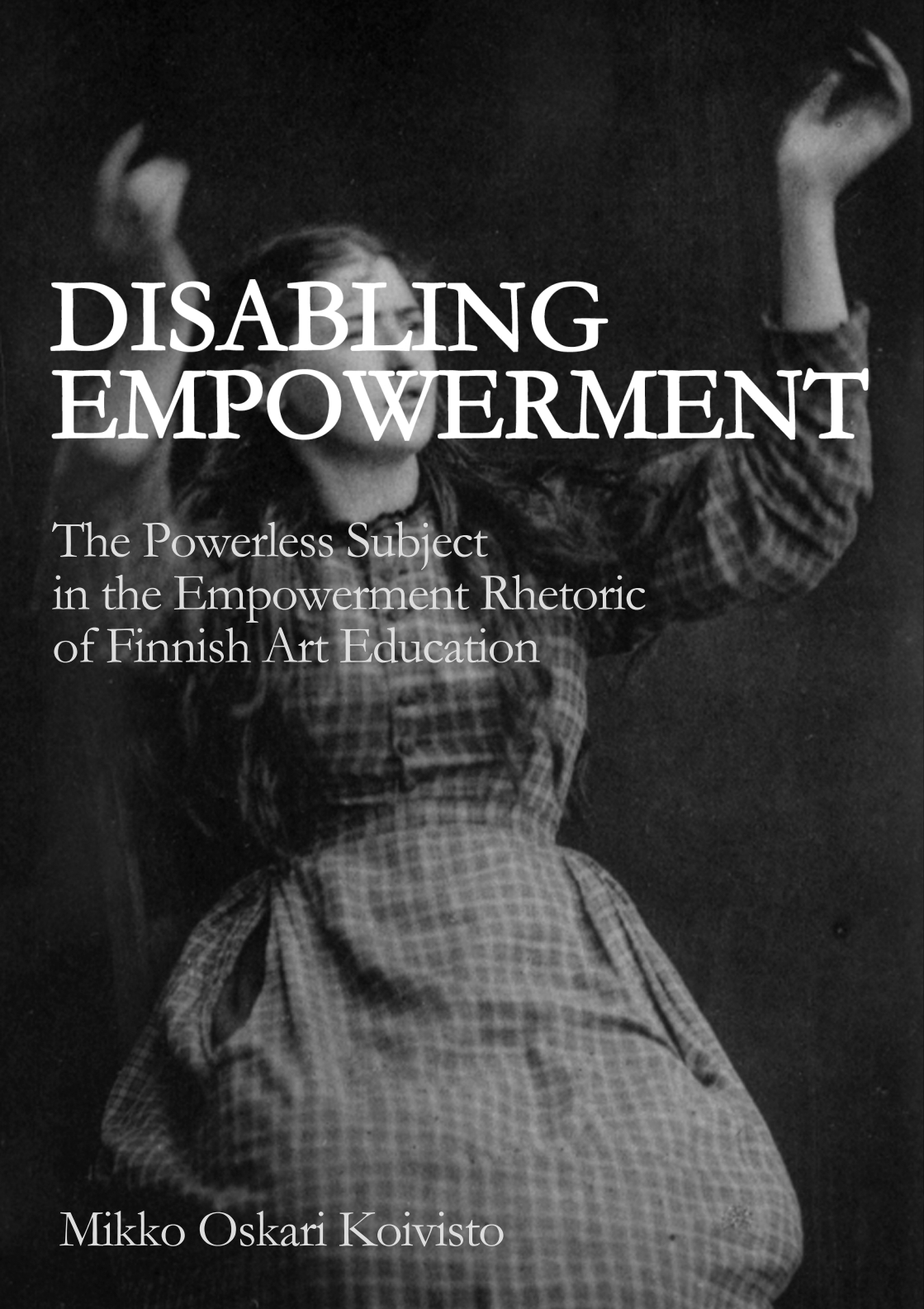

DISABLING EMPOWERMENT

The Powerless Subject in the Empowerment Rhetoric of Finnish Art Education

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Master of Arts thesis abstract

Author Mikko Koivisto

Title of thesis Disabling Empowerment : The Powerless Subject in the Empowerment Rhetoric of Finnish Art Education

Department Department of Art

Degree programme Art Education

Year 2013 **Number of pages** 107 **Language** English

Abstract

I approach the empowerment rhetoric of Finnish art education as a part of a broader discussion on the relation between art education and therapeuticity. The data consists of articles and works from the field of art education that explicitly discuss empowerment. A majority of the data includes references to the Loveliest Girl in the World project and the method of Empowering photography, but the focus of this thesis is solely on the rhetorical conventions used in the representations of empowerment.

