



Decades of Finnish Media Education

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Introduction

In many ways the history of Finnish media education can be perceived to be a part of the birth of Finland – the winning of her independence, the development of the Finnish language and the construction of Finnish identity – the national project and the history of Finnish popular liberal education, in which two stages are discernible. The first great wave of the latter part of the nineteenth century signified the age of civilising the masses into citizenship. The second great wave gained momentum in the 1960s with the beginning of the drive to educate people into the information society. The last phase of this great history, the further development of information society skills, has continued since the 1980s to the present day. Such a rough historical division paves the way for the following observation regarding media education: whether liberal education or media education, it is noteworthy that educational efforts came from above and represented vanguard thinking, likewise that they were surprisingly serious and geared to high culture.

Let us take as an example the popular education in art which began in the late 19th century and was intended to produce a decorous citizen with a nice appreciation of high culture. Indeed, there was an attempt to eradicate the people's own tradition with its folk culture and mode of speech and to replace this in part with the ideal moral and educational precepts of the leaders of the people and with a national uniform culture having no cause for shame vis à vis Western traditions (Kurkela 2000, 8-9). Cultural models were sought from Sweden, from Germany and from farther afield. The doings of the contemporary Swedish-speaking urban bourgeoisie afford an interesting point of comparison. At a time when the Finnish-language popular liberal education and art education of the day instigated the construction of a Finnish national culture and identity, and in the theatre, for example, the accent was almost from the outset on classics and so-called serious works, and later on realism probing social injustice, the Swedish-speaking Finns delighted in continental variety shows and the review tradition, in risqué operettas and comedy (ibid. 11). Nevertheless in the shadow of the "official" educational line there has always been resistance and opposition and the independent activities of individuals of different ages oblivious to the doctrines and wisdom descending from on high.

In this illustrative example from over a century ago there is a correspondence with the present discussion on media education, in which one might both evince moral precepts and at times draw dramatic distinctions between the pernicious influence of entertainment and developmentally elevating material. The pronounced emphasis on enlightenment and paternalism is rendered comprehensible by the historical background. On the other hand the serious-minded enlightenment emanating from the history of the school institution and popular education served to suppress any carnival and the opportunity for play and protest which it provides, and perhaps for that very reason also the more open conception of the opportunities of the child to use media and operate in the media. Defining children as incompetent objects of media education in need of protection and the "police state" media protection enshrined in legal parlance have made their own contribution to the present debate on media education:

"Media education is a means of exerting influence on the child's ability to re-

ceive messages without undesirable effects. However, it is not a justification for letting children themselves decide “in a responsible manner” what they will consume. Children cannot grow up in cotton wool; it is for the parents to decide what children really understand. Regulation of content which is not good for children is provided for in two laws and on the self-regulation of TV companies and game manufacturers. Regulation is on the one hand under the surveillance of the Ministry of Education and the Finnish Board of Film Classification and on the other under the Ministry of Transport and Communications and the Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority. (...) Given that the appropriateness of content for children is provided for in law, the responsibility cannot be totally assigned to the parents. Public power must provide parents with a basis for making their choices.” (Huovinen 2007)

Media education today appears equally important as once did popular enlightenment and sending children to school. Media education must not be left in the hands of irresponsible parents; no, there must needs be intervention from “higher up”, nowadays represented by the legislating state and the educational institutions. As with the universal faith in education, one might even speak of “faith in media education”, since the emphases are the same as they once were in the “will of the people” and “for the child’s own good”, knowledge of which was the prerogative of those who represent the people and the children. The media education researcher David Buckingham (2000; 2003a) has indeed claimed that the history of media education goes hand in hand with the ethos of enlightenment. This in particular has meant a construction of nationality leaning on good sense, which has served to conceal areas of affectivity pertaining to the culture of children and young people. At the same time the media education in schools, for example, has stressed the taste of the teacher and media experience to the exclusion especially of young people’s own taste. The result has frequently been a yawning gap difficult to bridge. At times it would appear in the public debate, especially regarding children, that there lurks in media some extraterrestrial bogey to scare children and ministers of culture from outside the world, while it would be more sensible to assume that media is a part of our shared reality.

Media education or media literacy?

Over the years various concepts have been applied to media education. In the 1950s, for example, there was the expression audiovisual popular liberal education. There was also mention of newspaper teaching in which Finland was a pioneer, especially after the 1960s, and of film teaching. Such concepts frequently portray in a very concrete manner the activities of each in a certain medium. The 1970s witnessed the coining of mass media education and audiovisual education until communication education became an established part of the curricula of the comprehensive school system. This term seems to survive, as it continues to occur in the few textbooks on media education. Whatever name media education goes by, it has often been accompanied by civic education (as of the 1960s), mass entertainment education (in the 1970s) and creativity education (in the 1980s). Thus media education vividly characterises the spirit of the time. When in 1968 the young students of the University of Art

and design in Helsinki occupied the national film centre for children, which comes under the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare, a radical and free-thinking approach came to be part of film teaching.

In the 1980s the theory and practice of media education were augmented by audiovisual education, which was provided, for example, in municipal video workshops. In the 1990s horizons expanded to research on various viewer groups and children's own perspective on media use gained a foothold in research. Interest arose in the use of information technology in teaching and in the schools ADP clubs were replaced by ADP lessons forming part of the curriculum. At the beginning of the new millennium the situation in media education and practice is complex indeed.

Since the turn of the millennium the concept of media education has become established in Finnish practice, even though it does not appear in the curricula of comprehensive schools. However, "media literacy" is indeed represented in curricula. The terminological confusion is due in part to international discussion and different cultures. Notably in the USA the concept of media literacy is favoured, while in the European context, and especially in the UK, from which numerous ideas on and practices in media education arrived in Finland in the 1980s, the term media education is in use. The concept of "media literacy" originating in the USA, however, enjoys a prominent position in the Finnish debate, too. It is common for a group of so-called new literacies to be added to the use of new media. These include computer literacy, digital literacy, game literacy, brand literacy and visual literacy.

First steps in the 1950s and experiments in the 1960s

Once point of departure in the media education of the 1950s was mass communication and especially the issue of the effect of film on the individual and on society. The first attempts in the direction of media education research are to be found in "Audiovisuaalinen kansansivistystyö" (audiovisual popular liberal education) by the film researcher and media scholar Helge Miettunen in 1954. He was influenced by American empirical mass communication research. In his book Miettunen notes the power of the mass media and especially film, to exert influence. The problem is the unidirectionality of mass media, exerting an effect by one over many, in both a commercial and propaganda sense.

