratize. In 1946, the American Federal Communication Commission Chairman, Paul Porter envisioned the transformative potential of television:

Television's illuminating light will go far, we hope, to drive out the ghosts that haunt the dark corners of our minds -- ignorance, bigotry, fear. It will be able to inform, educate and entertain an entire nation with a magical speed and vividness... It can be democracy's handmaiden by bringing the whole picture of our political, social, economic and cultural life to the eyes as well as the ears.

However, seven decades of television history provide a very different picture than the transformative enlightenment tool envisioned by the first proponents of the medium. Social critics began to question whether television's ability to entertain and distract subverted its capacity for educating the masses. Some cultural theorists argued that television was indeed becoming the most offensive form of popular culture as it eroded and trivialized social values and traditional forms of culture (Postman, 1985). Herman and Chomsky (1998) among others, uncovered the ideological bias in newsgathering and dissemination processes. Because of this bias, citizens were being misinformed. Earlier, Masterman (1980) had written about the commercialization of television, emphasizing the adverse impact of advertising on vulnerable audiences.

Media education, as a body of research and teaching practise, was founded on the perceived need to counter these growing concerns that television was proving less than a democratizing force, especially for children and young people (Kline et al., 2006). From the earlier work of Leavis and Thomson (1933), a considerable body of writing began exploring the relationship between media, education and democracy. Later, educational theorists (see, for example, Masterman 1980) focused on what was happening to youth culture in terms of public mass education's own democratizing mission. Television became an important site of both inquiry and intervention.

Over the last 40 years, media educators world-wide have launched a variety of media education projects which seek to provide creative ways to enhance the relationships between television and democracy. As evidence, a growing literature on media education experiments emerged, ranging from school-based media "literacy" courses focused on the teaching of critical perspectives on news and advertising institutions in the United Kingdom (Masterman, 1985), to participatory education video projects documenting and articulating the struggles for identity and community within grassroots women's organizations in Latin America (Rodriguez, 2001).

In the following discussion I set out to describe and contextualize my own project exploring the relationship between youth, media production and participatory democracy in my neighbourhood, the Grandview Woodlands neighbourhood area of Vancouver. I situate my approach to media democratization through community youth production within the various approaches to media education globally and within Canada, with a specific focus on the articulation of a critical video pedagogy. In the context of Canada's changing broadcasting political economy, I provide the context for 'reclaiming the local

airwaves' as a strategy for keeping media democracy alive. In Part Two, I will describe the way this idea of a low watt community TV station for young producers emerged and became refined in practice as 10 youth and myself struggled to make it a reality. Finally, in Part Three, I set out to evaluate this experiment in critical media education and community production by reflecting critically on the successes and problems our project encountered.

### **Media Education, Youth and Democratization**

The early critiques of television's limitations as a democratizing medium formed the backdrop for the launching of a theory of media education (Andersen, Duncan & Pungente, 2000). The roots of media education lie within the teaching of literary criticism as a means for disarming the erosion of popular culture. In what some scholars have called an "inoculation" approach to media education (Buckingham, 2006), students were to be trained to "discriminate and develop resistance" against the corrupting messages of commercial media (Masterman, 1980).

Crucial in the further development of a critical media education was the writing of Paulo Freire (1970, 1973) who gave new force to the movement through his account, informed by Marxist and neo-Marxist perspectives, of critical pedagogies. In his pedagogy of liberation, oppression itself is first critically investigated by the oppressed. It is subsequently challenged through a continual process of reflection and action. As he argues, a critical humanistic pedagogy "makes oppression and its causes objects of reflection by the oppressed, and in that reflection will come their necessary engagement in the struggle for their liberation," (Freire, 1970, p. 48). Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) therefore calls not just for the recognition of the existence of popular

culture but for its politicization and transformation through consciousness-raising and problem-posing.

For Freire, dialogic learning is horizontal, participatory and mutually created by teachers and students in an iterative inquiry process. It puts democratic values into action by encouraging students to practise democratic relations in the very process of learning. By rooting learning in negotiations, critical pedagogy stresses iterative participation as students critique and question material presented by academic experts, educators, and each other. For Freire, the aim is to avoid what he refers to the “banking” concept of education “in which the scope of action allowed to the students extend only as far as receiving, filing and storing the deposits [of knowledge]” (Freire, 1970, p.72).

Seeking a process of learning which created social change, Freire’s pedagogy calls not just for an elevation in status of the poor and marginalized, but an overhaul of the “structures of domination” that result in their oppression. Freire’s critical pedagogy in the classroom therefore focuses on the role of educational institutions and dialogic processes in ideological reproduction (Kellner, 2003 and Giroux, 1998). As opposed to the banking concept of education where students have deficits of knowledge that are filled with deposits of information from a standardized curriculum chosen by teachers and education experts and delivered by lectures, a Freirean dialogic pedagogical approach privileges problem posing inquiry and critical dialogue working together towards new forms of liberated awareness. Critical pedagogues strive also for a more democratic process of learning, originally advocated by John Dewey (1917), as student-centred because students and teachers create the curriculum together (Kellner, 2003).

Educators within the critical pedagogy tradition share this goal of the politicization of education. In fact, following Freire, they understand that education is inherently political, whether it serves status quo or transformative interests. Media education approaches based in critical pedagogy seek to extend this analysis to media systems and content by examining their contribution to oppression or to emancipatory practice. Focusing on the important relationship between oppression and knowledge, critical media educators' central goal is the understanding and transformation of media cultures.

The emergence of Cultural Studies in the 1970's (Hartley, 2003) added the tools of semiotics, psychoanalysis and ideological analysis to these critical pedagogy approaches, by encouraging students to critically evaluate their everyday cultural and media experiences in an effort to transform them. Elaborating critical pedagogies with methodologies of deconstruction and ideological analysis, media educators like Len Masterman sought to help students uncover the hidden meanings and techniques inherent within specific media texts like news and advertising (Masterman, 1980). Masterman's approach to media education situates representation and symbolic communication as key concepts of analysis. His UK curriculum, which he defines as "topical", draws from the lived experience of the students in attempts to make connections between their lives and broader ideological and historical issues.

Since the 1970's, additions to this critical pedagogy tradition were developed by incorporating the post-structuralist critiques of race class and gender (Kellner, 2003) as well as the feminist critique of subjectivity and identity (hooks, 1994) to a variety of



cultural texts in the classroom. Media education became a means by which teachers could focus on cultural issues of race, class and gender within the classroom.

By the late 1990's media education theory had become a complex and thought-provoking discourse encompassing different pedagogical principles. In her article "The seven great debates in the media literacy movement", Rene Hobbs (1998b) outlines the most significant struggles taking place within the media education movement since educators first challenged the idea that the goal of education was to teach the appreciation and comprehension of high culture. Noting the "protectionist" inoculation rationale for critical media education particularly in the analysis of news discourses and consumer culture she also notes the tendency of critical pedagogues to adopt an expert-driven pedagogical model that ignores young people's taste and cultures. Hobbs highlights the debate about whether student's real media experiences, including their home and leisure media consumption, need to be included in the curriculum by noting Aronowitz and Giroux's insistence on popular culture as preferred texts of analysis.

Hobbs also notes that various attempts to foster media literacy were compounded by a growing uncertainty about the role of media production in critical pedagogies. Most critical theorists agreed that video production that emphasized skills and techniques without reflexive critique were examples of what Freire refers to as activism without focus – action without reflection. As early as the 1970s, according to Goldfarb (2002), the discussions about "the convergence of media activism and education," (p.68) were underway. Building on the "screen arts" approach (Fisher, 1960 and Mueller, 1967), which emphasized the creative practices of self-expression to teach appreciation of cinema genres and forms, critical educators eventually realized that through the process

of film making students were able to recognize and subsequently challenge examples of what Freire defined as “codes of oppression”. From a Freirean pedagogical approach, photos and role-playing dramatizations were adopted as potent means to uncover these codes. Critical media educators like Goldfarb (2002) argue, as well, that video production had to go beyond simple acts of self expression and become a means of applied social criticism. Video production created within a critical pedagogy approach, for Goldfarb, becomes a strategy for engaging students in the very practice of democratizing education and working for social change by offering “a different perspective from which to understand how meaning is produced, (and) what functions it serves,” (p. 73). Goldfarb further suggests that as producers, “students learn that there is an alternative to resisting interpellation through mainstream media, or critical reading alone. They can appropriate the means of production to produce new sorts of meanings” (p.69). Goldfarb strongly endorses the need to teach media analysis and deconstruction alongside media production, recommending that “(b)y learning the production techniques that go into the making of a given text, students can understand the mechanisms of ideological construction at the level of the medium” (p.69). Goldfarb supports an educational process which calls for storytelling based on relevant thematic investigation, the democratization of production roles and peer critique. The process further requires careful reflection during video production and editing prior to a screening combined with group critique. With these pedagogical strategies, critical media production provides ways to challenge heterosexist, race, class and gender bias in media and society.

In her book chapter *Building citizenship skills through media education*, Renee Hobbs (1998a) discusses the many ways that production based media education projects help students explore notions of democracy and citizenship. She argues that the development of leadership and self-expression, as well as information skills are useful strategies for community building. In a related article, Hobbs (1998b) points to the migration of production oriented media education approaches outside of educational institutions. In a recent literature review, Buckingham (Buckingham et al, 2006), likewise discusses the varied but equally compelling reasons for non-school system youth media education projects. As examples, Buckingham refers to: youth work where media production and deconstruction is used as a tool for empowerment and identity construction, community media or media education from within a larger movement towards media democratization, an arts approach centred on youth voicing and self-expression through aesthetic exploration and appreciation, participatory video approaches to community building (using action research models), and the film and television industry model that positions skill-building and employment as central to the development of media education. Buckingham's study focused on the historical development of media education within the UK, but many of these same issues are prevalent within the Canadian media education landscape, as discussed below.

## **Canadian Context**

Canada's media education history began in earnest in the late 1960's with the formation of a Canadian Association for Screen Education (Andersen, Duncan & Pungente, 2000). The second wave of media education in Canada followed in the 1980's and 1990's with a more focused interest in the development of media education

curriculum at both the elementary and secondary school level. Before the end of the 1990's, all English Language Arts curriculum in Canada was required to include media education (Andersen, Duncan & Pungente, 2000). The late 1990's and early 2000's witnessed a growth in community-based media education organizations that expanded media education teaching outside of traditional educational settings. In Vancouver, for example, the Pacific Cinémathèque's Education Department and the Access to Media Education Society (AMES) based out of the Gulf Island Film and Television School (GIFTS) sought to bring critical media education in the form of video production in both school and community settings. Information on these community based media education organizations can be obtained from the following website addresses:

[www.cinematheque.bc.ca/education](http://www.cinematheque.bc.ca/education), [www.accesstomedia.org](http://www.accesstomedia.org), and [www.giftsfilms.com](http://www.giftsfilms.com).

The Canadian critique of television's failed potential rises out of the concern with the medium's failure to reflect and represent the country's diverse identity, (Audley, 1993). In particular, the 1955 Fowler Commission, a Royal Commission examining the cultural impact of the Canadian broadcasting industry, paved the way for the Canadian Broadcasting Act which, in addition to allowing private broadcasting in the country, argued for the production of both public and private of programming that reflected Canadian culture and values. The subsequent creation of the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), the federal organization responsible for regulating broadcast licenses, signalled the country's commitment to this goal of advancing Canadian culture and values.

The democratizing and transformative potential of public broadcasting was envisioned in the creation of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), which

aimed to reflect values and day-to-day experiences of Canadians. The 1991 Broadcasting Act specifies the social responsibilities of the CBC in the following terms:

...to safeguard, enrich and strengthen the cultural, political, social and economic fabric of Canada... by providing a wide range of programming that reflects Canadian attitudes, opinions, ideas, values and artistic creativity, by displaying Canadian talent in entertainment programming and by offering information and analysis concerning Canada and other countries from a Canadian point of view.

Along with the first draft of the Broadcasting Act, the 1960's brought a newly critical perspective to Canadian television. Situated within a larger discussion of media, cultural production and democracy, critiques of Canadian news and journalism began to emerge and as first identified in the Fowler report, there continued to be concerns about Canadian television's failure to provide diversity that reflects local communities resulting in a media system with programming concentration on central Canada, (Collins, 1990). Academics from various disciplines also questioned the commercialization of Canadian broadcasting and the resulting concentration of ownership within the private sector (Lorimer and Gasher, 2001). These concerns led to the eventual development of provincial policies which created 'educational networks' to counteract the commercialized system and to promote publicly funded broadcasting to the general audience including high quality educational programming for children. At the same time, in the early 1960's, "(p)rovincial educational organizations ...were pressuring the federal government to open up the broadcasting licensing policies..."(Wilson, Bell and Powell, 1984, p.2). Over the next two decades (1960's – 1980s), educational communications organizations, such as the Knowledge Network in British Columbia, were established across the country, (Wilson, Bell and Powell, 1984).

