The term visual culture includes all manifestations of cultural life that are significantly expressed through visual aspects and interpreted through individual and shared experiences (Carson & Pajączkowska, 2001). Visual culture includes art (e.g., paintings, sculptures, performances), cultural practices (e.g., holiday or home decorations, ceremonial paraphernalia, clothing), media images (e.g., advertisements, news images, videos, television, film), and other forms (e.g., clothing, toys, comic books, cosmetic surgery, quilts, foods) (Düttmann, 2002; Sturken & Cartwright, 2001; Barrett, 2003a). However, teaching visual culture involves more than extending the range of visual artifacts in school curricula. It also entails understanding and using those artifacts in new ways (Duncum, 2002; Barrett, 2003b; Freedman, 2003; Keifer-Boyd, Amburgy, & Knight, 2003). Visual culture is not based on traditional modernist concepts of aesthetic experience, artistic genius, or elements and principles of design. It is based on understanding cultural practices as ideology, social power, and constructed forms of knowledge. Teaching visual culture requires a critical examination of the power of visual culture to shape the ways in which we come to know the world and ourselves (Pauly, 2003).

During fall semester 2004, the authors served as instructors of a professional development course that explored ways to incorporate visual culture content into school curricula. The course was offered online through the Penn State World Campus to practicing art teachers (Keifer-Boyd, Amburgy, & Knight, 2004). Teachers who participated in the course had the option to receive professional development credit, and four of the six did so. All enrolled with the goal of developing and implementing a visual culture approach to their teaching with the support of a community of art educators.

As part of the course, the instructors developed five sample activities that focused on issues of privilege and power in visual culture: Memorable Narratives, Cultural Artifacts, Gender Constructions, Race Privilege, and Revision It. We created these activities to offer examples of strategies to reveal, critique, and re-envision privilege and power in visual images. Teachers could use or adapt from our sampler of five activities, or develop entirely different art lessons focused on issues of power and privilege in visual culture. In this article we describe the five activities that are connected together through their emphasis on revealing, critiquing, and re-envisioning privilege and power. In our descriptions, we include discussions of the various ways that teachers in our course adapted the activities in lessons and units they developed for art education programs in middle schools and high schools.
Visualization Exercise for Vivid Memories of an Image that has Impacted Your Life

Gather drawing tool(s) and paper. Set these in front of you, and reflect on what visuals are important to your life. Draw from your memory to re-vision a visual significant to you. The visualization below should be read slowly with pauses to allow time for the mind to wander and, then, go deeply into one experience to see everything in that experience, to zoom in on one visual within the context. Begin by finding a comfortable position. Take a few deep breaths, and let your eyes close. Reflect on visual culture for the ideas and stories that shape your life.

1. FOCUS ON A SPECIFIC EVENT
Locate a vivid experience that has shaped your life. Keep searching through the years, starting from today, and travel back in your mind until one experience stands out to you as particularly significant to your life.

2. ASK SPECIFIC QUESTIONS TO SEE YOUR WORLD
Where are you in this situation? Look around in your mind at the place. What do you see? Look closer. How old are you? What is going on around you? Who else is there? What are they or you wearing? Is it blurry or clear—what do you hear? Is there talking? What is being said? Are you doing something with your hands? What is it? Are you sitting, standing, on the floor, or are you moving? What surrounds you? How are you feeling? Are others sharing your feelings, or are you alone? What do you see in this very specific moment?

3. TRANSITION FROM MEMORY TO FORM
If you were to draw what you see, where will you begin? Will you begin with text, drawing, images, or gathering things? Will you search for images or information to help you see this specific moment more clearly? Will you draw what you saw, or your thoughts, or feelings?

4. DRAW
Move to a space that suits your needs to reflect and visualize a specific moment. Doodle, sketch, visualize, and remember the details as you draw from your memory.

5. SHARE
Show your drawing, and discuss why these visuals are important to you.

Figure 1. Visualization process for the Memorable Narrative activity.