Miettunen thought that mass communication was deemed a powerful channel for exerting influence by which the masses could be managed and moved, not only for purposes of propaganda but also for commerce. He argued that commercialisation, especially in the American context, had made mass communication ever more superficial and routine. According to Miettunen (ibid.) it was the mission of liberal and audiovisual popular education to teach the audience to understand "the difference between art and entertainment" and to "make the art of film, radio and TV clearer, teach (the audience) to comprehend and appreciate these and to enjoy them". Essentially Miettunen seeks to draw a distinction between bad entertainment and propaganda on the one hand and good art on the other. Such a point of departure was subsequently considered to be aesthetic media education.

The roots of aesthetic media education go back to what was known as Auteur theory, which sought to elevate the classic Hollywood film to artistic status, notably by stressing the significance of the director as the author of the film. When film was perceived as art, what was now essential in media education was to develop aesthetic sense and experience in works of film and other popular culture. Miettunen (ibid. 87-88) does indeed strongly defend those films and radio plays which are based on "aesthetic values" and the kind of work for media education which teaches people to distinguish good from bad and to choose wisely "from the products available".

The popular liberal education of the 1950s also brought to the fore the use of media tools in education and in the classroom. Miettunen spoke of immediate audiovisual popular liberal education as a way to consciously take account of media tools in the teaching situation. Such activity had two directions, on the one hand that of aesthetic film teaching and on the other the teaching opportunities of film. Again, the roots of the latter are in the USA, where the significance of film as a pedagogical tool had been identified and widely utilised. For example, in New York schools as early as in 1910 there were some thousand teaching films to be seen in different subjects (ibid.188). Miettunen himself addresses the opportunities of the teaching film very extensively and includes the potential of radio and television in this area.

In the practices of Finish schools, too, teaching films have been highly significant. Many towns and municipalities had their own AV centres from which audiovisual equipment could be borrowed, likewise slides and films to support teaching at school. The national AV centre was set up in 1976, its tasks having previously been taken care of by the state teaching film function. When in 1994 the AV centre was closed down, the production and lending operations of audiovisual teaching materials were transferred to the teaching materials function of the National Board of Education. YLE, the Finnish national public service broadcaster also played a considerable part in the production of audiovisual teaching materials.

However, the production and dissemination of audiovisual teaching materials and the related classroom practices have not always been considered to be real media education. For example David Buckingham (2003b, 4) actually makes a distinction between educational media and media education. For Buckingham media education is about the media, not through or with the media (see also Burns & Durran 2007, 7). With the use for teaching purposes of information and communications technology (ICT) the debate on the area of the concept of media education has been quite heated. Disputants are divided on whether or not teaching through or with media falls within the scope of media education. In Finland media education is taken also to encompass teaching with the help of media, among others in the media education programmes of the universities of Lapland and Helsinki. The University of Lapland makes a distinction between media as tools, production of media and the critical scrutiny of media. In practice teaching with the help of media and teaching media frequently dovetail into each other. Let us consider, for example, film analysis in the classroom. A skilful teacher can lift a theme out of a film and decipher how it is portrayed by film technique.

Miettunen also notes in his media education concept 'indirect' popular liberal education,

in more modern terms the nature of media as an informal learning environment or cultural pedagogy. Media is just not consciously utilised in teaching situations; it serves itself to teach and educate:

“Indirectly audiovisual programmes teach a great deal with their background and environmental filming, action which, when emulated, teaches behaviour, views from which hair care, modes of dress etc. are learned and with various psychological solutions.” (Miettunen 1954, 182)

Numerous modern media researchers and experts in media education are happy to subscribe to this informal educative task of media: “The ideal presented by the media, the lifestyle and fashion have begun to shape everyday life” (Kotilainen & Kivikuru 1999, 24). Media psychology also stresses the socialising significance of media “Media is a socialising force directing our way of building a world view and defining our place in the world. Children’s conception of reality in particular is in part a creation build on media.” (Mustonen 2000, 63.) The active relation between media and actors has also been stressed: “Media should indeed be conceived of as an active relation in which media both shapes the world while the world shapes media” (Sintonen 2001, 38).

The end of the 1950s witnessed a breakthrough of the age of “new media”. Miettunen writes habitually about film and radio, but only falteringly about television, whose breakthrough only came in the 1960s. Finnish Television (nowadays YLE) was granted a licence to broadcast television programmes in 1956 at the same time as the Finnish Foundation for Technology Promotion (TES). Indeed, at the turn of the 1950s and 1960s YLE and TES competed for viewers until in 1964 YLE bought the television function of TES and on that basis set up a second television channel, TV2. As always, the new media gave rise to new threats to children and young people. As soon as television broadcasting had got under way the Ministry of Education were asked about the chances of the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare to operate in the field of media education. In 1958 the Finnish national centre for children’s films was set up under the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare, aiming at analytical educational work with children and monitoring the content of children’s films and television programmes.

In the 1960s the situation changed as this decade witnessed a great number of new cultural departures. Artists in particular were incensed by the established conceptions of Finnish culture and created new perspectives of Finnishness in an internationalising world. Life was perceived as a Gesamtkunstwerk of which art was a part. On the other hand art was also conceived of as having a mission to invigorate the everyday and develop the human mind. There was a great desire, however, to radically expand what was deemed to be art beyond earlier conceptions. The concept of happening came into being, of which one legend reports making ‘mad, passionate love’ on top of a grand piano. The cry was Make love, not war.

The cultural turning point also had repercussions in education, where the wind of liberation was blowing. The universities adopted the European mode of protest and developed student democracy. The comprehensive movement in school education was under way with a call for school councils. In the opinions of the reactionaries we were heading for anarchy. Among art teachers in particular there was an enthusiasm for the pedagogy of freedom

which was sweeping the world. This found expression in Summerhill and A.S. Neill. It was part of the Summerhill principles to allow pupils a great deal of leeway in their attendance at school; for example, they were free to choose how they attended and what they studied. Such experiments were never undertaken in Finland, but the principle of freedom was apparent in the way of working in art education and in a belief in art as a force to change the world. International themes appeared in the education of art teachers: war and peace, hunger, sex, oppression of people and the opportunities of equality, the structural violence of society, indeed within the school system. These themes were scrutinised in pictorial art, for example, using materials from current affairs news reporting and popular culture.