During this period huge advancements were made in video recording technology. Portable, low cost video cameras (Sony Porta Pacs) provided increasing accessibility to the means of TV production which encouraged a “Do-It-Yourself” attitude to program development. A new generation of media makers emerged, who were determined to use the new technology as a means of taking control of broadcasting from the highly centralized stranglehold of corporate values and marketing. The aim was to break the stranglehold and re-invest the medium with notions of democratic participation and community access (Teasdale, 1999, Boyle, 1997, Juhasz, 1995). In other areas of the world, filmmakers and artists began to explore the potential of video with guerrilla TV projects, pirate broadcasting, video art, and community access cable, (Boyle, 1997, Goldberg, 1990, Downing, 2001). Prime examples of such radical initiatives are described in Parry Teasdale’s *Videofreex* (1999) and DeeDee Halleck’s *Handheld visions: The impossible possibilities of community media* (2002). Likewise, progressive Canadian filmmakers and community activists were eager to explore the new technology’s potential to engage audiences in de-institutionalized democratic production processes by making it possible for diverse communities across the nation to participate in the national dialogue about Canadian values and aspirations for social change from their own experience and in their own voices, (Goldberg, 1990). The National Film Board of Canada’s Challenge for Change program is still looked to as a model for community participation in television production. The program exemplifies an early experiment in the exploration of the relationships between education, television and movements for social change.

Challenge for Change attempts to implicate the communications media in the process of social change...which means, among other things, directing and

manipulating the tools of modern communication necessary to gain that expertise and participation (National Film Board of Canada, 1968).

Cable television appeared on the Canadian media landscape in the 1970s and brought with it new concerns about the changing structure of television and the ability of the Canadian regulatory body (CRTC) to adequately represent the distinctive cultural interests of Canadians. Since its inception in 1968, the CRTC has made progressively more corporate-friendly policy decisions that further reduce the democratizing potential of television in favour of commercial interests. To counter this marketplace emphasis, a series of public policy reports were published that argued for the development of community produced television. CRTC policy throughout the 1970s required that cable companies, as a part of their licensing requirements, provide equipment, training and broadcast of community-produced content to the public in the areas they serviced. Community-produced access shows began to appear across the country and Canadians got a taste for the potential of television as a vehicle for community participation through public dialogue with shows such as “Women’s Perspective” a call-in show produced by the local women’s resource centre in Powell River, BC which was broadcast on that community’s cable station (Goldberg, 1990).

In 1986, the Caplan-Sauvageau Task Force on Broadcasting Policy in Canada published the Masse Report, advocating for the creation of a special license for community groups, to be run by community organizations or non-profits, while paid for by cable companies. Community groups viewed the Masse Report as a victory for citizen access to television (Goldberg, 1990). This victory was short lived. In 1986 the CRTC ruled to allow cable companies to solicit and broadcast commercial advertising. An even greater set-back came two years later as Brian Mulroney’s Conservative government

excluded the community access license clause in the 1986 broadcasting policy. This outcome is hardly surprising in a policy designed to provide financial support for the expansion of cable and pay TV industries. As a result, Canada became one of the most “wired” nations in the world. Cable subscription rates peaked in the early 1990’s with over 7.1 million cable subscribers (Statistics Canada, October 2003). Finally, and signalling the absolute erosion of policy that once established a place for community programming- however limited - within Canada’s cable landscape, the CRTC reversed the license requirement policy for cable companies in the 1990’s (Goldberg, 1990).

Canadian cable companies are no longer required to provide funding and resources for community access channels. As a result, community access to television broadcasting system was disappearing in this country even as the stranglehold of cable companies itself was challenged by competition from the internet and satellite technologies. These challenges were compounded with the emergence during the 1990s of both new digital modes of production in the form of low cost digital video cameras and computer based editing software, as well as digital distribution (digital satellites, and internet distribution). The digitization of video production and distribution had important commercial and social implications as this development competed increasingly with over-the-air and cable distribution.

The new generation of low cost, accessible technologies of production signalled a *new wave of alternative media organizations concerned with the links between media democratization and social change*. Informed by the previous generation of experiments in media education and democratization, digital video programs began in schools, community centres and film organizations, many with a focus on video production by



young people. Even the CBC embraced this new trend in media technology production and distribution. Canada's public broadcaster created a 13 part series called *Road Movies* (Schellner, 1992) in an attempt to create an alternative to the mainstream CBC approach by hiring youth as producers of their own stories. Another compelling example of this alternative media trend is the IndyMedia network ([www.indymedia.org](http://www.indymedia.org)), a citizen-produced news network using digital video and internet technologies to provide alternatives to mainstream commercial media. Indymedia continues to function as part of the anti- globalization movement's critique of corporate news broadcasters' inadequate and misleading coverage of pressing global political and economic issues.

It is within this framework of media technological development, global and national policy change that I set out to create a *participatory, community-based, critical media education project*. In the project described below I sought to apply the critical media production pedagogy articulated by theorists like Brian Goldfarb (2002), Renee Hobbs (1998a, 1998b) and Douglas Kellner (2003). My own experience with non-curriculum based media education had taught me to appreciate Freire's insistence that dialogic and democratic learning practices provide the best pedagogical foundation upon which to build a critical media education practice.

First, to summarize this pedagogical approach, I argue that in the face of a commercially dominated, globally homogenized world of mass media, local communities and neighbourhoods provide the critical pedagogical spaces that young people must reclaim to assert their individual and collective power. This understanding is especially true within the struggle for media democratization. It is through the careful investigation of their local neighbourhoods that young people can articulate their own ideas of

citizenship and agency. My project uses low watt television broadcasting as a vehicle for this investigation and dialogue.

Second, my understanding is that a critical media education perspective establishes the theoretical grounds (drawing on Freire, 1970, 1973) from which to begin this exploration. To this central insight about the theoretical significance of critical media education, I would add that critically oriented video production provides a means from which to explore and respond to vital political issues that now confront our communities. This understanding necessitates a thoughtfully designed and genuinely democratic production process. The role of citizenship, in particular the agency of young people in this regard, comes under careful examination. This democratizing production process entails hands-on media production, community involvement and critical investigation of relevant neighbourhood issues. Collaborative digital video production mirrors and invigorates the democratic process by flattening the power structures of production and requiring iterative critical reflections. At the same time, and following Freirean praxis, production based critical media education projects encourage students to reposition themselves from the role of passive viewers (consumers) of media into a more actively engaged roles of media producers and community activists.

## **PART TWO: THE EAST VAN TELEVISION PROJECT**

In this part I set out to describe an action research project which explores the relationship between youth, media production and participatory democracy in my neighbourhood, the Commercial Drive area of Vancouver. First, I lay out a personal inventory of some of my prior media education projects which are directly relevant to this study. Two of these projects provided specific pedagogical challenges and a third continues to be a testing ground for my media education practice. I go on to discuss a National Film Board documentary that inspired me to imagine a project based on narratives of hope. Then I proceed to describe my research process, from the initial workshops through to the broadcast experiments.

### **Personal Inventory: Selections from Prior Media Education Projects**

This is where my past experience in media production and education begins to intersect with my interest in launching a participatory critical media education research project in my East Vancouver neighbourhood. My aim was to facilitate media democratization through reclaiming the community airwaves for young video producers. Since 1999, I have worked at the Pacific Cinémathèque, a Vancouver film centre, developing and teaching production-based media education projects. Through a process of self-reflection, critical evaluation of my practice including instruction and discussions with my colleagues and mentors, I was able to develop and articulate a critically informed pedagogical approach to production based media education. My projects ranged from one-week workshops with 9 year olds on producing public service

announcements to counter racism, to documentary production residencies with community artists. These projects involved working within formal and informal educational settings and with educators of vastly differing teaching philosophies and approaches. My graduate studies and community-based media education work informed each other and, in turn, my project design.

These previous projects, in particular, are indicative of the experience I brought to the design of EVTV. The first two were one-time only projects which presented specific pedagogical challenges that contributed to the development of my media education design of EVTV. The third project is still ongoing. This program has been a testing ground for my ideas and teaching practise as I developed the East Van Television community based broadcast project. I will discuss what I learned from each of these three projects in what follows.

The Things We Carry project<sup>1</sup> was an activist video initiative for secondary school youth from across Vancouver that started with a conference exploring issues of sustainable consumption, globalization and environmentalism. Over the course of 2003, I worked with eight teams to produce short videos exploring the project themes. Although the process of the Things We Carry project proved engaging and very worthwhile for the students involved, the resulting videos were a disappointment from a pedagogical perspective. In my view, the students produced self-conscious “student videos” which were mostly didactic and predictable. We were given what the students thought we wanted, in the manner of a school assignment. They did not provide any alternative solutions or visions to issues of over-consumption or corporate globalization. In the end, I

---

<sup>1</sup> See: [www.cinematheque.bc.ca/ttwc03.html](http://www.cinematheque.bc.ca/ttwc03.html)

wondered if they had gained any new knowledge about sustainability or environmentalism. Certainly, there was little evidence of critical insight or new understanding in their completed projects.

I was left with two self-critical reflections arising from our pedagogical design and praxis. Firstly, this outcome was disappointing because by moving the Things We Carry workshops out of the secondary school setting and into a film centre/ community location we had mistakenly anticipated that the project would galvanize a critical participatory learning process. Instead, I became aware that an uncritically articulated notion of “youth as expert” ready for critical engagement in community-based projects is unrealistic. Because they were active in environmental organizations or classes, I mistakenly assumed that they were already critically engaged - that they were sufficiently knowledgeable about the subject matter of the videos they were producing.

Since we failed to focus their attention on the role of critical inquiry in the preproduction process, the students were not ready to explore the role of critical thinking within media making. They became actively engaged in the mechanics and procedures of collaborative digital video production. However, in a way that represents their secondary school experiences, they were not encouraged to take responsibility for their own self-directed learning. So they never challenged their preconceptions and the opportunity for them to develop new ways of looking at familiar problems was lost. On further reflection, this experience with the Things We Carry project taught me the crucial importance of incorporating youth-directed research in production based media education projects. Although the inclusion of a research dimension can seem like a daunting task to the young participants who are already a bit overwhelmed with the learning about the

production process, it is a crucial element within an authentic media pedagogy. The research component is a necessary aspect of critical media production.

The Civics project (2004) was another critical media project that taught me valuable lessons in critical pedagogies. It was mounted as a joint media production research effort by the Cinémathèque and the City of Vancouver Youth Outreach Team with the goal of challenging young people to explore and engage politically with pressing social issues in their community. The neighbourhood we worked within was Strathcona, an East Vancouver neighbourhood encompassing Chinatown, the Downtown East Side and a residential area on the verge of gentrification. Over the course of six months, a group of 7 teen youth recruited from an active community centre, two teen mentors, the City of Vancouver Youth Outreach Team employees and myself worked to create a video which explored the youth perception of Strathcona.

In a dress rehearsal for what would later become my graduate project, I encountered two hurdles that taught valuable lessons. First, I was forced to grapple with the importance of production experience and competence within a media education production process. The young people who participated in the Civics project had no previous video experience. Although they were eager to experiment and explore the production process, they had difficulty moving beyond basic forms of videographic self-expression. They lacked the range of experiences that would allow them to create narratives that went beyond personal identity exploration. I recognized in this the importance of creating opportunities for students to work through the basics of self-expression before they begin more complex projects involving community engagement. I

decided that, for my graduate project, it was better to work with youth who had significant previous video experience.

The Civics project introduced me to the community development strategies and techniques of community mapping. The two community mapping exercises we used proved to be invaluable opportunities for the youth to begin an analysis of the physical and social space they occupy in their community. This exploration of the meaning of community did not easily translate into the scripting or storytelling process. We had simply failed to make the crucial connection between the community research/ mapping exercises and the visualized ways of engaging with communities in video (Goldfarb, 2002). I resolved to find new, visually based ways of community mapping for inclusion in my next project.

A third opportunity to reflect on the development of critical media pedagogy emerged while working at the Summer Visions Film Institute for Youth (SVFI) from 1999 to 2006. SVFI is a summer digital video program for youth aged 14-19 that I have directed since its inception. Originally, our design<sup>2</sup> of SVFI drew very much from an arts education pedagogical approach that values students' experiences and stories and encourages reflective creative production, identity exploration and identity construction. Art educators explore the aesthetic and technical elements of video production, particularly the visual language of film and TV (Goldfarb, 2002). This approach emphasizes the development of creative, artistic "play" and encourages the appreciation

---

<sup>2</sup> The pedagogical design of Summer Visions is a collaborative effort bringing together media education professionals, academics, filmmakers, teachers and youth. patti fraser, Stuart Poyntz, Analee Wienburger and Jim Crescenzo all contribute to the pedagogical design. A number of youth, including Evan Crowe, Jorah Fraser Porteous, Kai Nagata, Teresa Alfeld, Adrian Underhill, Gabe Forsythe, and many others contributed significantly to the program's development..

of values of cultural production and notions of aesthetics with students. Given our commitment to empowerment, we also employ collaborative production models which conscientiously avoid the film industry model of hierarchical specific production roles. To this media arts education approach, we added a critical education perspective that encouraged students to explore the discourses of ideological deconstruction, critical thinking, and notions of citizenship. We position their creative acts of storytelling and writing within a larger critical conversation exploring the debates about representation and consumer citizenship.