Memorable Narratives

One of the sample activities in our course was Memorable Narratives. In this activity, we invited participants to consider objects and visual images that surround them, and reflect on why they are important in their lives. (See Figure 1.) The activity concluded with a drawing exercise in which participants drew important objects or images from memory. Memory, a dynamic process, is a reconstruction of past experiences and is information for present understandings or future expectations (Sutton, 2004). In completing the activities, participants raised questions about the construction of episodic memory, and how sometimes others' memories merge with one's own. The resonance and recurrence of an event in images, testimonies, or texts is part of a socialization system that creates the reality of that event in one's memory (Brown & Duguid, 2000). For example, parents' stories of past experiences shape their children's understandings of those experiences (Gregory, 2001). Thus, collective memory, and its multilayered and shifting characteristics as situated knowledge, influences personal memory (Haraway, 2001; Huysen, 2000). Furthermore, meanings of objects are derived from a continuum of memories. Memory is never objective and fixed; rather it is subjective and fluid. Our beliefs and desires subjectively frame our memories (Marker, 2002). Memories are perceptual maps of how we know the world, i.e., our worldview (Roth & Mehta, 2002). Worldviews are derived from beliefs and deep desires or human drives (Kelly, 2006).

All six of the art teachers in our online course integrated some aspect of the Memorable Narratives activity in their classrooms in Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Texas. They found that this activity motivated students to inquire into the sources of meanings of images that were most influential and familiar to them. Students discussed familiar forms of visual culture at several stages of their art projects. For example, in one participant's classroom, students discussed their selection of media images of people whom they would like to be, and they shared objects or stories from their lives that were related to the idealized images in popular media.

Cultural Artifacts

The Cultural Artifacts activity provided an opportunity to share an object that represents one's culture. In this activity, we invited course participants to consider the object for its significance as a cultural sign that represents one's identity, and to discuss its meaning to different people in various contexts. The activity concluded with an examination of the ways in which visual cultural codes organize social life, and how these meaning systems are passed on from one generation to the next. For example, black and white is a visual code that has been used in cowboy movies to identify bad guys (in all black) and good guys (in all white) and to designate opposite and opposing characters. It continues in colloquial expressions to suggest dualistic beliefs, such as, "You see the issue only in terms of black and white." Further, the visual code has ramifications for people who are characterized as Black or White. Civil Rights activist Jesse Jackson's National Rainbow Coalition, which merged with PUSH (People United To Serve Humanity) in 1997, challenges social life organized around black and white visual codes (Jackson, 1984). The image of a rainbow has become a contemporary visual code within the United States and beyond to symbolize a call to action for civil rights of all people no matter their skin color or sexual identity.

Discussion of objects can reveal cultural narratives of power and privilege depending on the type of questions raised. One participant described the shared and different meanings of her grandmother's soup pot for members of her family. One might ask, would the soup within the pot feed expectations of assimilation where certain beliefs and social behaviors have held a dominant force within the large extended family? Or would it be a thick stew nourishing diverse beliefs, values, and life ways? The object becomes a social mirror in responding to such questions.
Cultural systems are negotiated meaning systems that use visual, aural, and textual languages as the primary signifiers. The Cultural Artifacts activity exposed negotiated agreements and shared meanings derived from artifacts' symbolic power. The process began with the familiar, and then moved to sharing perspectives that might disrupt commonly held beliefs. Investigations into cultural meaning systems help us to break free from oppressive systems that uncritically privilege hegemonic meanings as knowledge or truth. For example, personal memories of cultural artifacts, such as a purse or high-heels, may signify womanhood, femininity, and being grown-up. The teacher, as a facilitator, can guide the dialogue to move from the personal, to collective memories, to political implications. Sharing cultural artifacts opens spaces for critical thinking as evaluation from a broad range of viewpoints when discussing the object as a sign. Visual cultural codes, such as the black and white example, organize society and shape consciousness as an educational process of transfer from one generation to the next.

From the perspective of a cultural studies model, teaching visual culture might involve examining cultural narratives, interrogating subject positions that are offered to us, and thinking about interpretation in terms of compliance, negotiation, or opposition.