The change occurring in media education was also driven by students of art. The centre for children's films operating within the sphere of child protection acquired a new governing body in 1968, the year of European madness, when students of the University of Art and Design Helsinki held a sit-in in the organisation. The students created strife regarding the content of operations when alongside traditional protection work came the notion of creating high quality children's pictorial culture and their own film-making. Tarja Lapila, filmmaker and the first award-winning worker of the organisation now biased towards film and television education, reported that what was done gave rise to a great deal of suspicion: the modus operandi of the new radical generation was not sufficiently educational, researched or analytical, but were based according to the spirit of the time on free activity and learning by doing, which was not yet discussed in official pedagogy (Anttila 1998, 53).

The call for a high-level visual culture for children directed media education furthering the direction of film teaching. This was confirmed by the translation into Finnish in 1965 of the work by J. M. L. Peters, *Teaching about the Film* published by UNESCO. Peters outlines his point of departure as follows:

"The starting point of the book is my conviction that the film - and, along the film, television - is by and large assuming the proportions and shape of what we may call a 'second world' of our youth, and therefore education must take serious note of the way in which young people 'live' in this modern environment of the visual mass media which occupies so much of their leisure time. More and more, modern man, and particularly modern youth, lives 'visually'. Film and television, as the most popular and powerful means of mass communication and recreation, are gradually usurping the place formerly occupied - and not so long ago - solely by books and by other written, or spoken, material. But people - and young people especially - are not sufficiently prepared for this change and do not assimilate its effects in a satisfactory way. It is a new and urgent task for education to build, so to speak, a bridge between the life of children and adolescents in the ordinary, everyday world and their imaginary life in this 'second world' of the cinema and TV. Film-teaching is the means whereby this may be done." (Peters 1961, 10)

Peters pays attention to children's and young people's visual culture where indeed film and television are pivotal. Here aesthetic education also extends to societal education in which film is contemplated "as a social institution, as a means of mass entertainment having special effects and influences on the cultural and spiritual level of the people, a medium

for communication of ethical, religious, and other spiritual values.” (Ibid. 16) Here, too, the objectives of film teaching emerge: it 1) offers protection against the seduction of film and against “spurious appeal”, and b) offers “critical evaluation and assimilation” (ibid. 15). Finnish media education operates in this same direction as the idea of motion picture discrimination which proliferated farther afield. It relied in part on the tradition of inoculation and protection but perceived itself to be part of aesthetic art education. Yet it must still be noted that although film occupied a significant position as an object of education its relation to other visual and media culture was recognised. Indeed, Peters states that ultimately film teaching concerns all mass media and that this is a part of general communication theory (ibid. 20).

The significance of mass media in media education also manifested itself in co-operation between the Finnish Newspapers Association which began in the 1960s and continues to this day when the association in 1964 arranged a press course for teachers of history and social subjects. Teaching about newspapers was intended to strengthen particularly the component of topical material and societal orientation in schools. Reino Riikonen (1963, 39) wrote in 1963 in the publication *Suomen lehdistö* that

“Grammar school must intensify its civic education, increase the share of societal learning material, present economic questions and the political development and pursue new teaching methods when these subjects are taught. (...) Forging a link between the world of school and the society of the fully grown, I believe, can best be achieved with the help of newspapers, radio and indeed television. They constitute the most important bond with the world of adults. The potential of newspapers has not been thoroughly explored although in various subjects individual teachers had conducted experiments.”

The call for school to open up to society and the potential of media in this teaching have thus been a subject of discussion for over forty years. Especially great effort was invested in implementing this mission in the mass media education of the 1970s.

From film teaching to conscious mass media education

The discussion on mass media education and its internationally significant perspective gained momentum in the letters-to-the-editor of the quality daily *Helsingin Sanomat* in 1969, when Sampo Louhi, a junior school teacher inspired by Peters’ book, asked about the position of film teaching in school. In his letter to the editor, Louhi expressed the opinion that school should attend to film teaching, which according to Peters’ model, has both a positive and a negative objective; children and young people must be protected from the deceptive charm of film and they should acquire a critical stance to film. In his optimism Louhi believed that before long film teaching would before long be widely adopted in schools. The history proper of mass media education begins when Sirkka Minkkinen, a researcher for YLE, responded to Louhi’s letter. Minkkinen (1969) referred to the interim curriculum for audiovisual education in which the objective set was the observation and interpretation

of media, critical and selective “adoption” and understanding the modes of expression and narrative styles of information technology. Minkkinen wished to expand the objectives in such a way that the pupils would become accustomed to utilising mass media tools, acquire a critical stance towards the conveying of information and that the experiential sphere of the pupils, acceptance of differences and understanding be broadened through the mass media. Thus Minkkinen stresses knowledge and utilisation of the entire field of communication rather than film teaching. She moreover pays special attention to the fact that according to the audiovisual curriculum audiovisual education is to be realised through observation of media and emulation of various media performances, but that in no objectives or pedagogy is note taken of the societal significance of media tools.

An upshot of Minkkinen’s detailed proposal regarding how the aims and areas of mass media education could be brought close specifically to the societal significance and position of media was that Minkkinen was invited to join in the curricular work and eventually the curriculum changed utterly in the direction of the mass media education model proposed by Minkkinen. The mass media education developed on the comprehensive school curricular principles in 1972 was implemented on this basis.

At this point Finland was a pioneers, and in UNESCO the objectives and content of its mass media education were considered exemplary. At the end of the 1970s there was a great deal of activity in UNESCO in the comparison of international media education and curricular development. The point of departure was the fear that the mass media would negate the school curriculum, i.e. convey content which contradicted the content of school. Thus it became an objective to develop pupils’ critical attitude to be mass media and its content. UNESCO commissioned a survey of the mass media education offered in the schools of several countries, including Finland. The report for Finland was prepared by Sirkka Minkkinen and in UNESCO it occasioned interest in the Finnish practices.

Next it became Minkkinen’s task to create for UNESCO on the basis of the practices of various countries a general curricular model for mass media education which was more extensive than the model used in the curriculum for comprehensive school (see Minkkinen 1978). The basis of the report addressing Finnish mass media education was the notion of changes occurring in the conveying of scientific-technical and knowledge formation. This meant that Minkkinen perceived electronic communications to be the core actor in what kind of information people received on the world and their environment and what kind of image of the world they acquired on the basis of it. Thus the starting points of education and teaching pertaining to media needed to be essentially societal but also geared to art education (Kivelä & Minkkinen 1979, 3).