The analysis is based on the sociocultural problematizations of disability posed by critical disability studies. This perspective is combined with Michel Foucault's work on the history of psychiatry and on his theory of the relation of power and knowledge. The data is interpreted through rhetorical analysis, which is based on critical discourse analysis.

The data analysis examines how the portrayals of the empoweree, the empowerer, and the empowerment process adhere to certain discourses of disability that are considered problematic from the perspective of disability theory. I elaborate on the question of power with regard to the empowerer-subject's ability to recognize the need for empowerment in another subject, and examine the problematic implications the empowerment rhetoric poses for understanding the subjectivity of the empoweree.

Keywords disability studies, empowerment, Foucault, rhetoric

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Tekijä Mikko Koivisto

Työn nimi Disabling Empowerment : The Powerless Subject in the Empowerment Rhetoric of Finnish Art Education

Laitos Taiteen laitos

Koulutusohjelma Kuvataidekasvatuksen koulutusohjelma

Vuosi 2013 **Sivumäärä** 107 **Kieli** Englanti

Tiivistelmä

Tutkin suomalaisen taidekasvatuskeskustelun voimauttamisretoriikkaa, joka on osa laajempaa keskustelua kuvataidekasvatuksen ja terapeuttisuuden suhteesta. Tutkimusaineisto koostuu taidekasvatuksen piirissä tuotetuista voimauttamista ja voimautumista käsittelevistä kirjallisista teoksista ja artikkeleista. Suurin osa aineistosta käsittelee tai vähintäänkin sivuaa Miina Savolaisen Maailman ihanin tyttö –projektia ja voimauttavan valokuvan menetelmää, mutta niiden tarkastelemisen sijaan keskityn ainoastaan voimauttamisen ympärille muotoutuneisiin retorisiin käytäntöihin.

Tutkielma nojaa kriittisen vammaistutkimuksen kysymyksenasetteluihin koskien vammaisuuden representaatioita. Tätä näkökulmaa täydentää Michel Foucault'n tulkinta psykiatrian historiasta sekä hänen teoriansa vallan ja tiedon suhteesta. Aineiston käsittelyssä sovellan kriittiseen diskurssianalyysiin pohjautuvaa retoriikka-analyysiä.

Aineiston tulkinta keskittyy tapoihin, joilla voimautuja- ja voimauttajasubjektin sekä voimautumisprosessin kuvaukset kytkeytyvät vammaistutkimuksen kritisoimiin tapoihin, joilla vammaisuutta kaavamaisesti kuvataan ja käsitellään erilaisissa diskursseissa. Käsittelen vallan ongelmaa liittyen voimauttajasubjektin kykyyn tunnistaa voimautumisen tarve toisessa subjektissa ja tarkastelen voimauttamisretoriikan asettamia rajoituksia ja haasteita voimautujan subjektiuden ymmärtämiselle.

Avainsanat Foucault, retoriikka, vammaistutkimus, voimauttaminen

DISABLING EMPOWERMENT

The book's humane approach and intelligible texts empower the reader as well.

Kirjan inhimillinen ote ja yleistajuiset tekstit voimaannuttavat lukijankin.

—The back cover of *Taide keskellä elämää* (Bardy et al., 2007)

Mikko Oskari Koivisto

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Thesis
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Aalto University
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2013

Advisors: Jennifer Eisenhauer and Kevin Tavin

For Outi, Sointu, and Toivo.

Contents

1. Introduction

—What do you think the students did learn about mental disabilities through that assignment?

—I don't know.

This passage is an excerpt from a conversation—as I recall it—between me and an art educator, that occurred in 2010 during an art education seminar at Aalto University. The seminar was arranged by students and department's teachers as a part of a teaching practice course. Several schools served as sites for the teaching practice, and each art educator from these schools were requested to prepare a brief presentation for the seminar, in which they would discuss their art education practices and ideologies.