Gender Constructions

Gender Constructions was an activity based on a cultural studies model of visual culture. As constructed within the discourse of cultural studies, visual culture can be characterized in terms of text, address, and reception (Sturken & Cartwright, 2001). From the perspective of a cultural studies model, teaching visual culture might involve examining cultural narratives, interrogating subject positions that are offered to us, and thinking about interpretation in terms of compliance, negotiation, or opposition.

Analyzing visual "texts" includes examining the stories visual culture tells about who we are and where we belong in the world (Sturken & Cartwright, 2001). Recurring cultural narratives—stories we see over and over again in visual texts—are especially important. These recurring visual narratives convey stories about what it means to be a man, for example, or what constitutes happiness in life. Analyzing visual texts also includes attending to the way social norms are constructed to reflect the perspectives of dominant groups in society. It includes looking at the ways in which difference from social norms is marked, made exotic, or positioned as other in visual texts, while characteristics of dominant groups go unmarked (Derrida, 1976; Sturken & Cartwright, 2001; Amburgo, Knight, & Kefifer-Boyd, 2004).

Address is another important concept in a cultural studies model of visual culture. The term address refers to the ways visual texts organize our interactions with them by offering us particular subject positions from which to respond (Althusser, 1971; Sturken & Cartwright, 2001). This ideal implied viewing position may be gendered (e.g., looking from the position of a "male gaze"), or it may reflect other social relationships related to racial experience; ethnic identities; lesbian, gay, and transgendered identities; or institutional power. There are many kinds of gazes and implied viewers, including policing gazes and normalizing gazes (Mulvey, 1973; Foucault, 1979, 1980; Said, 1979; hooks, 1993). There may also be gazes that are respectful and non-objectifying (Sturken & Cartwright, 2001).

Reception concerns the way actual people—as opposed to ideal, implied viewers—actively interpret and use visual culture. Actual viewers may or may not accept the subject positions that are offered to them by works of art, media images, and other forms of visual culture. Although some viewers may accept the position offered to them and respond with dominant readings, other viewers may respond, with negotiated or oppositional readings of visual texts. Oppositional readings can take various forms, such as changing an image or repositioning it in a way that changes its meaning. Oppositional readings may also include not looking, or turning away from an image (Hall, 1993). For example, actual viewers may simply turn off the television set, close the magazine, or walk out of the gallery.

In the Gender Constructions activity, we invited participants to critically examine two children's toys, Ken* and G.I. Joe* in terms of text, address, and reception. (See Figure 2.) None of the participants in our course chose to complete this exercise, but two teachers dealt with issues of gender in the units on visual culture they developed for their classes. One teacher began a unit of instruction on visual culture by discussing the ways in which masculinity and femininity are represented in contemporary media. Another teacher extended the race privilege activity to include gender.

Race Privilege

The Race Privilege activity invited participants to reflect upon privileges related to "race" in their lives. Participants made a list of the things they typically do during the course of a week. (See Figure 3.) They were then to imagine that, upon awakening one morning, they found themselves to be of a different "race." They were asked a series of questions to help them think through unacknowledged privilege. (See Figure 4.) The activity concluded by asking participants to consider the ways in which cultural practices create, maintain, and perpetuate racial privilege.

Only one art teacher in our course, David Miller, explored the race privilege activity with his high school class, extending it to include gender. One student, who described her nationality as being half Egyptian, responded to the race privilege activity with the observation that if she woke up and became a White male, "she would have a penis and rule the world" (Miller, 2004, November 21). Another student, a young White man, said the difference would not be very great because "the government protected people from being treated badly in public places such as schools, etc." (quoted in Miller, 2004, November 21). This stirred a heated discussion in the class because some of the other students saw his comment as being grounded in an unawareness of his own position of racial and gender privilege. When the student was asked to think about his own physical appearance ("a blond-haired, blue-eyed male of European descent"), and the number of other people in the room who fit his profile (three, counting the teacher), he acknowledged "he hadn't even considered that he benefited from a position of social privilege based on his gender and race." He thought his hard work in sports and academics were responsible for his position of comfort (Miller, 2004, November 21).
Those with social, political, and economic power get to define how groups without power are represented, classified, stereotyped, and constructed as different in visual culture. There is power in representation. Through the repetition of themes and images in films, television shows, magazines, toys, comics, photographs, and other forms of visual culture, racial hierarchies are reinforced and reinscribed. Moreover, in the United States, one's group position within the racial hierarchy determines privilege. Some people receive unearned advantages because of their skin color (Jay, 2005). Those with lighter skin receive greater privilege than those with darker skin. For example, White people can easily purchase greeting cards, postcards, children's books and magazines, dolls, and toys featuring people of their race. However, this is not the case for those who are not White. In a culture that gives primacy to the visible, White is a passport to privilege (McIntosh, 1997). McIntosh (1992) lists 50 "daily effects of White privilege" in her life, and asserts White people do not notice their White privilege, which serves as "an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks" (pp. 1-2).