In Minkkinen’s model mass media education according to the comprehensive curriculum of 1972 is divided into education which is cognitive, aesthetic and ethical. The strong notion of mass media education is that it can be linked to the general educational objectives of school (ibid.). For example, film must then be perceived as pivotal as a “developed of the overall personality of the child” and as such to be integrated into the general educational objectives of school.

From the perspective of mass media education the cognitive education content includes

among other things the history and development of knowledge transfer and the structure and politico-economic conditions of the transfer of knowledge. The aesthetic content of the education includes the modes of expression, types and advertising. The ethical content includes selection and reception of messages, their comprehension and influence. (Minkkinen 1978, 35-41.)

Minkkinen likewise divides the objectives of mass media education into those of cognitive skills and motivation. Minkinen links the cognitive goals including the necessary knowledge of the mass media as a part of the "cultural, political, social, economic and technological activities of society" (ibid. 43) firmly with the scrutiny of social reality. Objectives related to skill pursue the making of media choices which support personal growth and world view and abilities to distinguish between media content and its appraisal, likewise the ability to express oneself through media and using the means afforded by media. Motivation objectives aim to "stimulate and encourage pupils to be active in favour of democratic communications, to take up stands in respect of the urgent issues raised by mass communication." (ibid.)

The key objectives once again are a critical, active and independent media user. Minkkinen also cherishes hope of children's participation in society. The starting point for this is the UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child. Thus through mass media education the child can also take an interest in problems in society. Minkkinen and Margarethe Starck in their book *Lapsi ja joukkotiedotus* (1975) as follows:

"When a child becomes interested in social problems, she also calls for justice more urgently than a lukewarm adult. For example, the hunger and hard labour of children in the developing world cause the child to consider means of offering help. It then becomes necessary to try to find means appropriate to the child to make her contribution in helping those children, and to try to sustain a hopeful frame of mind and desire to help" (Minkkinen & Starck 1975, 143).

Thus in UNESCO circles the model of mass media education coexisted with Paulo Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed (Freire 2005) and as an attempt at a more democratic and just world. The ideal of criticality and democratic media were riding high in the 1970s, although publicity in the terms of Jürgen Habermas (2004) had undergone a "structural change". The mass media were no longer the arenas for public debate and had become the consciousness industry. Media education in this development sought to defend the autonomy of the subject. Indeed, Minkinen notes that the new phase of information transfer, which she calls the scientific-technical phase has signified both a quantitative increase and become more superficial and one-sided (Minkinen 1975, 21-22). Minkkinen (ibid. 24) concludes:

"In today's society the mass media exert enormous influence. Children must not be left alone at their mercy; they must be provided with appropriate knowledge about the mass media and they must be helped and supported in applying this in practice so as to be able to exercise their democratic rights over this mighty force."

The Centre for Film and Television Education also adopted mass media education as its

core activity and Minkkinen was its leader for the period 1974-79. However, mass media education never actually progressed to practices in schools, but remained on the shoulders of individual teachers and actors. Indeed, in Finland media education has traditionally been the province of the third sector. In addition to the Centre for Film and Television Education media education was offered by film clubs and the Finnish Association of Films Clubs (SEKL), which also published reports on the field. Certain municipalities also began to engage in what was referred to as film work, municipal cinema and film teaching. In Jämsänkoski among others an extensive experiment in film teaching was planned in 1975 (report of a seminar in film teaching 1975) and the municipal film function in Oulu was especially active. However, in the schools mass media education did not really take off, although the curricula were emulated around the world. In 1971 Professor Kaarle Nordenstreng commented "Unless the school administration and teacher training rapidly begin to put theory into practice, it may be that Finland will become an example of double morality in school planning: we show off with our progressive memoranda while at the same time what is handed out in schools is as old as the Ark." (SS 17 June 1971)

According to Riva-Sini Härkönen (1994, 157) the model of mass media education operated on such a general level that it stood no chance in the school routine. Härkönen also refers to the comment by Dan Steinbock, according to which the mass media education of the 1970s was a flop as "they tried to run before they could walk", resulting in great distress "due to lack of resources and absence of understanding" (ibid.). After the mid 1970s those active in the Centre for Film and Television Education fell off: people tired of voluntary work, especially as they received no thanks, the financial situation of the association was poor and children's culture appeared to be gaining no ground in the state administration. The difficulties were the same as in the 1990s: lack of resources, research, teaching, training and materials.

Audiovisual media: the 1980s and 1990s

At the end of the 1970s media education encountered a new situation. First, at the end of 1978 it became necessary to take a position on the new youth culture and the antics of the Sex Pistols group. On attempting to enter Finland with a view to performing here, the group fell foul of the Finnish press until the Ministry of the Interior denied them entry to Finland. Then on 1 August 1980 Music Television began broadcasting. The media education of the 1980s had to react to a new youth movement and a new music video generation. The media researcher Jukka Sihvonen described post-Music Television media education in 1996 by stating that "as a consequence of the metamorphosis of television the traditional starting points of media education have gradually ceased to have any effect" (Sihvonen 1995, 18). Sihvonen called for a new kind of media awareness, a sense of media extending into the affective areas and conceiving of media as a more holistic field of experience. After the 1980s an increasingly powerful perspective entered media education through media culture research, which was accomplished among other places at the University of Turku in the 1990s from the perspective of a new subject, the science of film and television. Sihvonen's book of 1987 *Kuviteltuja lapsia: suomalaisen lastenelokuvan lapsikuvasta* (Imaginary Children: on the Picture of the Child in Finnish Films) was an exceptional book touching on media edu-

cation as it was more in the nature of a study of media research than a work of education. In spite of the efforts of the Ministry of the Interior and those parties who were appalled by Donald Duck's failure to wear trousers and his indecent behaviour – Donald and Daisy were blatantly living in sin and caring for Donald's nephews – the new youth culture did indeed make landfall in Finland. In addition to the option of watching music videos, the new video technology made it possible to have cheap and extensive film production at one's own discretion, as a result of which video workshops in Finland sprang up like asparagus in May. Making films was fun and cost little if only the municipality or some other organisation would stump up for the video cameras and editing equipment. The 1980s saw the beginning of the annual event of the Centre for Film and Television Education *Minun elokuvani* (My Film), which was targeted at young video filmmakers under the age of twenty. Nowadays the names of the enthusiasts of the video workshops can frequently be seen in the credits of mainstream television productions. Finland's first Eurovision triumph was also due to the video workshop movement, as the singer Lordi, alias Tomi Putaansuu, was one of the video enthusiasts and the group's masks are just the aesthetics which appealed to the video workshops in their early days; the horror film. Yet again the video workshop movement ruffled the feathers of the serious educators and the debate on music videos, horror films and children's and young people's own pictorial culture raged among others in the publication *Peili* (The Mirror) for children's and young people's media culture. It had been established by the Centre for Film and Television Education in 1977 under the name *Sinä, mina, me* (You, Me, We).

