



The Problem of Creativity: What Images Do Young People Choose?

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the problem of youth creativity and the perception of television and media images. Studies of Western and Russian psychologists lead to the conclusion that viewing TV does not always cause a positive effect. A high degree of negative behavioral problems in Lithuanian youth is made apparent. The influence of information created with the help of media channels on the development of the creativity in children and adolescents is discussed. The study conducted by G. Seputis on the applicants of art colleges is reviewed, the study's sample consisted of 80 boys and girls at the age of 18. The method of comparative analysis of drawings and TV images was used. The article presents correlation between drawings and TV images and clearly confirms the youth's response to the neutral stimulus "silence" with the reproduction of negative media images. The author invites to use educational methods aimed at developing creativity in youth.

Keywords

Human and media image communications, information, TV and youth, influence on consciousness, creativity, college applicants drawings, TV shows ratings beauty;

1. Introduction

The official statistics is rather worrying. According to the Institute of Hygiene of Lithuania (2015-2016) over the past five years the number of young people in the country has decreased by 2%. A lot of diseases attack patients at a younger age but the most frequent cause of death among adolescents in Lithuania remains voluntary death. In 2015, 67.8% of young people's deaths were attributed to external causes, the main of which was suicide. Psychologists sound the alarm: young people do not demonstrate any negative attitude towards suicide! "Suicide is contagious," psychologists say, "when TV channels or magazines talk about it to teenagers they only spread the virus." All this spreads via social networks, and the tragedy makes a hero out of an ordinary schoolboy. Not for too long, of course... The most important question we ask is where does the suicide virus come from, how does it infect the younger generation? Communication always serves definite purposes. There are several participants who exchange messages in a communication act. It is not always that they are aware of their communication goals, but they always use certain communication channels. So the suicide virus is spread via the media or the Internet and infects us, whether we like it or not! Information shapes both the context and the participants of communication.

We perceive information but do not always develop full awareness of what we perceive.

2. Previous studies review

There is an increasing interest by Western psychologists in studying the influence of television images on the consciousness of young people. For example the negative impact of watching TV programs is looked at from the point of view of increasing aggression and feelings of loneliness or feelings of belonging (Frey, B.S., Benesch, C., & Stutzer, A., 2007). The results of experimental studies confirm that children copy the behaviour they see especially with regard to acts of aggression which was already noted back in the 60-70s by recognised American psychologists (Bandura, A., & Walters, R. H., 1965). So children who constantly witnessed their favourite TV "heroes" incorporate aggressive acts into their own use in conflict situations (Effects of television viewing on child development/britannica.com.).

When conducting a study of the influence of image selection on behaviour of young people, we used the interpretation of image by an Italian psychologist A. Meneghetti. According to A. Meneghetti, "all serious defeats and failures of a scientific process in any sphere of human thought, always and up to now days have been determined by the lack of conscious understanding of an image (Meneghetti A., 2004. p. 18). Image, representing a carrier and the differentiating structure of the energy quantum is a code determining the existence or non-existence of a certain energy mode, it is the alphabet of mean-

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ing for energy discourse in the universe and in a concrete human being. The study carried out by us confirms that a human consumes images and becomes what he sees and chooses (Meneghetti A., 1997).

3. Study's conclusion

What is an image? The concept of an image is widely manifested in the language we speak: to imagine, to do the worst thing imaginable, to fit into an image, imaginary, the spitting image of somebody, to imagine things, imaginative, image thinking. Every day we are assailed by the images surrounding us. The concept of an image is inseparably linked with action, a visible change of something (Meneghetti A., 2004).

Moreover, an image underlies this action, often remaining invisible. An image can create a reality, for example, a person looking in the mirror starts to smooth his clothes or tidy his hair. In fact, there is nothing behind the mirror, but the form that the person sees in it changes his behavior, and he starts to act in accord with the information conveyed by the mirror.

Are these images always positive from the recipient's perspective? Of course, not! Let's take the research conducted by Gintaras Seputis as an example. Gintaras says, "It all started with the fact that every summer, 5 years in a row, I was invited to be the chairman of the admissions board selecting future students. And all the five years I had to have a kind of a week's detoxication after those examinations. It worried me because, after I had looked through 300 works, I felt somewhat sick at heart. I asked some psychologists, acquaintances of mine, "Why don't you examine me, why don't you study the case?" Everyone said, "Yes, it's interesting," but no one took up this research. And all this ended up in me conducting it."