The Race Privilege activity was designed to help participants recognize and unravel some of the daily effects of race privilege, and unlearn ways of being that perpetuate it. An activity such as Race Privilege can be a critical first step in addressing race privilege that impacts personal, curricular, and pedagogical decisions. As art educators we must not assume race awareness since society has not socialized and educated White people to notice and understand their own race privilege. Moreover, society has not taught Whites to recognize racism (Leistyna, 2005). Without knowledge of who we are as historical and cultural beings, we are unconscious of the ideologies and power relationships that shape and reproduce racial privilege. The media is overwhelmingly implicated in the current perpetuation of racial privilege. The plethora of visual, textual, and aural signifiers do not merely convey or reflect our social reality—that White is normal—they also form and influence our worldviews. The Race Privilege activity, coupled with an exploration of contemporary artists and critics (e.g., Leezy Saar, Adrian Piper, Kara Walker, and Maurice Berger), can provoke and inspire viewers to challenge notions of Whiteness and racial privilege (Berger, 2004; Stallings, 2003).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>G.I. Joe®</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Reflect on the ways in which each figure represents masculinity, the &quot;stories&quot; he tells us about what it means to be a man.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Address</td>
<td>Reflect on the ways in which each figure addresses us, the &quot;subject position&quot; he offers people who view him or play with him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>Reflect on the ways in which actual people—you or others—have interpreted and played with the figures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When you look at G.I. Joe®, what do you see? (Include clothing and accessories as well as his body type.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For whom is G.I. Joe intended as a toy? Boys, girls? Children, adults? Working people, the middle class, wealthy people? Gay, lesbian, heterosexual, bisexual, transgendered people? White people, people of color?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do you (or did you, as a child) have a G.I. Joe? How do/did you play with him? Do/did you alter G.I. Joe's appearance (hair, body, clothing, accessories) in any way?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How does G.I. Joe represent masculinity? What sort of man would you describe him as being?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Given G.I. Joe's body type, clothing, accessories, etc., are there certain ways in which children (or adults) are supposed to play with him?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do you know any men with characteristics that are similar to the toy G.I. Joe's? Is he typical or atypical of men today? Does (or did) seeing G.I. Joe or playing with him help to shape your understanding of what it means to be a man?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ken®</th>
<th>Text</th>
<th>Reflect on the ways in which each figure represents masculinity, the &quot;stories&quot; he tells us about what it means to be a man.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Address</td>
<td>Reflect on the ways in which each figure addresses us, the &quot;subject position&quot; he offers people who view him or play with him.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reception</td>
<td>Reflect on the ways in which actual people—you or others—have interpreted and played with the figures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When you look at Ken®, what do you see? (Include clothing and accessories as well as his body type.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>For whom is Ken intended as a toy? Boys, girls? Children, adults? Working people, the middle class, wealthy people? Gay, lesbian, heterosexual, bisexual, transgendered people? White people, people of color?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do you (or did you, as a child) have a Ken? How do/did you play with him? Do/did you alter Ken's appearance (hair, body, clothing, accessories) in any way?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How does Ken represent masculinity? What sort of man would you describe him as being?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Given Ken's body type, clothing, accessories, etc., are there certain ways in which children (or adults) are supposed to play with him?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do you know any men with characteristics that are similar to the toy Ken's? Is he typical or atypical of men today? Does (or did) seeing Ken or playing with him help to shape your understanding of what it means to be a man?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. Prompts for analyzing Ken® and G.I. Joe®.