Every yearly institute provides us with a new opportunity to re-examine the pedagogy of SVFI. In particular, one of the defining elements of Summer Visions is the peer-based, participatory learning model based on youth mentors. For each program, we hire up to 12 young people, aging in range from 16 – 24, to work as peer mentors and instructors for the video teams. These are young people I have worked with for three to seven years. They have become skilled media educators and producers themselves. The mentors are remarkably committed to the engagement with the difficult process of critical media education and to employing the techniques we have learned together: problem posing inquiry, the role of dialogue in the collaborative process, and the fundamental re-learning of power dynamics required for truly democratic learning.

Summer Visions takes place in the neighbourhood I, and most of the youth mentors and instructors live in. The other youth participants, however, come from across the Lower Mainland, and often bring with them (negative) preconceived notions of East Vancouver. We spend a lot of time defining our neighbourhood and asking the youth from elsewhere that spend their summer with us to be respectful of the stories and people



they discover here. The youth mentors, in particular, have become very adept at defining the place where they live to others.

My sustained work in my own community through SVFI and an extra-curricular film program (the after school Film Academy at Templeton Secondary School), I have developed long-term mentoring relationships with dozens of youth in my neighbourhood. It was conversations with these youth, along with a personal politicization around the changing nature of our neighbourhood, that convinced me to pursue graduate studies in an attempt not only to understand better the work I was currently doing, but to create a media education project that positioned citizenship and critical engagement of our community as central. It was this desire to define and in some respects protect our neighbourhood that motivated me to create a media education opportunity that inspires young video makers to learn more about their community and engage with it at level beyond what their own individual experiences have so far allowed.

All three of the above projects were built on a model of collaborative filmmaking in an attempt to democratize the production process. In this view, critical investigation into process engages students with larger ideas of democracy and citizenship. In imagining the design of my graduate research project, I realized I had yet to explore successfully the shift from media education as self-expression and identity exploration to media production as critical engagement with community building. I wanted an opportunity to access the ability of young people to engage with their neighbourhood in ways that allow them to stake out a role for themselves in critiquing the problems identified and creating solutions. I wanted to develop a pedagogical praxis manifested in a project design and teaching informed by current theory. From this standpoint, critical

media production creates the space and the tools to achieve authentic community engagement that is much in line with Freire's empowerment pedagogy.

My long-term work (from 1999 to the present) with the neighbourhood youth as creative video makers with something to say highlighted for me an additional practical goal to showcase youth produced media to the larger community. The intelligent, technically strong and socially relevant youth productions I was involved with at the Cinémathèque were screened within a youth "ghetto"- watched by a few hundred young people (including friends), their families and the media education professionals who constitute the "Youth In Film" community. Unfortunately, this community includes of only a dozen or so non-profit workers, artists and institutional-based organizations.

From the early 1990's to the present, a bounty of youth festivals have been organized across the country. Typical examples include the Reel 2 Real International Film Festival for Youth in Vancouver, the BC Student Film Festival and the Canadian National Youth Film Festival in Ottawa. These festivals provide realistic opportunities for youth filmmakers to interact with other young people in media production. For example, at the Cinémathèque, I observed the beginnings of a youth produced genre<sup>3</sup>. In this context, I noted that youth-made videos exist so strictly within this closed loop of "youth-produced" media that youth produced media work from across the country started to look and feel similar. Elements of this type of youth media production are thought provoking and instructive. The Cinémathèque media educators, including myself, were after all, helping to create a video vernacular that spoke directly to youth. However, I felt we were still limiting the critical communication potential of youth video. Not only did I

---

<sup>3</sup> The characteristics of a youth produced genre are defined on the Cinematheque resource website: [www.cinematheque.bc.ca/inpoint/pdf/youthproductions01.pdf](http://www.cinematheque.bc.ca/inpoint/pdf/youthproductions01.pdf)

want more people to see their compelling work, but I wanted to find a way for young people to exert some control over the distribution and context of their art.

Our work in the past has met with a significant level of success in helping young people find stories and issues in their immediate community that allowed them to articulate their hopes and vision in creative ways. However, while expressing themselves imaginatively, these young media makers often failed to articulate a sufficiently informed understanding of citizenship and the implications for engagement with their communities. With the East Van Television project I wanted the participants to extend the goals of engagement beyond concerns for their own personal development towards a more committed engagement with the larger social issues confronting their community and society as a whole.

I became increasingly interested in the way collaborative digital video production can mirror and challenge the democratic process. As I noted earlier, many of the video projects I worked on were designed with a peer-mentoring and a flattened power structure. I wanted to study in a more rigorous fashion how this process translates into notions of citizenship and specific forms of the democratic process.

Finally, I wanted to provide venues and opportunities for youth to embrace agency (that is, their potential to act relevantly as individuals and as a collective to effect social change) while demonstrating to the local adults and larger community the potential and abilities of young people in our neighbourhood. My intention was to facilitate media education work that provides critical space in which to advance alternative perspectives on community life and to illuminate community based solutions to social problems.

Accordingly, my past involvement in media education provided valuable lessons for the design of the EVTV project. I resolved to explore the ways that my new understanding of critical video production could galvanize young video-makers in a more sustained political involvement with their communities. This process of sustained politically-orientated community work includes: the acceptance of critical research responsibilities as a fundamental aspect of video production, alternative visual ways to explore community mapping, the recruitment of youth with significant previous experience in identity-based media production, the exploration of opportunities for youth to define and engage their audience within their neighbourhood, and the creation of alternative distribution options for youth produced video. I wanted to create a media project with the aim of constructing alternative solutions to community issues. This called for an “imagining” of concrete ways for youth to exercise collective power in re-defining their individual and collective notions of citizenship.

A significant element of my project design process fell into place in 2004, when I saw a National Film Board documentary, *The Take*. Created by anti-globalization activists Naomi Klein and Avi Lewis, *The Take* suggests a new way to respond to the anti-globalization movement’s seeming inability to articulate alternatives to the shortcomings of advanced capitalism. For my purposes, *The Take* provided a compelling link to Paulo and Ana Maria Araújo Freire (2004), Henri Giroux (1997), and bell hook’s (1994) transformative pedagogies by offering a critique that focuses on solutions as well as problem posing. Avi Lewis, describing the initial inspiration for the film states: “We set out to make a resolutely hopeful film. We wanted to find people constructing real alternatives to corporate capitalism,” (O’Keefe, 2004). By showing successful stories of

worker controlled factories in Argentina, *The Take* provides a vivid media-based critique of social injustice paired with the creative articulation of the alternatives. I envisaged that building a critical media education project on the same notion of narratives of hope could motivate the youth I work with to explore their hopes for the future in addition to critiquing their place in their community

### **Designing the EVTV Project (2005-2006): Knowledge for the People**

As with any community based research project, my first task was to grapple with my complicated role within the project. My responsibilities as researcher included the project design, theoretical grounding and critical analysis. My responsibilities as a media educator and project facilitator were much broader. I adopted the roles of motivator, teacher, organizer, fundraiser, sounding board and host as we worked over a year and a half of meetings, content production, workshops, screening and grant applications. I began the project with a clear understanding of the complex role of community researchers (Shor, 1992), and set out to maintain the connections between critical observation and the pedagogical praxis. I looked to Giroux's notion of the transformative intellectual (Giroux, 1998) to guide my teaching along with the work of bell hooks (1994) and Ira Shor (1992). Transformative intellectuals characterize their commitment to the process of critical investigation as collective knowledge building. Often this process is informed by facilitators or teachers from the outside, but the knowledge created originated from within the community.

The next step in the design process involved defining the project. After informal discussions with many youth I work with, I decided that we should ground our media education experiment in the creation of a low-watt, community based television station. I

had heard of the early television pirate broadcasters in Europe and the United States (Halleck, 2002 and Teasdale, 1999), and had met a Vancouver artist who had experimented with low-watt UHF broadcasting in the late 1990's. I was drawn to the idea of combining the latest digital video technology with an analog television transmission. In the age of youtube and ipods, television broadcast media has been bypassed in favour of web-casting and digital video streaming. However, I live in a neighbourhood where only some people have high-speed Internet, but everyone has a TV set. Thus, we aimed were to define our neighbourhood and audience by a broadcast radius and thought that TV was the best medium to reach our neighbours. UHF broadcasting requires viewers to use television antennas (rabbits ears) to receive a signal and we were looking forward to providing our neighbours with a reason to unhook their cable. No doubt, the subversive potential of becoming "TV pirates" was appealing to the youth involved in the project. We wanted to challenge our neighbours' ideas of television and persuade them to re-examine the effects commercial television has on their lives.

As low-watt broadcasting is technically illegal<sup>4</sup>, I had to determine what aspects of the project I would be solely responsible for and what elements I would co-create with the youth participants. I decided to take full responsibility for the creation, placement and use of the transmitter and antennae, thus assuming any legal risk entailed. The youth were involved in the creation of the station as an organization, the production of the content, and the organization of screenings and events. This important distinction about our respective roles and responsibilities was made at the beginning of the recruitment

---

<sup>4</sup> At the urging of ICTV and other community media activists, the CRTC has approved, in theory, licensing for low-watt community based TV stations. However, they have not yet created the application process, thus making any low watt TV broadcast a violation of CRTC regulations.

process, as many of the participants were less than 18 years of age. I spoke, as well, to the parents of the participants to make them aware of the project parameters.

My next step was to sketch out the workshop timelines and process. I researched and planned for several workshops exploring visual community mapping, the history of community media, research and interview methods, and named the station East Van Television (EVTV). Over the course of the next year and a half, the name was the only thing about our project that remained unchanged. In the appendix, I include a detailed workshop timeline and description

I then began the recruitment process. Because this project was designed as an investigation of critical media production practice at an advanced level, I invited youth I had worked with before and who had proven production skills. I intended to represent the diversity of class and ethnicity of our neighbourhood in my recruitment. However, my group is more acutely indicative of how the neighbourhood is changing with regard to ethnic, class and age composition, than the current make-up. The EVTV participants are mix of upper middle class youth in the beginnings of post-secondary, and lower-income, but well educated children of artists and cultural workers.

My previous relationship with the young people in EVTV was longstanding. I had been very much involved with their previous media production work. With the exception of one woman, I had introduced each of the participants to digital video and mentored them over a period of years. Most of them work with me as peer mentors and instructors at the Summer Visions Film Institute. I have been an ever-shifting combination of teacher, disciplinarian, confidant, mentor, employer and friend to the youth participants. I am a friend with many of their parents and we are connected

through engagement with a large community of activists, artists, filmmakers and educators in our neighbourhood. This familiarity brought challenges but also provided me with the knowledge to choose participants experiencing the same critical transition point in their lives. All of the youth were moving into adulthood, entering post-secondary and/ or full time employment and expanding their daily lives beyond their neighbourhood and city.

Once the youth participants were properly committed and fully aware of their project responsibilities<sup>5</sup> we then began our bi-weekly meetings and workshops in January 2005.

The design of the workshop changed over the course of the process. The group had approved the initial design at our first meeting but by the second time we met, I began to sense small glimmers of hesitation and boredom among the group with an academic approach to workshop design that had derailed previous community-based projects. I had designed the material to be presented in what I thought to be a very engaging and interactive way, but it was not as well received as I had intended. So, although I hadn't planned a formal group workshop to discuss our rationale for the project, we took pause to generate a list of "why we were involved in EVTV". I had been very forthcoming about my reasons for gathering them, but wanted to be clear on their reasons. I had assumed the real pull to the project was the oppositional appeal of illegal, pirate broadcasts.

What I discovered, however, was their genuine desire to produce work that allowed them to engage with their community regardless of the transgressive potential of

---

<sup>5</sup> See appendix for a recruitment brochure created to outline the project parameters.



pirate broadcasting. They wanted a venue to produce work outside the confines of school or paid work – hence their discomfort with an overly structured, academic approach. Their interest was in “building” something together, both conceptually and literally. In this regard, the organizational aspect of creating a local youth driven TV station was a key motivation for their involvement.

This information allowed me to shift the design focus to incorporate certain elements that I found crucial to the development of their awareness of the critical potential of community based media production, while retaining the momentum necessary for video production. For example, we set aside two or three evenings to draft a manifesto for our station. The manifesto meetings included brainstorm sessions which allowed me to facilitate discussions on the nature of citizenship, specifically the notion of youth citizenship, and the role of ideology in media production and distribution. I was not introducing these as novel concepts; rather we were discussing their implications to our work. Through manifesto drafting sessions, the group began the process of defining their roles as community engaged media producers.