At the entrance examinations of 2014 the applicants were given "silence" as the topic of their works. 80 applicants were to write a script on the topic of "silence". Interpreting a topic like this, one can't but be guided by his own judgments, life experience and emotional state. Gintaras looked through 80 works of students born in 1996, i.e. at the moment of research they were 18 years old. These young men and girls were applying to the course, which was directly related to work with an artistic image - photography and the media. The results of the works analysis turned out to be really horrifying.

Silence triggered more negative than positive associations. The following ones may be referred to as negative: death, illusion, keen sorrow, suffering, boring routine, something absurd and incomprehensible, anxiety, violence, misunderstanding, escape. There were far fewer positive associations: meditation, peace, an opportunity to hear yourself, intuition. A neutral, in fact, image of "silence" evoked negative associations in more than 50% of future authors of artistic images. 16% of applicants depicted death, 9% featured bullying and violence, and 4% showed suicide in their scripts. As the applicants themselves said, "Silence comes only after death."

Where do these scary images come from, how do they get into children's minds? Speaking about contemporary art, many authors promote the idea that negativity in contemporary art is nothing but the author's creativity! So perhaps, this really was the creativity that manifested in children's works? Creativity has become a fashionable topic nowadays! This question Gintaras Seputis asked himself. What he discovered was that there was hardly a trace of creativity in the applicants' works. All the images they drew on came from the reality they lived in. They did not create anything new. Most of the images came from TV shows, the rest stemmed from the wide-spread clichés, some of the teenagers processed other people's ideas. Where is their creativity?

The great creators of the Renaissance, for example, sought inspiration in the images of nature, a human, and the golden section. What images inspire modern youth? The images conveyed by television and social networks.

We are all users of social networks, so different in age, status and place of residence. Our view of the world is built on common associations and images existing in social networks. According to Russian researchers there are "viral images" characterized by some specific features. R. Dawkins calls them memes. These images travel through social networks and the media infecting the users who are not very particular about the content quality.

Besides the Internet there is another powerful means of communicating images. It is television. Television and films feed the imagination of people all over the world. Gintaras Seputis told us about the research carried by R. Jusiene and Tominiene J. in 2005. They interviewed more than a thousand children aged 11 to 14 years trying to find out how many hours a day children watched television. The result was 3,8 hours per day. The children said they watched TV secretly from their parents, who did not always know, which programs their children chose. The study conducted by R. Jusiene in 2006 shows that children most often watched comedies - 34%, then came horror films - 19%, then animation - 17%, and, finally, action movies - 14%.



The films and programs were rated in accord with the answers of children under the age of 14.



Figure 1: Suicidal thoughts in the script influenced by Top 1 TV annual satyric show (2005 - 08) „Golden Onion“.



Figure 2: Example of use of TV images in drawings



Figure 3: Example of use of TV3 images



Gintaras Seputis showed how the ideas from films got into applicants' scripts using their works as an example.

What is happening to our youth? These are the people who will create the visual culture of the future. G. Seputis notes that the better a person draws, the more clichés and stamps he takes from the Internet and television and the more creative the drawings are, the worse the technique is. "Unfortunately, they are the creators of the images of our future," says Gintaras!

4. Conclusion

Considerable preliminary work is needed to educate a person. The biggest mystery of life is the human and, like it or not, the human inherently strives for perfection. How do we help our children regain the desire for perfection? We've got to speak with them about existential things - about life, death, loneliness, and meaning. These questions cannot "dissolve". We need a program that will work in educational institutions.

What can this program be like?

"Beauty will save the world," said the character of F.M. Dostoevsky's novel (Dostoevsky F.M., 1874). "Awareness of Beauty will save the world," N. K. Roerich explained, in just one single word opening to us all the complexities and joyous discoveries of the inexpressibly long and painful path of the evolution of consciousness. "Trying to be authentic, true and creative," continued A. Meneghetti, "it is important to distinguish between beauty and ugliness, in order not to let inside you something that contradicts the higher order of life. Beauty is integrity; it is the order of harmony. Beauty is the absence of error."

Beauty is an internal criterion for creating an image. It all depends on the person. Inner order and health based on a person's mental activity allow for the ability of creating an image in its high understanding.

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