The somewhat more extensive media education discussion of the 1980s was kickstarted by the book *Teaching the Media* by the British media researcher Len Masterman (1985), which was translated into Finnish four years later. Masterman was one of the main representatives of the influential screen theory in British media education; although critical of the elitism of the theory he subscribed to many of its initial premises, such as questions of language, ideology and representation (Buckingham 2003b, 8). Masterman's line in media education was demystification of media, the endeavour to scrutinise the latent ideologies and escape their power.

Immediately after the translation of Masterman's book it was followed in Finland by *Media ja merkitykset*, a book published in 1990 by the association of teachers of the Finnish. In this collection of articles focused on media education Masterman was a big name and there was a desire to part company with mass media education by paying special attention to the active role of the viewer, which created a new paradigm for media research. The role of Masterman in the Finnish media education of the 1990s is evidenced by the final discussion of the book where it is stated: "But more than the Finnish points of departure [Minkkinen and mass media education] the discussion centred on the theories of Len Masterman and his book *Teaching the Media*. It is the most comprehensive work on media and communications education to come out in Finnish." (Mäki-Tuuri & Vilhinen 1990, 202-203).

The media research foundation for media education was now finally ousted by the mass communication tradition represented by Minkkinen. This was also apparent in the list of contributors to *Media ja merkitykset*. The mass communication researchers Jyrki and Veikko Pietilä were now opposed by a number of researchers of popular culture and media researchers: Jukka Siivonen, Hannu Eerikäinen, Markku Koski, Tuike Alitalo. The pivotal

question continued to be the task of media education, whether the exposure of the power of illusion, the performance nature and rhetoric or the scrutiny of media as a part of the everyday world and how the difference in these tasks was to be discerned in practical media education.

In the place of the former mass communication, the parlance in media education turned to communication and communication education, including the dimensions pertaining especially to expression and doing. Thus making videos also became a part of media education and school work. Communications was defined in the bases for the comprehensive school curriculum of 1994 according to the curricular model as interaction concerned with the cognitive, aesthetics and ethics, when communication education was the creation, management and development of this interaction (POPS 1994, 35-36). In the development measures proposed for communication education of the Ministry of Education of 1991 communication is understood as communication both with tools and face-to-face, thus communications education entails both the higher term and the communicative capabilities, and thus extended to education in creativity education. Creativity education and media education were educational orientations manifesting within communication education. (See Härkönen 1994, 32-33.)

The plurality of this communications education caused persistent problems in the conception of the relation of communications to media education. In point of fact, with the advent of the 1990s the field of media education was dominated by a motley collection of different educational concepts referring to media. In her doctoral dissertation of 1994 Ritva-Sini Härkönen compiled them as follows: mass media education, communication teaching, teaching communication, communication training, media pedagogy, media education, media communication education, audiovisual teaching, film, television and video education, teaching on the press, media literacy, IT teaching, computer-aided teaching, teaching in telematics and multimedia teaching (Härkönen 1994, 21). And as noted by Härkönen, communication education, which was enshrined in the curricular bases of the comprehensive school system as early as in 1984, as a term is "generally known, but as a concept its use is unclear, fragmentary and overlapping" (ibid.).

Confusion is the state in which Finnish communications and media education had long existed. For example, Härkönen (ibid. 24) refers to a publication of the state art administration of 1985 in which it is mentioned that efforts have been made in Finland for twenty years to arrange communication education at school level, but with little success. The confusion in communication education was exacerbated by the division into two lines, teaching communications and communications teaching (see ibid. 283). This distinction actually emerged in Finland in the points of departure for audiovisual popular liberal education. Helge Miettunen (1954) made a distinction into two of audiovisual popular liberal education according to the American model. These were a) media, especially film, as a tool in teaching and b) media, especially film, as an object of teaching. Naturally communication tools had also aroused pedagogical interest as new tools for application in school to support learning. B. F. Skinner among others outlines the notion of a teaching machine in the field of education. This would enable pupils to learn twice as much in the same space of time and with the same effort as in a conventional classroom (Dreyfus 2001, 28). In teaching technology thinking and in the use of teaching communication or media, the aim is indeed effective learning,

whereas in the case of communication teaching it is critical and reflective communicative competence. The understanding of communications and media as a tool for education and learning has been linked especially to problem setting in education, while the orientation of communications teaching departs from the perspectives of mass communication, media research and theories of communication.

This view gained strength especially in the 1990s, when the use of communication and information technology in educational institutions became more common and aroused interest among scholars of education. At the same time much was accomplished by way of information society strategies, for which the ethos of the new teaching technology was eminently suitable. In education sciences numerous research projects were developed around the theme: the virtual classroom was researched, likewise mobile teaching and studying, the options of videoconferencing, open and distance learning (ODL), telematic communication, interactive ICTs and so on. (See Vesterinen, Vahtivuori-Hänninen et al. 2006.) In Finland media education can also be defined as a task pertaining strongly to the supporting of learning processes from the pedagogical perspective. For example, at the University of Helsinki Seppo Tella, who served as professor of media education defines media education specifically as a branch of education science which focuses particularly on the opportunities afforded by information and communication technology (Tella 1997).

The start of the new millennium

The 2000s signalled expansion in many directions in Finnish media education. The interest of school officials right up to ministerial level has shown signs of revival, although it remains difficult to discern any clear line of action. On the other hand there have been projects in media education by both the Ministry of Education and the National Board of Education. For example, in the 1990s there was a special communication education project in the National Board of Education and an extensive advisory body for communication education. At the beginning of the 2000s, especially in the time of Tanja Karpela as Minister of Culture there was activity in the development of media education for young children. The perspective of protecting children from the media was much to the fore. For the promotion at national level of media education Antti Kalliomäki, Minister of Education, initiated a broad-based programme of measures to plan an action programme by which to promote media skills and expertise as part of general civic and information society skills. The work group includes representatives of the teaching and other central administration, the schools, municipalities, media and the Finish Society on Media Education and the universities.