In addition to my presentation on the historical development of community media, we also held meetings with a local independent community media organizer and video-maker. Michael Lithgow is well-versed in the CRTC policy, and informed us about the current low-watt broadcast license application submitted by Independent Community Television, a local open-access alternative media organization. He outlined for us the current state of community access cable and the erosion of the commercial cable industry’s commitment to community-produced programming.

Our preproduction process stretched over several months (from March to June) and included a visual mapping workshop, several group pitch sessions, and individual story research and scriptwriting, in addition to our series of meetings to write the manifesto. We examined ideas for the overall format of the pilot collection of videos, comparing the benefits of variety show and news magazine formats. Each participant pitched at least one idea during the pre-production process. We settled on a loose collection of videos that would be tied together by the thematic link of exploring our neighbourhood. Our collection was interspersed with short station identification promotional videos. This format provided flexibility and alleviated concerns around the levels of commitment that individuals could undertake, allowing people to contribute what their circumstances would allow.

During the pre-production phase, I guided two members to write a grant application. As a result, the group received some funding from the City of Vancouver which allowed us to organize and hold an event to screen the first series of videos at a local venue. This event presented us with a crucial deadline to work towards and allowed the group to imagine new ways of interacting with their audience not achievable with a conventional broadcast. From the grant funding we also secured a good quality digital video camera. Paired with the equipment I borrowed from the Media Lab at SFU, and Templeton Secondary School, we were in a position to launch an intensive production period over one month in the summer of 2005. In true guerrilla media fashion, we were viewing rough cuts of many of the pieces days before our premiere screening. Because of the experience of the youth participants, my involvement in the production process shifted away from technical instruction to facilitation, coordination and mentoring. I read

scripts, offered guidance and critique, organized equipment and provided technical support.

Over the production and post-production period, the core group of 10 EVT V youth enlisted help from friends and family to help with production and to take part in the projects. The pilot EVT V line-up consisted of nine video shorts and three promotional spots. The content was varied and reflected both the cultural interests and political intent of the station. Two of the youth, Kai and Caitlin, were particularly motivated, and produced 5 of the pieces and all of the promotional videos between the two of them. The table below lists the videos produced (not including the promotional station identification pieces) with a short description of each piece. In Part 3, I discuss the content of the some of the videos in relationship to the larger issues of youth agency and citizenship.

Table 2.0 EVT V Line-up

Name of Project	Length	Description
Manifesto	1:44	The EVT V pirates take your TV hostage and list the demands of their media democratizing mission.
East Van Vigilante Squad	4:20	A comedic series following two wanna-be vigilantes as they foil neighbourhood crimes.
For the Record	5:51	One woman uses the camera to confess to her friend (and the audience) that she slept with her friend's boyfriend. First in a proposed series of closet confessionals aimed to provide catharsis for the confessor and entertainment for the audience.
Hookin' it Up: East Van Style	9:56	A low budget take on a reality dating show with two awkward contestants and three under-enthused hosts. First in a series hoping to add a bit more reality into the reality dating show genre.
Bike Rant	4:19	A local bike enthusiast calls for the community's participation in demanding recreational bike parks in east Vancouver. Second in a series of the Ranter's Corner at EVT V.
Tonnes of Fun University	7:18	A biographical documentary about local spoken word/ hip hop group TOFU. First in a proposed series of neighbourhood artist profiles.
East Side B-Side	3:27	A hip hop love letter to Commercial Drive neighbourhood. First in a series of music videos examining community issues.
Fuck Buck Slice – Episode 1	29:00	A cooking show for young people with no cash – the shows host cooks healthy, inexpensive food for friends. First in a series.
EVT V Rant	2:29	The EVT V call to action – explains the rationale behind the station and points to some specific issues that demand our attention. First in the Ranter's Corner series.

The first EVTV public screening was held at the WISE Hall on July 22, 2005. In many ways, the first event became the test screening, and many of the participants viewed it as an initial focus group for their work. It provided a huge collective learning opportunity for them as they planned, promoted, organized, and enlivened the evening with a DJ, two bands, and a small theatre piece for launching the videos. Over 200 people attending the event and almost half signed a list for regular EVTV updates, creating the groundwork for an email information network.

After our first community screening, we began the process of building the antennae to boost our signal from our small, ordered-from-the-Internet transmitter kit. I arranged a series of meetings and workshops with a local electrical engineer turned performance artist who is Vancouver's expert on low watt radio and television broadcast. We cut cables, soldered extensions and mounted a 3 meter dipole antenna of copper wire and PVC tubing on the roof of a supporter's house. Two of the EVTV participants, who were over 19 years old and had decided their desire to understand the transmission process overrode their concern with the legal risk, helped me with this process. I had secured the broadcast location from a community member who lives in a centrally located, relatively high point in the neighbourhood. The supporters were made aware of any potential legal risk associated with housing the broadcast technology.

At 4pm on Sunday, November 12, 2005 we flipped the switch and aired the 12 videos created specifically for the pilot broadcast in a loop, which lasted two days. In the lead-up to the broadcast, the EVTV participants not involved in the transmitter and antenna assembly were busy with a series of carefully planned neighbourhood "interruptions" or performance skits intended to promote the upcoming launch. The

promotion included comedic skits, postering and in homage to our original counter-culture TV pirate pioneers, some pre-meditated streaking. Unfortunately, our pilot broadcast had a disappointingly small radius of three to four blocks owing to the large trees and tall houses in the neighbourhood. We broadcast continuously for a few weeks and then stopped to assess the technological improvements needed.

Over the next year, EVTV participants held semi-regular meetings organized around the continuation of content production and the discussion of how to improve the broadcast technology. Two members in particular were very active in the content production and, as of fall 2006, have produced 4 episodes of the cooking show, *Fuck Buck Slice*. By March 2006, meetings were held less regularly and attendance dwindled until May and June 2006 when EVTV participated in the Car-Free Commercial Drive Community Festival. This festival is a community-organized event for which car and bus traffic is halted along a major street in Vancouver's Grandview Woodlands neighbourhood. The festival organizers are committed to grassroots community development and the event encourages residents to reclaim their streets with a huge neighbourhood-wide street party including musicians, roving artists, local merchants, artisans, a "kid's" area and the East Van Chopperfest (local DIY bike enthusiasts).

The first year of the festival inspired many of us to rethink our relationship to our neighbourhood and seemed an excellent way to reinvigorate EVTV participation. We began to meet again on a regular basis with the goal of doing a live broadcast during the second annual Car Free Commercial Drive Festival. Two members of the group and myself attended several festival meetings to introduce EVTV to the organizing community and secure a location for our antennae, transmitter, mixing boards and

monitors. Luckily, one of the festival organizers lives in a condominium low-rise right on Commercial Drive with an easily accessible roof deck. The building is at a geographically ideal location for broadcasting with line of sight coverage for a radius of up to 15 blocks. Our group had long been eyeing the building as a potential transmitter location. We developed a plan to cover the festival with two roving camera crews on the street doing impromptu interviews and gathering images of the festival in addition to the roof camera providing a “pirate’s-eye” view of the festival from above the crowd. The day before the festival we borrowed an enormous amount of equipment from a local secondary school and set up a live three-channel switching system on the roof. The weather forecast was for rain and we estimated we had over \$50,000 worth of gear that was exposed to the elements. Two of the EVTV participants set up a tent and camped out on the roof. They spent the night setting up the mixing station and building a pulley system to move digital videotapes up the side of the building.

On the morning of the festival, the transmitter and antennae were moved from their original location. During this move the transmitter was dropped. Luckily one of the youth who had worked on the transmitter had the confidence to open it up and look for broken parts. One of the components had fallen off the circuit board, but the youth inspecting it recognized the part. Two hours before our hopeful broadcast time, he biked home, opened up his guitar amp, found a similar looking component, ran back up to the roof deck and plugged the piece in. It worked. At 11:00 on June 16, 2006, EVTV began its second broadcast (and first live event) behind a 5-foot black flag from the top of Commercial Drive and Charles Street.

We set up TV's along the street and mixed live feed from our roof-top transmitter perch and that of the two roving camera crews on the street with our previously produced content. One of the EVTV participants made boxes for the street television sets describing the purpose of our reasons for the station and our participation in the festival. We were all appropriately branded with EVTV t-shirts and we distributed stickers with the EVTV email address and website URL. An estimated 50,000 people attending the festival and many of them stopped to watch the EVTV television sets and pick up our stickers. Although the youth participants were exhausted by the process, our participation at the festival introduced EVTV as an organization to the neighbourhood and to the small but influential group of community activists responsible for the festival. It also gave me a satisfying event for concluding my research, allowed me to begin my formal reflections on our experiment in community media production and youth agency.

Re-invigorated by our experience at the festival, we held a few regular meetings to plan a new round of content and to organize a series of neighbourhood garden parties with the aim of promoting EVTV and recruiting new participants. By July 2006, summer employment had claimed all the participants' attention once again and the meetings ceased. It was only when I began my research interviews in August that another burst of interest was sparked among our members. The collective planned to hold to monthly meetings within a newly created organizational structure by the end of 2006 to carry the project forward after the completion of my research.

## **PART THREE: EVALUATION - CRITICAL REFLECTION ON OUR PRAXIS**

Conceived as participatory research lodged in a critical pedagogy approach and informed largely by the work of Paulo Freire, my research data collection took two forms: project process documentation and a post project evaluation in the form of critical reflection. My project timeline included the workshop, pre-production, production, first screening and the pilot broadcast stages. During that period I documented all the workshops and meetings on videotape. Our group used a shared documentation method that involved passing the camera to each of the participants during each recorded workshop. This increased their familiarity with the camera, but also eroded some of the discomfort of being documented. In addition, I took notes throughout the process and recorded a video diary after each group meeting or workshop to provide a video narrative of the project events. I asked each participant to record “video confessionals” after each workshop. Subsequently, I undertook paired interviews with each of the participants and a few community members familiar with the project. My post project evaluation involved the compilation of a detailed review of all of this material as well as each of the pilot videos. My final research activity drew on my own creative contribution to ETVV content. In an attempt to synthesize my research into pirate-broadcast ready format, I produced a instructional video/ documentary entitled *Ten Steps to Build Your Own Pirate (or community) TV Station*. In what follows I provide an assessment of the key results and conclusions from this research.



What became apparent over the evaluation process was that although we failed to accomplish one of our major goals (to establish a regularly broadcast neighbourhood wide TV station devoted to local youth produced video) the process of creating EVT TV was an enormously valuable media education experiment and learning experience. In this regard, I examined the impact the project had on the participating youth, the community impact of EVT TV, the conceptual or theoretical implications of the project, and the insight I gained into my own pedagogical practise.

## **Youth Impact**

My first concern was with the learnings of the youth participants. The intent of critical education is to foster learning of a deep and transformative kind. I wondered if and how the youth came to see themselves differently through EVT TV. Did they explore the notions of citizenship? Did their videos reflect any deeper understanding of their own individual and collective agency? How did they view the failure of EVT TV to generate a sustained community broadcast venue? Did it override any of the other potential learnings?

Our neighbourhood, Grandview-Woodlands, is a diverse mix of artist/ academic/ professional/ working class/ immigrant populations. Having worked with young people in this neighbourhood for seven years, I have observed some commonalities in their values and ideas. Whether they themselves participate in any community-based activities, many of the young people who have grown up in this neighbourhood recognize the importance of community involvement. Compared with the young people I have worked with in other areas of the city, they seem to have considerable resistance to the values expressed through the mainstream commercial-driven notion of arts and culture.

Rather they are less preoccupied with material acquisition. I have often speculated on whether these young people from East Vancouver grew up with more time in their lives to explore creative interests because they weren't distracted by the need to consume. Further, on my work in the community and schools of this neighbourhood, I have learned that many of the youth of this neighbourhood demonstrate a tolerance for difference and are open to new ideas, cultures, and life experiences. These attributes help shaped the nature of their engagement with this community and its inhabitants. Since housing costs have grown over 100% in the last five years (according to recent real estate statistics published by the Multi Listing Service, available monthly at: [www.realtylink.org](http://www.realtylink.org)) some of our group have had a difficult time finding affordable rental housing. In this respect, there is a concern among them that the growing gentrification so evident in this community will change the diversified nature of this neighbourhood.

What I found was that the EVTV project did elicit a thoughtful reflection from the members of the group on their neighbourhood. Through the workshops, discussions, video production and distribution of their work, both through broadcast and screenings, this project created an opportunity for the young people involved to actively define, with sensitivity and insight, the place in which they live. Katrina describes her neighbourhood in these terms:

I think one of the best things about it, and almost everyone says this about this neighbourhood is that it is a mixture of everything, like economic status, different races, lifestyle, and I think that ends of defining the neighbourhood, and the commercial stuff and the residential stuff.