Figure 3. A White student contemplating his list of activities as a person of a different race.
Race Privilege

Race is a social construction that affects every aspect of our lives (West, 2001).

1. Examine Your Identity in Terms of Race.
   Start by making a list of your daily activities. Consider what you typically do during the course of a week. Where do you go? What do you do? With whom? On what occasions? Under which circumstances?

2. Picture Yourself As One of A Different Race.
   Imagine that upon awakening one day you find that you have become someone of Asian, African, Latin, European, Native American descent, and/or other ancestry. (You decide.)

3. As A Person of A Dissimilar Race, Consider How Your Life Might Differ.
   How would you feel? Would you change your behavior? Would you go, or be able to go to the same places or same events? What are the chances that members of that racial group would be found in those places? Would you mingle with the same people, or participate in the same events or activities? In what other activities might you engage?

4. Reflect on Racial Privilege.
   Who is represented in our visual culture (e.g., sculptures, paintings, advertisements, news images, television, video, film, toys, and comic books)? How are they represented? What cultural advantages are afforded or not afforded to members of your race? What cultural practices create, maintain and perpetuate racial privilege? What differences does race make in our everyday lives? What issues do we need to face?

5. Take Action.
   What can you do to work for change? How might you contribute to reconstructing systems of power and privilege? How can you help create a society where equality is available to all?

Revision Strategies

1. Empty Space: Ask who or what is missing or not represented? How would their (its) presence change our understanding of the existing work?

2. Reposition: How would the meaning change if you changed the position of the object? What if it's back was to the viewer? What if two pieces faced each other? Would they give tribute to each other or challenge each other?

3. Overlay: If you overlaid an image or word, how would this change the focus of what is important, emphasized, or intended?

4. Juxtaposition: If you put two things together that were not usually together, how would this create new meaning?

5. Unexpected/out-of-context: Place a different face or body in the image or place something in the setting that one would not expect. How would this reveal taken-for-granted assumptions?

6. Change the Label: What might text say that would redirect the meaning of the work? What would you name or title the visual?

7. Cover Up: What if some sections were covered up to reveal parts that may have been taken-for-granted? Would this change the meaning?

8. Old with New: How would meanings change, if something from the past were placed next to something from the present?

9. Spotlight: What invisible idea can you spotlight to make it visible?

10. Comparisons, Metaphors, and Analogies: Creatively use metaphors and analogies to illuminate subtle meanings. (Adapted from Keifer-Boyd, 1997.)

Revision It

Revision It focused on revisionist strategies inspired by Mining the Museum, a contemporary installation by Fred Wilson. (See Figure 5.) Wilson's work in Mining the Museum uses traditional museum strategies (i.e., lighting, placement, labels, and juxtapositions) to reveal taken-for-granted assumptions of visual culture within specific contexts (Corrin, 1994). In his work, Wilson draws attention to the politics of display and representation.

In the Revision It activity, we invited participants to select an example of visual culture that represented gender, sexual identification, social class, ethnicity, spirituality, ability, weight, and/or age. Using one or more suggested strategies, participants revised their examples of visual culture in ways that revealed taken-for-granted assumptions about purpose, ownership, makers, intended viewers, and the politics of representation. For example, one art teacher selected a pair of her shoes. The teacher's shoes, placed in front of a photograph of shoes of a missing woman of Juarez and an

Power, Privilege, and Visual Culture in Art Education

In this article, we describe five sample activities that help empower teachers and students to understand, critique, and re-envision the ways in which the world is constructed through visual culture. Emphasizing the need for critical work, our activities are preliminary examples linking current theories to classroom practice. These sample lessons are not etched in stone. Instead, they are points of departure from dominant educational paradigms that enable
art teachers to explore relationships between larger historic, social, and economic constructs, and the ways teachers and students are situated in positions of power and privilege. Gaining knowledge of both the positions we occupy and the positions from which we speak enables us to take responsibility for and transform our beliefs and actions.

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REFERENCES


AUTHORS' NOTE
This is a true co-authored work with equal contributions from all of us and no first author. The order in which we list authors is based on a rotation we use in our collaborations on publications.

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