In the new millennium is it no longer so easy to crystallise the content of media education as it was in earlier decades. The preceding decades could be characterised through the new technology, for example in such a way that the 1950s were the era of the newspaper, the 1960s of television, the 1970s of mass communication, the 1980s of video and the 1990s of the computer (including e-mail and telematics networks) and the mobile telephone. Positions were taken on these in media education one way or another and an effort was made to respond to the “new challenges” they posed. At the beginning of the 2000s new ques-

tions for media education have once again emanated from the new media and especially children and young people's relation to media. With the new media and digital media the interest of media education continues to be increasingly in the media production of children and young people. Among other things, many festivals are arranged every year in Finland, where the media productions of children and young people themselves are presented. Internet communities such as Dvoted and Pixoff pages are another place for publishing one's own films. Finnish children's films have also gained international approbations, as animations and films have frequently won awards at international festivals.

However, the 2000s are likely to be a more fragmented era unless we are to raise games and the manifold opportunities of net-based technology as "great stories" and the so-called social media and the various combining of media. Social media and "web 2.0" have made it possible to publish and engage in virtual networking on a global scale. The new Internet options including picture galleries, blogs, podcasts, YouTube, Second Life, Habbohotel etc. are a routine matter for young folk, but frequently a mystery to the older generation. Yet again the threats and almost unlimited opportunities of new digital culture rear their heads. In the discussion on digital games there has been an increasing trend towards defending the new learning culture and experience afforded by the games and game characteristics and support for this has been sought from as far afield as neuroscience. When talking of media education in the 2000s there is no ignoring the contribution of games. Indeed, games have attracted the attention of Finnish researchers in both education and from the perspectives of culture and technology.

Media education in schools and in the training of teachers

Questions of media education follow hard on the heels of changes occurring in the media environment, and these are nowadays so fast that pedagogical institutions are hard put to keep up. In the schools media education has been defined in keeping with the curricular objectives of 2004 as media literacy, with special reference to Finnish and literature and subjects in pictorial art. Media education also continues to exist as an entity, a position which it has enjoyed since the inception of the comprehensive school system. In basic teaching the overall term is nowadays Communication and Media Skills. In upper secondary teaching the subject is called Communication and Media Expertise. The subject as a whole represents an attempt at integrated teaching and the subjects need to include common and elective subjects and the school's operating culture. The objectives for communications and media skills subjects are defined as follows: "the objective is to develop skills in expression and interaction, to promote the understanding of the position and significance of media and to develop skills in using media. In communication skills the emphasis is on participatory, interactive and communal communication. Media skills should be exercised both as recipients and producers of communication." (POPS 2004, 39).

Through communication and media subjects it is hoped to have the pupil express herself in a diverse and responsible manner and to interpret the communication of others; to develop information management skills and to compare, select and utilise information acquired, to take a critical attitude to the content conveyed by media and to contemplate the ethical and

aesthetic values pertaining to them in communication, to produce and convey communications and to use media in an appropriate manner and to use the tools of communication and media in information acquisition, information transfer and in various interaction situations. (Ibid. 39.)

The main content of the group of subjects is mentioned as the expression of one's own thoughts and feelings, various modes of expression and their use in various situations, likewise distinguishing and interpreting of the content of messages, changes in the communicative environment and multimedia, the role of media and its effects in society, the relation of the world portrayed by the media to reality, co-operation with the media, source criticism, data security and freedom of speech, likewise technical equipment, its varied use and netiquette. (Ibid.40.)

In teaching in Finnish and its literature the pupil in the first or second class "develops her reading and writing skills and her media skills, likewise her communicative skills in an information technological learning environment (...) her media literacy will be sufficient for her to follow programmes intended for her age group" (ibid. 47, 49). In the third to fifth classes a pupil "acquires basic information about the media and will be able to make purposeful use of communication tools" (...) have got to know fiction constructed through film, theatre and other media" (ibid. 50, 52). In the sixth to ninth classes the task of teaching is "to encourage the pupil to read and evaluate literature, including various media texts" (ibid. 53). A pupil "acquires a conception of the power of the media and text to create images, form the world view and direct people's choices (...) read texts, including various media texts using an appropriate reading strategy" (ibid. 54, 56). The justifications of the 2004 curriculum in basic teaching also mention the equipment of schools' learning environments, which "should also support the pupil's development into a member of the modern information society and provide opportunities for the use of computers and other media technology and for the use of information net. (ibid. 18).

The implementation of media education as an all-pervasive subject, however, has been heavily dependent on the activity of individual teachers. When, in order to implement media education in basic teaching and upper secondary teaching the school arranges, for example, theme days and carries out projects, this is often a matter of the initiative of one teacher and her own interest and activity. In the best examples media education is implemented systematically, for example, in co-operation between the school and local societies, the media or the homes. The school institution has endeavoured to strengthen the position of media education by recruiting special media pedagogues to assist teachers. In media education activity the pupils have opportunities to do things on their own and to experiment. In the worst case media education is not offered at all, or remains a drop in the ocean with the analysis of a media performance in an individual lesson.

Ensuring the commitment of teachers begins right at the time of their teacher training; there is a need for courses to support the development of pedagogy, the development of materials, wide-ranging collaboration and connections to actors in the field, including those beyond national boundaries. Media education is increasingly catered for in teacher training, but it is still possible to qualify as a teacher without any studies in media education. Compulsory courses in media education in the various institutions for teacher training are either rare or

non-existent.

Ever since the 1970s, when media education was included in the comprehensive school curriculum, there has been some form of media education teaching in the training of class teachers and subject teachers. Traditionally, however, content in media education has been the province of the university departments of mass communication and media research. At the end of the 1990s, however, media education began to really inspire interest in teacher training. At the end of the decade the Ministry of Education granted three-year project funding to initiate media oriented class teacher training at the University of Lapland. The first students were selected for the programme in autumn 1997. Teaching was provided almost from the very outset by a professor, a senior academic assistant and later a lecturer. Subsequently the Faculty of Education at the University of Lapland made the media-oriented teacher training into an independent major subject and as such it remains the only one of its kind in any faculty of education in Finland. The professor is Professor Heli Ruokamo. Media education was also located in the Faculty of Art and Design, where teaching and research were already initiated early in the 1990s, first by Tapio Varis and then by Jeff Taylor.

A year before the startup of operations at the University of Lapland it was proposed at the University of Helsinki that a fixed term professorial post be set up, the special field being media education with special reference to research and teaching on the use of information and communication technology in teaching. This five-year post was held by Professor Seppo Tella. Students at the University of Helsinki can choose studies in media education as a minor subject in the media education centre of the Department of Applied sciences and Education. They also have the option to continue these studies at advanced level at the University of Lapland.