Here is how Teresa explains it:

And there is a sense of community that is rooted in that, that we are a little but poorer, a little bit weirder, a little bit more lefty-bizarre than the rest of Vancouver but I think kinda gives us a sense of community.

But the EVTV participants worry about the threat of gentrification. Teresa explains:

Its like Commercial Drive culture is a commodity now that everyone can buy into, but at that time, once its bought into you kinda lose the essence of what it is, that thread that ties us together.

The threat of gentrification is alluded to in many of the videos produced as part of the EVTV pilot series. In East Side B-Side Adrian raps:

I've lived here my whole life up on Kitchener street  
Same house, same block, rocking to the same beat  
But over the years I've noticed things have changed  
Like the price of ice cream which is just insane  
But seriously, take a look at the Drive,  
you can't deny its got a different vibe than back in '95  
it's a tourist attraction, and now the main reaction  
is that every franchise wants of piece of the action

As gentrification works to widen the gap between the haves and have-nots, the youth in the neighbourhood feel singled out because they no longer fit in within the changing neighbourhood. Some participants spoke of “runs ins” with local city police and they were alarmed at the new appearance of security guards in bullet proof vests “patrolling” the main street in the neighbourhood, leading to a decrease in youth-friendly space.

Kai explains:

I don't know what the agenda of the people who are out there (wearing bullet proof vests)...same with the cops, I mean who are they protecting, cuz I live here, why do I get stopped all the time?

Involvement in EVTV provided many of the youth with the opportunity to examine their neighbourhood from an informed critical perspective, allowing them to articulate issues that affect them as young people. Yet they remained hopeful of the potential for positive community friendly change. Caitlin explains:

I think there is still something else that is still possible of Commercial Drive regardless of the gentrification and hegemony, because there are still a lot of people here that are very interested in a different way of living with other people, and interacting with other people.

This critique became active when they began the process of storytelling and video-making. For many of the participants, EVTV provided an outlet for their new concerns. Teresa, in particular, responded favourably to this kind of creative involvement:

...this project felt like a really good way for me to be more involved...I mean we are not that active, we are really critical, but we don't really do much about it aside from just talking about it so I think this was a really good way for us to get involved and feel like we had more of a stake in the community.

Through this examination of their "stake" or roles in the community, the participants were able to explore the notions of citizenship and power, and create a concrete experiment in participatory decision-making. Jorah had this to say about the benefit he gained in this regard:

I feel empowered in a sense, with the fact that we can control the media. Because I was involved with this I was exposed to some other things that were going on in some other grassroots community organizations...Besides the conventional means in society, what other alternatives are there to be active? And this is the first time I got exposed to the idea of participatory democracy. It's a cool idea

However exciting and empowering the experience of EVTV felt to the participants, each of them expressed concerns and frustrations with the process. Over the

course of the year and a half of EVTV's existence, the group experienced extreme difficulties with the broadcast technology and, in consequence, went through periods of low motivation and poor attendance. This tendency in the past of some of the participants resulted in a more intensive workload for others. Many of the youth suggested the group had unresolved momentum and organizational issues. They were frustrated at their inability to commit to a long-term project. Some were especially disappointed given the perceived privilege of the group of participants (i.e their access to technology and relatively comfortable economic status).

Regardless of these frustrations the EVTV participants were eager to speak about how, by focusing them on the potential role for youth produced community oriented television, the project provided an opportunity for them to examine TV from a critical viewpoint. The youth participants explained that it was important to learn that you can "work" in television at a "grassroots level." The quality of their interviews confirmed that they were able to assess television critically as a local medium rather than simply critiquing the commercialized content. They were developing a critical media literacy as a result of their involvement in EVTV.

Some of the group were able to apply their critique to a broader understanding of the social and cultural state of Canadian media. Jorah's growing interest exemplifies this point, "I thought about a lot of the stuff involving policy, like what is community television in Canada?"

Others were attracted to the democratizing potential of community television and wondered if it might be possible to apply some of the fundamentals of EVTV (concerning

the participatory, democratic, and critical aspect) to mainstream, commercial television.

Kai's observation in this regard is thought-provoking:

...its raised the possibility to me that, well, its not that the commercial outlets are evil by default, its just that nobody is putting the idea into the outlets that are available to them, and the possibility of infiltrating it seems more possible.

Speaking as much to her disillusionment with the political process as to the transformative power of community television, Krista sees the potential of community television as nothing short of revolutionary:

In my opinion, TV is way more democratic than the Canadian government. Like what we do or say has way more direct effect and power than any voting or protest that we've ever done. TV is our revolution basically...it is our political outlet in a lot of ways.

As they developed a more substantial understanding of their collective power as video-makers, the EVTV participants were able to explain how the experience enabled them to articulate the potential of community media as a space for dialogue, especially for young people. Many of the EVTV youth suggested that this critical dialogue could come from many forms of participation, which included the production of producing videos, attending screenings and broadcasts and joining the core organizational body of EVTV.

One of the most revealing elements of my interviews with the youth occurred when I asked them what the future held for EVTV. It was here that I realized they had begun to envision EVTV as community mobilizer or, more specifically, a cultural group that creates youth events and public screenings in addition to pirate broadcasts. They suggested community arts events such as a showcase of neighbourhood bands or the facilitation of a screening series based on thematically linked films (labour or human

rights issues, for example.) Some were keen to establish more of a presence within the neighbourhood by documenting local political and cultural events. One participant recommended that EVT TV sponsor a youth film festival to gather all the video-making youth in the city together to discuss the potential for their work and how they can contribute to EVT TV.

A desire was expressed to brand EVT TV as an organization and to invest the EVT TV logo with a more significant cultural meaning in the expectation this will foster further critical dialogue. Caitlin was the most enthusiastic advocate of the logo idea:

I think bringing the logo to people outside the community is more significant than we've given it credit. The ability to say, "hey, those are some good principals, I agree with that in theory, I would wear that T-shirt, or that button. Its seems really lame and superficial, but it gives people a chance to be connected to something up to the point that they are actually doing something about it.

This statement reflects a sophisticated and opportunistic understanding of branding and consumer culture, and the desire of the youth participants to see their project live within the broader world of commercial advertising and consumptive-based youth culture. It reflects as well the discussions we had during the EVT TV workshops that encouraged the young participants to examine the difference between youth as citizens and youth as consumer. The "EVT TV Rant" points to the group's conclusions on this debate:

We live in a capitalist society where everything and everyone is dollar signs, and where the most political influence we as individuals have is how we choose to spend our money. So, as relatively poor youth, its easy to feel politically invisible....EVT TV is visible.

Given the technical limitations with our original choice of low watt UHF transmission as our primary form of distribution, most EVT TV participants were eager to

try additional distribution venues such as webcasting, podcasting, and even packaging the show for the local community cable station. The participants suggested having a multi-media approach to distribution. This speaks to their growing understanding of the potential of the current multi-media environment to help them establish a presence as politicized media makers.

The participants' discussion of the future direction of EVTV signalled to me an important shift in their level of political engagement. The organizational structure of our project had become as important, if not more, than the content production. In fact, most of the participants called for a re-organization of the group around a more specific political goal or mandate. As Kai explained:

I think that it is most useful to the community as an activist group. Maybe its time to stop saying, well, I'm one person in this sort of undefined collective and I can't really speak for the group. Maybe if we had more of those answers prepared and actually believed in, but to have a really clear idea of our direction.

As reflected in their statements, the EVTV youth were not only learning to articulate their concerns about their neighbourhood but also what they could do to change things for the better by voicing these concerns in a low watt broadcast back to their community. While my interviews with the participants uncovered many intense frustrations with the broadcast technology, an overwhelming workload, and periods of low motivation, most EVTV participants did experience a collective sense of their political roles within the community. This politicization was reinforced, as my research revealed, by the participants growing appreciation of the potential for community based TV to create space for public dialogue and debate. My interviews with EVTV youth uncovered their future hopes for the project include re-envisioning EVTV as an more specifically mandated organization that plays a larger role in community cultural and



political events. In this view, EVTV can be envisioned as a hopeful as well as critical pedagogy.

The process of EVTV, created an opportunity for the youth participants to gain specific and useful media production related skills. These skills, in addition to becoming more competent with digital video production, included grant writing, and maintaining relationships with funding organizations. Participants were introduced to article writing as we co-wrote an article for a media education issue of Adbusters magazine. The article was not accepted for publication, so I adapted it to a flyer for community groups and individuals interested in creating a low watt TV station. They gained concrete organizational skills as they planned our ongoing meetings, manifesto writing, promotional and screening events. And importantly for new community activists, this project fostered the development of community networking skills through participation in the Car-Free Commercial Drive Festival and other community events.

### **Community Impact**

The unrealized potential of EVTV is most acutely felt at the community level. Certainly, the EVTV participants experienced a great deal of support from their immediate circle of family and friends. Some of their friends were sceptical about the feasibility of the project, but that everyone they spoke with thought it was a “cool idea.” All the youth maintained that this neighbourhood was the perfect place for the EVTV experiment, suggesting that it is a “neighbourhood that is receptive to video piracy” and that “the community values free speech over possibly offending people.” But the neighbourhood’s actual response to the project has proven difficult to assess.

There have been several opportunities for community members to observe and participate in EVTV events. The following table outlines EVTV events.

Table 3.1: Timeline of EVTV Community events.

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION	ATTENDANCE
EVTV Community Launch and Fundraiser	July 22, 2005	W.I.S.E. Hall Adananc Street, Vancouver	Over 200 people
EVTV pilot broadcast	November 13, 2005	Low-watt broadcast for a 3-4 block radius around 2000 block Williams Drive, Vancouver	Not measurable
Solstice party – EVTV table with loop of content and giveaway DVDs	December 21, 2005	W.I.S.E. Hall Adananc Street, Vancouver	Est 150 people, primarily youth
Regular EVTV broadcast	Sundays during November, December, 2005 and January 2006	Low-watt broadcast for a 3-4 block radius around 2000 block Williams Drive, Vancouver	Not measurable
EVTV Garden party	June 3, 2006	Participants house, 8 <sup>th</sup> Avenue, Vancouver	27 people
GetOut Bash – looped EVTV content	June 10, 2006	Roundhouse Community Centre, Vancouver	Over 100 youth from across the lower mainland
Car Free Commercial Drive Festival	July 16, 2006	Live broadcast from roof deck at Commercial and Charles St, Vancouver	An estimated 50,000 people attended the festival. Our TV's were placed at major locations on Commercial Drive

Given our inability to measure audience impact by a consistent broadcast radius, I set out in this research to find some kind of indicators of the ways the local community accepted and supported EVTV. Did the local community see value in the project, and encourage the participants? The following discussion elaborates on this investigation.

### **MEDIA COVERAGE**

We did receive both verbal and email response from the first community screening at the WISE Hall as well as the Car Free Commercial Drive Festival live broadcast. A number of alternative media organizations (the Georgia Straight, the

Republic of East Vancouver and the Simon Fraser Peak in addition to those listed in the table below) heard about EVT TV and approached us for interviews. We decided to allow only anonymous interviews to youth-based organizations until the broadcasts were occurring regularly. The following table outlines the local alternative media coverage.

Table 3.1: EVT TV Alternative Media Coverage.

Story	Publication / Organization	Date
Pirate TV: talk hard, steal the air	The Nerve Magazine – free weekly urban scene magazine	July 2005
EVT TV's here to rock the boat, pirate style	Capilano Courier – Capilano College Student Newspaper	November 28, 2005
Highlights from Commercial Drive Car Free Festival	EarthSeen ACCESS/ ICTV Independent Community Television Co-operative Shaw cable 4 From Commercial Drive Car Free Festival with exclusive rooftop interviews with pirate television activists of East Van Television.	August 13- 1:00pm August 14- 10:30pm August 17 - 2:30pm August 19 -11:30am (all dates 2006)
EAST SIDE STORY celebrates the Commercial Drive Festival.	East Side Story - ICTV Independent Community Television Co-operative Shaw cable 4	September 4 -10:30am September 4 -10:00pm September 5 -10:00 am

## DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

Aside from meetings and events, the core group of EVT TV participants and supporters use an email list and communicate regularly. The nearly 30 people on this list first began to use the group email to send reminders for EVT TV meetings for suggestions on scripts and story ideas, and for tracking down the equipment. Over the last year, however, the list has become a place for the participants to contact each other about neighbourhood youth cultural events, film festivals, local political issues and activist events. Further, since our participation in the Car-Free Commercial Drive Festival, we are now part of an information network of community activists, artists and organizations.

## **WEBSITE**

After our first screening of the EVTV content, I created a website for EVTV that includes our manifesto, a description of our collective, a synopsis of each show and downloadable video of some of the key pilot videos. I had initially intended that the project participants would take on this task, but after a few false starts it became apparent that I would need to build the site if we wanted it created in time for our broadcast. It included contact information, broadcast details and how community members can get involved. I have only recently put a hit tracker on the website so it is not yet possible to tell how much traffic the site gets.

## **COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

Since our involvement with the Commercial Drive Car-Free Festival, some of the EVTV members have become politicized around key issues affecting our neighbourhood, specifically the proposed highway expansion program that would literally tear our neighbourhood in half with a dramatic increase in car traffic along 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue. One of the youth and I were recently elected to the local neighbourhood advisory council as part of a slate of pro-community, anti-highway expansion group. We aim to use our involvement on the council to expand awareness and participation within EVTV.

Another of our participants has recently begun paid work as an assistant video editor on a local civic issues television show. The executive producer of the show is a community television advocate and academic who is familiar with the EVTV mandate. He has offered his support if we choose to apply for a low watt broadcast licence with the CRTC as well as for a show proposal to the Shaw, the local cable provider.

No doubt, the limits on EVTV's broadcast attempts has restricted the community impact in terms of television viewing audience. However, other areas of community impact can be regarded as significantly beneficial from a community development perspective, such as community screenings, web presence and community participation.

## **Contributions to a Critical Media Education**

The final objective of the project is the contribution that EVTV made to my own understanding of critical media education. It is useful to look at three specific aspects of the project that I consider crucial to the success of EVTV as a critical media experiment. I will discuss these areas in turn and their contribution to my overall aim of developing a critical media production approach to community democracy. I will conclude with a discussion of some of the insights I gained into critical media practice.

## **BUILDING OUR PIRATE TV STATION**

The process of building an organization (in our case a pirate TV station) is a true exercise in critical media education. As we discussed the elements of creating a low-watt TV station, we had to grapple with concepts of ownership, control, and the role of advertising in both commercial and alternative media. We took a critical look at our neighbourhood in an attempt to genuinely define our audience. Our workshops and debates led us to consider organizational structure, the representation of women in mainstream media and in positions of power within our organization. The group had to define the term youth and debate their views on decision-making and they had then to put those ideas into practise. They struggled with the paradox of wanting to create important social justice based work without speaking for or silencing marginalized people. Over

the years, I have had opportunities to discuss all of these issues in media education workshops, but the dialogue became so much more relevant when it was based in a context of building an organization.

### **MANIFESTO WRITING**

The most focused element of this dialogic process was the manifesto writing. We held three workshops that allowed the young participants to articulate their collective stance on the purpose of the station and to refine their views on the role of youth-produced community media within the democratic process. I introduced Jankowski's community media elements to guide our brainstorming discussions (Jankowski, 2002). The manifesto provided both an opportunity to develop a critique of current commercial television and position their alternative. The manifesto makes some significant critical media education "demands" upon its audience. First, it asks viewers to be critical of the commercial nature of television, to examine the ideological bias of corporate media, and to become informed media consumers. The EVTV masked pirates asked this of their audience:

..engage yourself in the media that you consume; that you watch television with your family and your neighbours; that you not only allow yourself to be entertained, but develop opinions, and critical viewing skills.

The manifesto then broadens the critical request as it asks viewers to move beyond the role of critical consumers to become active citizens. It challenges the EVTV audience to:

Participate in the creation of your community's media; that you not content yourself with passive complaining, or make excuses for your apathy, but rather take your talk of politics and put it on the line.

Although the manifesto articulates the EVTV participants' desire to reclaim television as a site of dialogue and community building it does not allude to the important potential it provides in helping young people derive a sense of their own agency from participating in the *process* of building and maintaining a pirate TV station. Some of the participants, now more carefully aware, suggested we re-write the manifesto to include this element.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

Arriving at an adequate understanding of the technology, and the skills necessary for its successful deployment, is a humbling, and almost disappointing experience. At the beginning of the project, I kept control of this aspect because it needed the most focused control. I had the community connections to the performance artist who helped us build the antennae and I was paying for the construction of the antennae and transmitter. However, in doing so, I realized I was robbing the youth of the opportunity to become thoroughly familiar with the technology, partly because I barely understand it myself. At first I felt I needed to protect them from the knowledge of the transmission because of possible legal repercussions from involvement with pirate broadcasting, but after discussions with other local low-watt TV activists and a careful reading of the Canadian Broadcast Act and the most recent CRTC policies, I came to the conclusion that the legal risk from one broadcast was fairly minimal. I decided to open up the technology construction process, inviting all the participants to the transmitter building workshop and the subsequent antennae-raising event. This aspect of the project allowed the youth to gain a clearer understanding of how their work would be distributed, adding to their critical awareness of television's potential as a community broadcast medium. Understanding the technology through hands-on experience made the process very real

and allowed the youth to take ownership of EVTV in a way they would not otherwise have done.

It became important to understand our use of technology in the context of the larger global media climate. We began to look at other forms of community-produced technology – video streaming on the internet, for example. Even the National Film Board of Canada is looking to new digital forms of media to re-invigorate video as a site for social change with the creation of Citizen Shift, “an interactive (internet) platform where (one) can explore social issues through: films, photography, articles, blogs and podcasts.” (National Film Board of Canada, 2006). By looking to other organizations like this, we began to envision a multi-media approach to our distribution. Initially, some of the participants were concerned that an Internet presence would detract from our community communication goals by widening our audience. Ultimately, most EVTV participants were more anxious to establish a technically viable distribution option than to worry about how other neighborhoods would perceive their content.

As the above elements suggest, critical video production provides a vehicle and structure within which to investigate, and respond to issues and stories that exist within our communities. This project addressed the concept of youth agency, turning critical knowledge into critical action. EVTV provides place for youth to gain agency, and demonstrates to adults and the larger community the potential and ability of young people to heighten social awareness, and in some measure, to effect social change.

The manifesto process aids in the construction and articulation of alternative positions from which to build a critique, advance a critical argument, and provide solutions. This project offered a concrete participatory exercise by asking participants to learn democracy in a tangible way through engagement in the decision-making process



and in the organizational work of building a low watt station. Thus, EVTV enabled us opportunity to examine critically the role of technology in community media production.

### **PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICE**

One of the largest challenges I faced in this project was the shifting definition of my role as researcher/ facilitator/ organizer/ co-conspirator/ catalyst. In the process I have learned an enormous amount about being a teacher and media educator. It is (possible and) deeply important to provide long-term, sustained opportunities for young people to experiment with media in critical, creative, collaborative ways. I have been enormously fortunate to work with a group of diverse young people from early secondary school age to the transition to adulthood. Video-making has been an integral part of their relationship with their neighbourhood – first as mentors for other young video makers at Summer Visions, then as community media producers with EVTV. The more opportunities we have to create long-term, youth-driven critical media education production projects, the more we will understand the political and creative potential of critical media education.

Further, I developed a deeper understanding of popular education/ critical pedagogy praxis. There is much talk in youth art circles of young people being the expert in their own experiences. However, there is a huge jump between this understanding and developing the trust in their abilities to tell those stories. In the past two years I have learned to trust in young peoples' ability to guide their own learning, and to work through the practical and intellectual challenges I set before. This project encouraged me to negotiate continually the relatively uncharted terrain between the mere dissemination of information and, on the other hand, the establishment of strategies to write a manifesto,

the introduction of outside experts, and the handing over of ultimate creative control of content and mandate. I could question the participants' motives and decisions, but ultimately, the decisions were theirs to make. I learned when to stop talking, and how to pick and choose the information to impart. I didn't fully appreciate the mechanics of this strategy this until I watched the workshop tapes, from beginning to end. I spoke too much at the beginning, introducing concepts that they would have eventually come to on their own. By the manifesto meeting, I was more truly facilitating – re-phrasing their concepts to more clearly understand them, asking more questions instead of giving answers.

This project re-enforced the idea that any meaningful, relevant media education project needs to be an exercise in democratic education. It is crucial for power relations to be explored and shifted, and decision-making processes must be clearly explained and agreed upon. We had to negotiate continually the democratic potential of EVTV. Because of their experience with the Summer Visions model of peer-based instruction and democratic-decision-making style of video-making, most of the mentors were skilled collaborators prior to their involvement in EVTV. Most of them were looking for some form of artistic freedom within this project. In the end, we made democratically agreed upon group decisions on the overall content and the manifesto, but chose to give EVTV producers creative autonomy within their own pieces.

## **Conclusion**

The commitment to a “community based” youth media is not a new concept. As I noted in the introduction, from the beginning the Canadian Broadcasting Act recognized the importance of opportunities for community groups to express their unique voices and

tell their own stories within the broadcasting medium—including youth. This remained a rather empty concept until more accessible production technologies precipitated initiatives in youth produced media, from community cable shows to Regent Park TV and You Tube. Recognizing the need to “re-engage young people with politics and media”(Gibson, 2006) Al Gore’s “Current TV”, is only the most recent model of this so called “user-generated” strategy. Most of these models use youth produced segments only to bolster the audience for commercially produced contents.

Informed largely by Paulo Freire’s concept of a ‘hopeful pedagogy’, the East Van Television project was developed as a participatory research initiative intended to add to our understanding of critical pedagogies by documenting and evaluating the democratizing potential of a *participatory, community-based, critical media production initiative*. Over the course of the project, a group of young video-makers and myself worked together in the construction of a low watt television station to produce and distribute a series of community-oriented videos in an attempt to reclaim an authentic youth space within our neighbourhood. Three important lessons were learned that may be useful for others interested in community media production as critical pedagogy.

My research project documented how during the past year and a half (January 2005 – August 2006), the EVTV youth researched, reflected on and ultimately “reclaimed a space” within their neighbourhood. Central to EVTV was the critical media education strategy of “taking back the airwaves”. The low watt station was viable because cable and digital distribution technologies had left the airwaves open to youth broadcasting. This unorthodox method of distribution became the focal point for achieving a number of critical media education goals as the group set out to foster a

youth-produced, community-based alternative to mainstream commercial television content.

I set out to investigate community empowerment through an iterative media education initiative which attempts to foster both critical engagement and creative praxis through a process of collective decision making about community engagement. This was achieved through a number of workshops and group meetings. A visual mapping exercise encouraged the EVTV group to think about their relationships and roles within their neighbourhood by broadcasting to their community. It framed what we were doing as alternative, critical and renegade. Additionally, the theme of critical community engagement permeated the manifesto writing process, the promotion strategies, and the style of programming. Our use of low watt TV broadcasting encouraged new forms and means of community involvement. The EVTV broadcast footprint defined our audience geographically. The work of adjusting rabbit ear antennae, tuning stations, and sharing the viewing experience with neighbours became an important aspect of EVTV's contribution to the neighbourhood.

The EVTV youth lived critical pedagogy through reflexive cycles of effort which transformed their critical engagements into creative programming concepts. The process of running a station demanded the EVTV participants to engage constantly in critical reflections and negotiations. They examined their exclusion from mainstream media, the transformations of their neighbourhood, the collective decision making and production process that would define their station, the individual creative autonomy of their video productions and most importantly, the public identity of their group expressed dramatically through their video manifesto. Although individual creative pieces were

created, each one was submitted to constant peer review and critiques which ensured in-depth discussion of content. The manifesto writing and video production process especially crystallized this critical focus on neighbourhood issues as the EVTV youth strove to negotiate the mandate of their station and to create video projects which reflected their concerns about the place where they live.

The task of launching and programming for a pirate TV station proved to be a challenging, but fruitful exercise in participatory democratic decision making. We were encouraged to collectively reflect on and re-articulate our place as citizens and videographers within our neighbourhood. The EVTV youth further established their “place” within the neighbourhood through the promotion of the screenings and broadcasts. The word-of-mouth promotion and public performances created key opportunities for community building and audience engagement. Through this process, these young video makers gained a new sense of their own collective voice and vision. At the same time we demonstrated to local adults the contribution that can be made by creative young people to our neighbourhood.

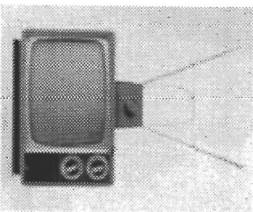
I believe that EVTV proved a successful example of how critical media education can help focus creative young people on claiming a space within their community. My written account of the project design, together with my 10 point instructional video will hopefully inspire others involved in critical media education to explore the possibilities of a new creative space for youth within a local neighbourhood context.

## **APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT BROCHURE**

## COMMUNITY BUILDING TV

### What will I get out of this project?

- Aside from the aforementioned TV broadcast of your video projects, plus the support to create a new video, you'll also get:
- a more involved understanding of your neighborhood
- the opportunity to participate in creative, innovative research methods (visual community mapping)
- the chance to be involved in a politically motivated experiment (can we create radical forms of democratic cultural production?)
- my undying gratitude and love
- occasionally food and beverages and free games of pool at my house!
- to hang out with Quinn – which is really a pretty good motivation, if you ask me.