At the University of Tampere teaching in media education is offered on a three-year (2006-2008) teaching and research project. The project is located in the Department of Journalism and Mass Communication, with one post for a senior academic assistant. Earlier (1997 - 2002) there was a professorial post shared between Journalism and Mass Communication and Education in Tampere and this was held by Professor Tapio Varis. Professor Varis continued as professor of media education until the spring of 2007. This official post was shared between Hypermedia and Education. At the University of Tampere there is an Adjunct Professor, as also at the University of Turku. The Åbo Akademi University (Vaasa) also arranges teaching in media education, as does the University of Jyväskylä. In addition to these, there is the option for those in training as art teachers to take studies in media education at the University of Art and Design Helsinki. Really permanent media education at university level with permanent posts is only available at the University of Lapland and the University of Helsinki and at the University of Art and Design Helsinki.

There is also teaching at the universities of applied sciences (polytechnics) which could be counted as being in the field of media education. Media education content is to be found in those degree programmes which concentrate on media culture. In adult vocational education there are also projects in the direction of media education focussing on the use of information technology in the management of various professions and on which the potential of the net has been exploited. In the acquisition of professional skills one might speak of media skills which can be developed in many ways. In this case media skill is one dimension of

the individual's professional competence, like language proficiency, teaching skill or indeed power of thought. Media education creates skills with which the learner copes with the new challenges of society (see Ruokamo 2005).

Media education promoted by the National Board of Education

The National Board of Education has long been involved in various media education development projects. Examples of these include the upper secondary school media diploma, the planning work of which began in spring 2000 in the advisory board for communication education. Those participating in the planning were representatives of upper secondary schools from various parts of Finland and other experts in the field. The upper secondary school media diploma resulting from this planning work was piloted in the academic year 2001-2002 in several educational institutions and has spread far in Finland. What was behind the development of the upper secondary school media diploma was the idea to strengthen the position of media education in upper secondary education (Sinttonen 2001, 101).

The upper secondary school media diploma is one of the diplomas contingent upon sustained demonstration. Over and above upper secondary school studies students have the option of completing the diploma in those subjects which do not actually form part of the written matriculation examination. Completion of the diploma requires that the student demonstrate special interest in some issue and field, although upper secondary diplomas do not as such carry any weight in admission tests or requirements to any further education.

The central administration of teaching has been involved in the further development of media education teaching since the 1970s. In spring 2007 the programme of measures work group for the further development of media skills and expertise of the Ministry of Education completed its work by publishing the report "Proposal for an action programme for developing media skills and knowledge as a part of the promotion of civil and knowledge society" (OPM 29/2007). The report describes the present state of media education on various educational levels and makes development proposals to increase the teaching of media education in formal training. Possibly the most important proposal is the implementation in the period 2008-2011 of the Action plan in media education. Its "aim is to improve the prerequisites for media education in basic education at the secondary level and in teacher education". In addition the programme is intended to be part of the normal routine of schools and educational institutions.

Media houses, organisations and projects

The big Finnish media houses engaging in television broadcasting took a significant interest in media education at the beginning of the 2000s. When Channel 4 joined the UNESCO me-

media education campaign the news reported that Baba Lybeck could be seen attending media education seminars. The Finnish public service broadcaster Yleisradio was in a pivotal role, having promoted media education for decades. The most recent conquest is the net environment in which YLE publishes media education material.

The newspapers have likewise taken an active part in media education. In several papers a "school link" has been appointed, charged with the task of visiting schools and implementing media education in collaboration with them. The company Sanoma Oy also has a virtual newsroom in which classes can participate in newspapermaking, while the paper Aamulehti owned by the company Alma Media has its own interactive game which pupils can play in the Aamulehti auditorium. The newspapers have also been active in providing various publication platforms for the schools' net papers.

In the field of organisations activities have been extensive, but also fragmented. Actors come from the interest organisations (the Finnish Newspapers Association, the Finnish Periodical Publishers' Association, the associations of kindergarten teachers, of teachers of Finnish, of teachers of pictorial art etc.) from among the film organisations (regional film centres, the organisation Koulukino) and child protection (the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare, the association Save the Children). The work of the Centre for Film and Television Education continues its work, but now under the name Centre for Media Education Metka, registered association.

The Finnish Newspapers Association arranges an annual newspaper week for schools which activates media education extensively. The Finnish Periodical Publishers' Association arranges a periodicals day. Both organisations produce a great deal of learning materials for use in schools.

The libraries have also become increasingly active in the direction of media education while the library services have expanded and alongside conventional books there are cartoons, audiovisual recordings, computer games and also Internet. The library institution has traditionally co-operated closely with the schools and thus media education in many localities has been achieved as a joint effort between school and library. The Finnish Library Association has also participated in the Ministry of Education project on children and media and has produced media education material for the kirjastot.fi portal.

It should be noted that the Federation of the Finnish Media Industry has made a historical strategic paper in 2008 in which media education and critical media literacy are in the central position. It is stated in the strategy that media education and critically media literate people are needed in all areas of the society, and especially in Finnish (high quality) teacher education. Furthermore the Federation emphasizes that teacher education has a vital role in developing critical media literacy at schools.

A Finnish speciality is media education work targeted at children under school age, which on the initiative of the Ministry of Education has been done since 2006 on the project Media Muffin (<http://www.mediamuffinssi.fi>).

The project has produced learning materials for media education among those under the

age of 8 and arranged training in the implementation of media education. The project is also expanding in the direction of the producers of children's films and it is hoped also to achieve learning material production in connection with children's film production.

However, the activities of organisations and projects are very much tied to projects and project finance, thus media education is constantly living on a hand-to-mouth basis and is dependent on the frequently fickle policies and financial conditions of sources of funding. Inherent in project economy is among other things the eternal compulsion for something new. In place of demonstrably good practices there is always a need to think up new projects for which funding may be applied for in a period of a couple of years and then it all starts again.

Research on media education in Finland

Media education research is still fairly new in Finland. As a multi-disciplinary field of science its researchers have been located in various fields and faculties, when the theoretical basis of media education emanates from several traditions. From the perspective of the further development of teaching and research in media education a decisive step forward was achieved in 2005 with the founding of the Finnish Society for Media Education. The Society rapidly gathered together actors in the field from universities and schools and from associations and organisations in the media field (see <http://www.mediaeducation.fi>).