IF YOU ARE INTERESTED,  
OR WANT SOME MORE  
INFORMATION, PLEASE  
CALL OR EMAIL ME:

Home: (604) 253-3341  
Cell: (604) 250-9093  
Email: [cbrowne@sfu.ca](mailto:cbrowne@sfu.ca)

FIRST MEETING:  
January 15 or 16, 2005

## Calling all young videomakers....

If you have been involved in Summer Visions Film Institute at Templeton Secondary (as a participant or mentor), or a video production program through the Pacific Cinematheque, or another media education production program and live in the Commercial Drive area in Vancouver, and would like to make a community-based collaborative video, keep reading...

# EAST VAN PIRATE TELEVISION!

## SOME QUESTIONS YOU LIKELY HAVE:

As some of you know, I am currently completing my graduate degree in Communication at SFU. My research project builds on the work we have been doing together for the past 5 years at Templeton and the Cinematheque: youth-produced, collaborative video.

Over the years I've noticed the unfortunate lack of distribution or screening opportunities for the work that you produce. My hope is that the creation of a low-wait, community-based, youth-produced, TV station in our neighborhood will provide opportunities to showcase your work, both past and future. Yup, that means we're gonna build a TV transmitter and broadcast your work to the TV sets in our community!

### Why are you doing this, crazy woman?

I believe we have created the beginnings of a critical, youth-driven video culture in our neighborhood, and would love to foster and encourage the continued development of this culture. Also, I believe that video can be an important way for us to engage and participate in our communities in creative and constructive ways. Plus, how cool will it be to have our own TV station?

### Who can participate?

To participate in this project, you must have a solid understanding of digital video production. Also, it is essential that you have worked in a collaborative production process. You must live in, or be very familiar with, the Commercial Drive neighborhood. You must be willing to challenge your video making skills and engage in some community-based research.

### How much of a time commitment is this?

About as much time as you spend in one university or academic high school class. If you are attending SFU, you may be able to receive Directed Study credit (please contact me at more information).

### When will the project run?

We will meet in the evenings and on weekends, depending on your availability. First meetings / Workshops in January 2005 Production and Post March - May First Broadcast - Beginning of June

### Where will it happen?

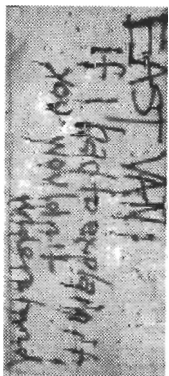
All meetings/ production will take place in Commercial Drive neighborhood - probably my house, but also at local schools, coffee shops, etc.

### What will we be doing?

- Produce the pilot content for a low-wait community-based TV station - as a group we will produce 30 min... hopefully 3 ten minute projects, but could be 5 five minute projects.
- Help to build a pirate TV transmitter and antenna
- Participate in workshops (on alternative forms of citizenship, history of community video, community mapping, methods of storytelling)
- Investigate / Research stories / ideas/ people in neighborhood
- Explore what it means to be engaged with your community
- Take over running / programming of station once my project is done
- Write a ETV Manifesto - mandate for our station

### Isn't pirate TV illegal?

Technically, yes. But you will not be participating in any illegal activity. You will simply be producing content for a TV transmitter that I will hold responsibility for. This is a very important issue - we will discuss this at length during the first meeting. If you are under 18, I'll need to talk to your parents as well.





## **APPENDIX B : PROJECT TIMELINE**

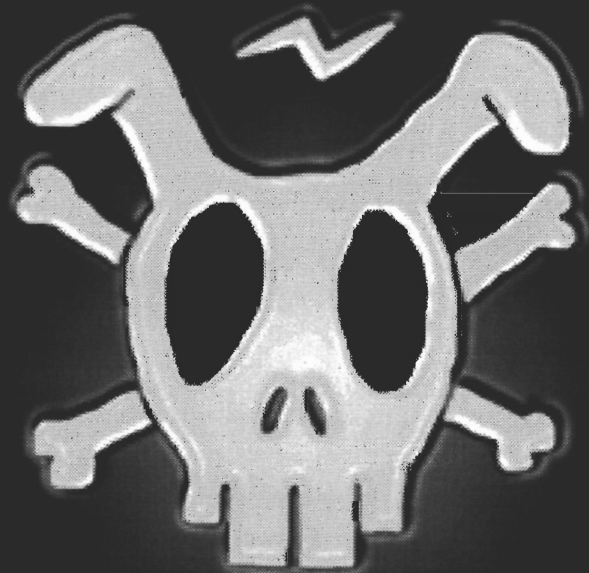
## EVTV TIMELINE

<u>DATE</u>	<u>WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION</u>
January 2005	Project Recruiting and ethics approval. Discuss project with individuals and parents.
February 5	Introductory meeting. Present and discuss project design. Hand out articles on "The Take" and Pedagogy of Hope.
February 20	Screen "The Take" and gather contact information
February 27	Critically discuss film. Present project rationale.
Late February	Apply for GetOUT! Youth Grant from City of Vancouver
March 12	Visual Mapping Workshop Part I Why we are doing this discussion
March 19	Visual Mapping Workshop Part II
Late March	Build Transmitter
April 9	Story Idea Brainstorm Test Transmitter
April 16	History of Community Video Workshop Story Development
April 23	Meet with Michael from ICTV Finalize first EVTU line-up
May 16	Pre-Production Meeting Creating Crews Defining Community Engagement
May 26	Write Manifesto
Early June	Organize/ Book Community Screening at WISE Hall
June 11	Production Meeting Event planning, view rushes



<u>DATE</u>	<u>WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION</u>
June 24	Rough Cut Screening
July 7	Production Meeting / Event Planning
July 27	Production Meeting / Event Planning
July 22	EVTV Screening at WISE Hall
August 9	Screening De-brief and Next steps Transmitter fixing and antennae building Website development Grant report
Sept 9	Content meeting New episodes of Fuck Buck slice Equipment purchase Broadcast planning
September 16	Meet with Bobbi to plan transmitter re-build
October 28	Promotional meeting/ Guerrilla Marketing strategies
November 5	Antennae Building workshop
November 13	EVTV LAUNCH – first broadcast Street performance as promotion
Irregular meetings from January – May 2006	
Early May, 2006	Festival planning meeting
June 16, 2006	Commercial Drive Car Free Festival Live broadcast from rooftop
July 12	EVTV Garden Party I

## **APPENDIX C : WISE HALL EVENT POSTER**



**GUU**

all ages  
launch party

**WISE HALL**

FRIDAY JULY 22, 2005

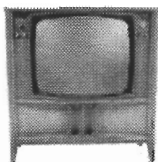
7:00PM

with music by:

**Big Haas**

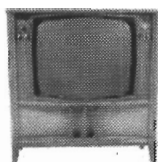
The Ingredients

## APPENDIX D : PROPOSED PEDAGOGICAL DESIGN TABLE OF CONTENTS



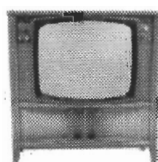
**INSIDE THE BOX:** Pedagogical Design for a Participatory Video Project Exploring Issues of Youth Citizenship, Community and Democracy.

---



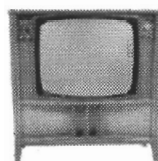
### **PRODUCTION PROCESS**

WORKSHOP ONE: Playing with Democracy	Page 1
WORKSHOP TWO: Visual Scavenger Hunt	Page 3
WORKSHOP THREE: Defining Community Video	Page 4
WORKSHOP FOUR: Constructing a Scene of Social Justice	Page 7
WORKSHOP FIVE: Collaborative Storytelling	Page 9
WORKSHOP SIX: Scriptwriting and Storyboarding	Page 10
WORKSHOP SEVEN: Viewing Rough Cut	Page 12



### **RESEARCH NOTES**

PARTICIPATORY AND RADICAL DEMOCRACY	Page 13
THEORETICAL ROOTS OF COMMUNITY VIDEO	Page 15



### **REFERENCES, MEDIA AND ORGANIZATIONS**

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY	Page 26
ANNOTATED VIDEOGRAPHY	Page 20
COMMUNITY VIDEO PROJECTS (YOUTH BASED)	Page 23

A full version of the resource package is available on the EVTV website:  
[www.sfu.ca/evtv/](http://www.sfu.ca/evtv/)

## **APPENDIX E : PILOT BROADCAST LINE-UP**

# Nothing to do on Sunday Night? Check out EVTV on Channel 4 (unplug your cable- plug in your rabbit ears)



## HERE'S OUR PILOT BROADCAST LINE-UP:



### Manifesto

Arriving here at the EVTV studios in an unmarked manila envelope, delivered by sinister masked militants, this tape sets the terms for the imminent revolution. Transcribed by one of our faithful interns, it reads:  
"Do not adjust your set. We have seized control! This is an official broadcast of the Airwave Liberation Front..." see website for full transcription.



### East Van Vigilante Squad

By day, 'Trent Callahan' and 'Ray Duffy' are mild-mannered citizens. But during other parts of the day, they don their identity-concealing Masks of Justice and become the East Van Vigilante Squad! Pow! Biff! Sock! Rated 14A for non-stop thrills..



### For the record

Cheaper than a transactional therapist and more probing than your local eye care specialist, For the Record will get right to the meat of it. Are those skeletons in your closet getting a little too raucous? Is that soiled laundry in dire need of airing out? Well, here at For the Record we combine strictest confidentiality with public exposure.



### HOOKING IT UP: East Van Style

Take two East Vancouver singles, send them on a no-budget date around Commercial Drive, throw in some snappy commentary, and what do you get? A recipe for a ridiculously weird show we like to call Hookin' It Up: East Van style, a programme which will leave you positively itching to experience a no-money east side romance of your own.



### Bike Park Rant

There are a number of ways this neighbourhood has been languishing over the years. One of the least important of these is due to the lack of adequate dirt-jumping facilities closer than North Van. In this informative short, local man-about-town Commodore Rahim Zequestra rides his bike into a mattress and talks a lot. Rated PG for strong language and Iron Maiden.





#### Tonnes of Fun University

Join the inimitable, the indomitable, East Van's own T.O.F.U. on a poetic breakfast journey that will have you, dare we say, hungry for more. Individually known as C R Avery, Mike McGee, and Shane Koyczan, (yes, that Shane Koyczan), the trio perform what is, without overstatement, some of the most significant hip-hop and slam poetry in existence today.



#### East Side B-Side

Local recording artist Adrian Theodore Underhill sings a love song to his neighbourhood in the 'Rhythm and Poetry' style so popular among today's youth. Hipping and hopping his way from the Nelson courts to the bocce park, Underhill, with his catchy hooks and infectious flow, will have you tapping your feet and feeling straight-up proud to represent. Rated G in the absence of any cussing.



#### Fuck Buck Slice

Three vagabonds brought together by a common lust for knowledge, drink and the fleshy bits of food stuffs; Gerry Su, The Duchess and Astro-D have circled the covered wagons just long enough to bring you their carnival of the Gastronomique. Transdimensional voyaging in every bite. Fuck Buck Slice will take you there!!



#### EVTV Rant

Celebrated local agitator 'Big' John Chestbeard makes effective use of a lavalier microphone in this stirring half-rant, half-rallying cry. John's deep roots in the community bear fruit in an articulate, even poetic appeal to his fellow East Vancouverites. This man is a very tree of impassioned vitality. Rated PG for intensity.

**Email [evtv@yahoo.ca](mailto:evtv@yahoo.ca) for more information or to get involved....**

**APPENDIX F : 10 STEPS TO BUILDING YOUR OWN  
PIRATE OR COMMUNITY TV STATION**

# 10 Steps to Starting Your Own Community or Pirate TV Station

brought to you by the friendly pirates at



## **STEP 1      Become Critically Media Literate**

- Hone your media skills as both a consumer and producer. Learn to be a critical, not passive viewer and seek out opportunities to create challenging, meaningful videos

## **STEP 2      Get to Know your Community.**

- Your community will be defined by your broadcast range. Deepen your understanding of your neighbourhood, its inhabitants and their support for community produced TV. Do cultural and social research through informal lectures by local historians and interviews with neighbours.

## **STEP 3      Know Where Others Have Been Before**

- Investigate the history of community video to avoid a stereotypical a historical point of view. Ask questions about cable access community video and other media education experiments. Look at other work to develop a “community video” barometer. What makes a good piece? What can you learn other groups?
- Let theory help. Become or seek out someone who will explore academic knowledge to enhance your community-based research. If you are in high school or university, get credit, dammit! The learning you instigate and take responsibility for is usually the most meaningful and relevant.

## **STEP 4      Write a Manifesto**

- Individually and collectively, you need to get very clear on why you are doing this, how you will make decisions (cooperatively, consensus or participatory democracy, for a few examples), what limitations you will place on content (if any), who can broadcast, how you are going to work your community. You also need to decide who takes responsibility if you get caught, and how that will play out. Your manifesto should balance the interests of the smash-starbucks-direct-action-oriented- activists, with the more academic-leaning-lets-use-video-as-a –capacity-building-tool-artists.