According to a survey one of the weaknesses of media education research is currently the lack of a home base, lack of funding and the meagre amount of co-operation between researchers and departments (OM 5/2005). In the same report it is stated that the share of media education in the training of teachers is still poor. On the other hand media education research is by nature multidisciplinary; research on it is conducted in the humanities, in social sciences and in education, and also in the field of information science. Research on media education has so far been advanced by active individuals and a small group of people interested in the field. The members of this group are located in difference fields of science.

Research on media education addresses media in various forms or a culture saturated with media. A significant uniting force is also the relation of the individual or the community to media and the phenomena of media culture, especially growth and development and exerting influence in society and in politics. The structures of society and media have also been seen to be part of the field of media education research. The disciplines fundamental to media education research could be deemed information science and education. (Kotilainen & Suoranta 2005.)

In media research, research on media education also falls into the field of audience research. As long as there have been means of communication there have been interesting perspectives on the development and growth of media. Audience research also involves the problematic of media and the active interpreter. In the science of education research on media education is conducted, for example, to support development, training, teaching, studying

and learning. There have also been exploratory excursions into research on various ICT learning environments and learning materials development and into the scrutiny of the relations between media culture and school or the ethics of media education (e.g. Kotilainen 2001, Sinttonen 2001; Suoranta 2003; Ruokamo 2004; Kupiainen 2005). In the sphere of critical pedagogy research, too, media education has an established foothold (Suoranta 1998; Herkman 2007) Issues pertaining to citizenship in the age of media and of the potential of media education in strengthening citizenship have also inspired interest (Kotilainen & Rantala 2007).

However, media education cannot be confined to the disciplines of media and education; research is also conducted in sociology, social psychology, psychology, literature and economics. Research currently involves such phenomenon-centred research areas as research on children and young people, culture research, film research, ICT research, art education, information research and consumer research. Indeed, it is pointless to seek to compartmentalise the research too strictly. Suffice it to note that media education is defined as “a hybrid field of science”, “for which the phenomena, forms and practices of media culture and society constantly offer new multidisciplinary and phenomenon-centred research objects which can be approached both empirically and through conceptual theoretical means and by combining these research approaches” (OM 5/2005).

Four “tribes” are discernible in Finnish media education research, and their attitudes and emphases differ (Kotilainen & Suoranta 2005, 74-75) These tribes are 1) the technology tribe, 2) the protection tribe, 3) the culture research tribe and 4) the critical tribe. The technology tribe are characterised in accordance with Jürgen Habermas’ critical theory of knowledge and human interests by an interest in technology, in the research of net pedagogy and “new learning environments”. As the name suggests, the point of departure for the protection tribe is in the goals of child protection and in the research of the effect of media and media violence. The culture research tribe approaches media research from the standpoint of culture research as broadly as possible and endeavours to understand the phenomena of media culture and media relations. After Habermas the domain of knowledge of this tribe is hermeneutic. The critical tribe relies especially on critical pedagogy and scrutinises, for example the mainstream issues of media culture, resistance strategies and media participation. The domain of knowledge of this tribe is emancipatory. Aharon, Aviram and Deborah Talmi (2005) make a similar distinction, into technocratic, reformist and holistic in relation to information and communication technology and education.

What goes around, comes around

So far the development of Finnish media education has gone through numerous stages. Contemplated internationally, Finnish media education and its research, however, got off to a fairly late start. For example, in Britain the roots of media education can easily be traced back to the 1930s. Although the debate proper on media education was in motion in Finland in the 1950s, the wider discussion on media education only took off at the end of the 1980s inspired by notions originating in the UK.

At the turn of the 1980s and 1990s the development of European media education was coloured by a history with a protection mentality, in which David Buckingham (1992) distinguishes three trends; what underlay the first was the conception that television programmes increase violent behaviour, in the second it was thought that media culture would undermine children’s intellectual development and in the third media, and television culture in particular, were thought to have adverse effects, among other things, on values. Such was the thinking which governed the conception that people’s media relations are simple and mainly negative.

Decades of Finnish media education have been characterised by a desire to protect, safeguard and repel. The development of media technologies has regularly brought with it new tools and technologies, causing educators new concerns and fears. The table below presents how each decade can be linked to its own media and form of media culture prevailing at the contemporary development stage of media education.

Table 1. Decades of Finnish media education

1960 Popular liberal education	Audiovisual education Mass media education	Film, television, newspaper, mass communication
1970 Critical stance	Mass communication education Communication education	Television, mass media
1980 Aesthetics, ethics	Communication education	Video, audiovisual culture, film, music videos
1990 Networking, interaction	Communication education Media education	Information technology, net technology, digital technology
2000 Multi-modal media culture	Media education	Digital technology, multi-modality

As a generalisation, it would appear that the development of media education has gone hand in hand with the development of media technology. There has always been some new tool or technology to move its predecessor along and gain a foothold, for example, in the classroom. Thus the development of media education has been distinctly driven by media technology and biased towards it, just as the first part of the phrase “media education” suggests. Perhaps we are now about to shift into a new stage in media education in which we really dig into the educational and pedagogical potential that media education has as a process of teaching. On the other hand it also appears that the aspect of a media inoculation or protection gains a great deal of publicity in the debate on media education. Perhaps the best possible thing that could happen in the future would be a major increase in media education research and coordination in order to dispel the doubts and prejudices and to expose possible real dangers. There is still a need, for example for clarity with regard to a fundamental question: what are we talking about in media education? Is it based on the notion of two

worlds – of this degenerate world of media and that better one – or of one common world of which media education is a part, “the diversity of life in this world and the safeguarding of that diversity” (Sihvonon 2004).

This was an outline of the development of media education in the Finish context from audiovisual popular liberal education through mass media education and communication education to media education. Nowadays the term media education has gained domination of the field, which is likely due to the fact that communication is no longer taken to refer merely to the sending and receiving of messages, but more widely to media culture and meaning-making. In communication theory the field has been won by an understanding of communication as cultural interaction and a process of meaning making. In this sense communication is not merely the transfer of meaning but also above all the generation of meaning, its exchange and reception.

In summary it might be stated that it is possible in media education to make a distinction firstly with regard to whether we should focus on media tools and their use or media performance and its analysis. Secondly, according to different orientations both media tools and media performances can be approached from different angles. The most important approaches are the technological orientation stressing the technical use of communication tools and the assessment of media performance and media culture stressing a critical attitude to society and culture. These three approaches could together constitute the point of departure for the comprehensive research, development and teaching of media culture.

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