Continued...

10 Steps continued....

**STEP 5 Beg, Borrow, or umm, Liberate Equipment**

- Get a decent, working videocamera and some tape. For your work to be more than just watchable, you'll need a good microphone, headphones, a tripod, a bounce-board for basic lighting, and a computer to edit on.

**STEP 6 Create the Content**

- Aspire to both a technical proficiency and specific communication goals. Don't re-broadcast cringe-worthy Movie of the Weeks. What do you want to say to your community? Don't shy away from artistic or challenging content – stick with your collaborative goals –push your storytelling boundaries. There are no 22 min half hour time slots in pirate TV land.
- Find local filmmakers and writers to act as mentors – but on your own terms!

**STEP 7 Build a Transmitter, Amplifier and Antennae (and Put it Somewhere Safe)**

- The easiest, but also the non-law abiding part. The internet has info to build your own transmitter. Whoever "owns" the tower, "owns" the danger of discovery. fines and potential criminal charges.

**STEP 8 Guerrilla Market your Station**

- Let people know what you are up to, and when you plan to broadcast. Spray-paint sidewalk stencils, t-shirts, or your bodies with a logo, channel, and time.

**STEP 9 Flip the Switch**

- Combine pirate broadcast with facilitated screenings to raise awareness about your station and the issues in your videos.
- Be prepared to help people attain the old-school technology needed to receive your broadcast (rabbit ears and antenna adapters for cable inputs)

**STEP 10 Reflect (Continuously) and Keep a Record**

- Share your successes and failures, so that other may do the same. How does this project fits into your larger idea of social change? How effective is this medium as a vehicle for community engagement? How can you balance the historical tension between process and product? Can you commit to both a rigorously engaged method of storytelling and a development of critical aesthetic and high technical standard?

Contact us at [evtv@yahoo.ca](mailto:evtv@yahoo.ca)

## APPENDIX G: VIDEO TRANSCRIPTIONS

### MANIFESTO

Do not adjust your set. We have seized control! This is an official broadcast of the Airwave Liberation Front. As you can see, we the People have taken television hostage. Any attempts at a rescue will guarantee the brutal execution of our prisoner. Therefore if you value your viewing, you will pay attention to our reasons for this drastic action. Firstly, it is our opinion that television viewers have languished too long in the jaws of the bourgeois corporate basilisk, who robs the life from the people at the same time as he fills them with perverse falsehoods and pervasive despair. Furthermore, since its inception, the potential of this glorious medium for community building and for true dialogue has been squandered in favour of lining the pockets of those who would regulate content and licensing, for the advancement of their empty agenda. And finally, by our action we wish to provide a shining beacon for the homogeneous and for the malcontent; for the young artists with no audience, and for the old Luddites with no cable. We are living proof of the ability of the citizenry to rise up against unjust media control. Now hear our demands!

Firstly, that you the viewer engage yourself in the media that you consume; that you watch television with you family and your neighbours; that you not only allow yourself to be entertained, but develop opinions, and critical viewing skills.

Second, we demand that you obtain rabbit ears for your TV set, for the purpose of receiving these open broadcasts -- and that you think seriously about who you are giving your money to for a medium that was always supposed to be free.

And third, that you participate in the creation of your community's media; that you not content yourself with passive complaining, or make excuses for your apathy, but rather take your talk of politics and put it on the line!

There will be no ads! There will be no retreat!

The revolution will be televised.

### EAST SIDE B-SIDE

Check it – I won't wait no time to deliver this rhyme  
If you don't think its prime well I guess that's fine  
I'm just an average Joe with an ear for the flow that will make a hip hop track go  
So hear me out, I've got something to say  
That might make you think in a different way  
About the place that you live, east van or not  
So listen up and please just give it a shot

*If you are from East Van well you gotta stand strong  
We take care of each other because we all belong*

*If you are from East Van you gotta represent  
You gotta do your part to the full extent*

I've lived here my whole life up on Kitchener street  
Same house, same block, rocking to the same beat  
But over the years I've noticed things have changed  
Like the price of icecream which is just insane  
But seriously, take a look at the drive,  
you can't deny its got a different vibe than back in '95  
it's a tourist attraction, and now the main reaction  
is that every franchise wants of piece of the action

*If you are from East Van well you gotta stand strong  
We take care of each other because we all belong  
If you are from East Van you gotta represent  
You gotta do your part to the full extent*

If you wanna make a difference you gotta to get up and fight  
Look out for children and always be polite  
You gotta be a hero like Trent Callahan  
I gotta give mad props cuz he's my main man  
He looks after the people with the help of Ray Duffy  
Preventing bike theft and looking of a lost puppy  
If only we could be East Van Vigilantes  
We'd all know martial arts from at least 5 countries

*If you are from East Van well you gotta stand strong  
We take care of each other because we all belong  
If you are from East Van you gotta represent  
You gotta do your part to the full extent*

*If you are from East Van you gotta represent  
You gotta do your part to the full extent*

### EVTV RANT

Now is the time to touch upon why you, you, and you are here to witness and support the first ever live EVTV pirate broadcast.

Because the EVTV crew is far too varied to and opinionated for one person, me, to speak for, I can only give you my personal reasons and opinions, state of position, state of mind, state of the arts, Just ask:

Where does a Canadian filmmaker get seen? Where is the artistic freedom? How do we communicate with our community? How is a television station run? Where do you learn to run a television station?

We live in a capitalist society where everything and everyone is dollar signs, and the where the most political influence we as individuals have is how we choose to spend our money. So, as relatively poor youth, its easy to feel politically invisible.

EVTV is visible. Like right now I'm talking to you about this fence, this fence that was out here to stop people from selling things to each other. And that sounds like a small little thing. But little things add up.

Some problems are big, like the proposed highway expansion of First Avenue, a plan that was made up by the BC provincial government, but was rejected by New Westminster, Burnaby and Vancouver city councils as being a bad idea. This is a plan that is going to effect all of our lives and is something that we as a community need to get educated about.

That is exactly why EVTV needs to happen. Because we need to connect and become something instead of somebody. Now as a connected force, we can start to get shit done.

TV is a severely underutilized medium with one-way communication taking place. Broadcast network to vegged out viewer. Stop being the vegged out viewer. Cut the cable, up with the rabbit ears, write some stories, make some programs, get you ass off the couch, because EVTV had opened up the airwaves.

## **APPENDIX H: EAST VAN TELEVISION DVD**

The material presented on the attached DVD forms part of this project.

Title of DVD:

East Van Television: the revolution will be televised

Included videos:

Manifesto

For the Record

Fuck Buck Slice

EVTV Station Promos

East Van Vigilante Squad

Tonnes of Fun University

10 Steps to Make Your Own Pirate TV Station

Hookin' it Up: East Van Style

East Side B-Side

BikePark Rant

EVTV Rant

This DVD will play on any standard North American DVD player.



## REFERENCE LIST

- Andersen, N., B. Duncan, & J. Pungente.(2000). *Media education in Canada: The second spring*, retrieved September 4, 2005, from <http://interact.uoregon.edu/MediaLit/JCP/articles/mediaedcanada.pdf> from Jesuit Communication Project website
- Audley, P.(1983) *Canada's cultural industries: Broadcasting, publishing, records and film*. Toronto : James Lorimer & Co. in association with the Canadian Institute for Economic Policy.
- Boyle D. (1997) *Subject to change: Guerrilla television revisited*. New York: Oxford University Press
- Buckingham, D. (2006) *Media education: Literacy, learning and contemporary culture*. Cambridge : Blackwell.
- Buckingham, D with Banaji, S., Burn, A., Carr, D., Cranmer, S., Willett, R. (2006). *The media literacy of children and young people: A review of research literature on behalf of Ofcom*. London: Centre for the Study of Children Youth and Media Institute of Education, University of London.
- Collins, R. (1990). *Culture, communication and national identity: The case of Canadian television*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education*. (1966 edn.), New York: Free Press
- Downing, J.(ed.) (2001). *Radical media: Rebellious communication and social movements*. Thousand Oaks, London, and New Delhi: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Freire, Paulo. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum Books.
- Freire, Paulo.(1973). *Education for critical consciousness*. New York: Seabury Press
- Freire, P., and A. M. A. Freire.(1994). *Pedagogy of hope: Reliving pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- Gibson, O. (October, 7, 2006). *Gore joins forces with Murdochs for user-generated web/TV network*. Retrieved October 7, 2006, from The Guardian Unlimited website:<http://business.guardian.co.uk/story/0,,1889786,00.html>

- Giroux, H. A. (1997). *Pedagogy and the politics of hope: Theory, culture, and schooling: A critical reader*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Goldberg, K. (1990). *Barefoot channel: Community television as a tool for social change*. Vancouver: New Star Books.
- Giroux, H. (1988). *Teachers as intellectuals: Toward a critical pedagogy of learning*. Westport and London: Bergin and Garvey.
- Goldfarb, B. (2002). *Visual pedagogy: Media cultures in and beyond the classroom*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.
- Halleck, D. (2002). *Hand-held visions: The impossible possibilities of community media*. New York: Fordham University Press.
- Hartley, J. (2003). *A short history of cultural studies*. London: Sage Publications
- Herman E. and N. Chomsky. (1988). A Propaganda Model. In M.G. Durham and D.M. Kellner, (Eds.), *Media and cultural studies: Key works*. London: Blackwell.
- Hobbs,R. (1998a). Building citizenship skills through media literacy education. In M. Salvador and P. M. Sias (Eds.). *The public voice in a democracy at risk*. Westport, CT: Praeger
- Hobbs, R. (1998b). The seven great debates in the media literacy movement. *Journal of Communication*, 48 (1), 16-32.
- hooks, b. (1994) *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. New York: Routledge.
- Jankowski, N. (2002). The conceptual contours of community media. In N. Jankowski & O. Prehn (Eds.) *Community media in the Information Age: Perspectives and Prospects*. Cresskill, New Jersey: Hampton Press, Inc.
- Juhasz, Alexander, (1995). *AIDS TV: Identity, community and alternative video*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Kellner, D. (2003). Toward a critical theory of education, *Democracy and Nature* (9) 1.
- Kellner, D. (2001) Critical pedagogy, cultural studies, and radical democracy at the turn of the millennium: Reflections on the work of Henry Giroux. *Cultural Studies, Critical Methodologies*, (1)2, 220-239.

- Kellner, D. (2002). Critical perspectives on visual literacy. *Journal of Visual Literacy*. (22) 1, 3-12.
- Kline, S., K. Stewart & D. Murphy. (2006) Media literacy in the risk society: Toward a risk reduction strategy. *Canadian Journal of Education* (29) 1, 131-153.
- Lorimer, R. & M. Gasher (2001) *Mass communication in Canada*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press.
- Leavis, F. R., & Thompson, D. (1933; reprinted in 1960). *Culture and environment: The training of critical awareness*. London, UK: Chatto & Windus
- Masterman, L. (1980) *Teaching About television*. London: Macmillan
- Masterman, L. (1985) *Teaching the media*. London, UK: Comedia
- Multi Listing Service. (August 2006) *Housing price index, Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver, preliminary report*. Retrieved online, October 29, 2006 from <http://www.realtylink.org/hpi/rebghvpistats.cfm?date=0806&TYPE=buyers>
- Mueller, H. (1967) The screen arts: No longer neglected. *The Speech Teacher*, (16) 8.
- National Film Board of Canada (n.d.) Citizenshift website. Retrieved November 20, 2006, from <http://citizen.nfb.ca/onf/info>.
- National Film Board of Canada. (1968) *Challenge for Change newsletter*. Toronto: NFB
- O'Keefe, D. (2004) Seven questions with Naomi Klein and Avi Lewis. *Seven Oaks: a magazine of politics culture and resistance*. Retrieved October 27, 2006 from: <http://sevenoaksmag.com/questions/36.html>
- Postman, N. (1985). *Amusing ourselves to death: Public discourse in the age of show business*. New York: Viking.
- Rodriguez, C. (2001). A Process of identity deconstruction: Columbian women producing video stories. In *Fissures in the mediascape: An international study of citizens' media*. Cresskill, New Jersey: Hampton Press, Inc.
- Scheller, J.(1992, November) *KidTV road movies*. *Chatelaine*. (65)11, 16
- Shor, I. (1992). *Empowering education: Critical teaching for social change*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press
- Statistics Canada (2000). *Broadcasting and telecommunications report* (33) 3, October, 3 2003. Quarterly.

Teasdale, P. (1999). *Videofreex: America's first pirate TV station and the catskills collective that turned it on*. Hensonville, New York: Black Dome Press Corp.

Wilson, J., B. Bell & W. Powell. (1984). The provincial educational communications Organizations. In Canada *TVOntario: New technologies in Canadian education: paper 7*. Ottawa: The Ontario Educational Communications Authority