A field school teacher from a gymnasium introduced herself as an art educator who does not avoid controversial topics nor provocative art practices in her teaching. She propped her assertion by describing some projects which she had conducted with her students. Most of the examples she presented did not demonstrate any notable usage of particularly controversial motifs or practices in comparison to contemporary art, but one description of an assignment managed to provoke me a little bit.

The art educator described an assignment in which she had invited the students to construct a collective installation that would represent a mental hospital [mielisairaala]. The students were also asked to create inhabitants for the hospital. The finished installation was populated by "scary characters" which included "naked men" and a female character giving birth to a "monstrous" or "abnormal fetus" [epäsikiö], who was being violently pulled out by midwives. The art educator did not make an attempt to state the motives or objectives of the assignment; she offered no explanation, justification or contextualization for it.

As a mentally disabled art educator, I was troubled by this description. The assignment seemed to completely neglect

the critique proposed by disability scholars and activists on the stigmatization and stereotyping of the disabled individuals through various sociocultural discourses (Cheu, 2005; Derby, 2009, 2011; Eisenhauer, 2008a, 2008b, 2009, 2010, 2012; Kuppers, 2005; Price, 2011; Sandahl & Auslander, 2005). On the contrary, the assignment and the finished artwork seemed to actually reiterate the stereotypes of the mentally disabled individuals that circulate in popular media, which, in turn, reinforce the dominant prejudices. The impact of media representations of mental disabilities in public attitudes have been documented and discussed by disability scholars as well as researchers from other fields (e.g. Eisenhauer, 2010, p. 29; Wahl, 2003).

After the presentation, I asked the art educator about her assumptions regarding the effect of the assignment in expanding the students understanding on mental disabilities. She answered that she did not know, but she proceeded to justify the character in labor by stating that it had been created by a student who had recently became a mother herself.

I found the description of the assignment disturbing, as well as the art educator's indifferent answer to my question, but what struck me the most was the general approval and appreciation her presentation received among the seminar participants. My comment was virtually the only one that contained critique, all the other comments being explicitly positive. For example, one of the most visible scholars of art education in Finland, invited to the seminar as a guest speaker, joined the ranks of the admirers, acknowledging the art educator's work as interesting, daring, and brave.

I would like to reconstruct here another incident concerning art education and mental disabilities, a brief conversation between me and a fellow student of mine. It did not make me feel offended or insulted, but it nevertheless implied certain problematic power relations within art education. My friend told me about an art project that she was arranging for

young mothers who were customers of municipal child welfare services. She told about her insecurity and unease stemming from the fact that she had never met a person who had received support from the child welfare office. Out of embarrassment, and in order not to embarrass her, I did not mention to her that my family had received child welfare services less than a year earlier. A hospital's social worker composed a child welfare report to ensure the well-being and safety of my two small children while I was hospitalized for severe depression for a period of one month. The child-welfare cliency was discontinued soon after since no threat for the children's well-being was confirmed, but the status and stigma of a child welfare customer remains.

What kind of implications do these incidents have for art education? One could question the relevance of using the seminar incident as an example by pointing out that there was only a relatively small group of art educators participating that discussion, and therefore it does not represent the general consensus. That might be true. Nevertheless, I maintain that the act of remaining silent, carried out by the majority of art educators, choosing not to participate, is a rhetorical gesture. Even if we presume that all the participants who chose not contribute to that discussion, actually harbored radically differing opinions from those discernable in the actual discussion and the audibly uttered comments that constituted it, there still remains the silence which undisputedly signifies something.

In the conversation between me and my friend, the silence appeared again, this time through my decision not to identify myself as a child welfare user. Even though this silence bears a tone different from the one that was present in the seminar scene, it nevertheless is rhetorically significant. To me, this incident pertains to a common assumption that the individuals lacking wellbeing—such as the customers of child welfare services—are always situated in the receiving end of art edu-

cation, in effect, as *objects* of art education. The art educator, in turn, is endowed with the status of a *subject*. My friend automatically supposed that child welfare customers are *other* to both of us. She did not consider me as a potential child welfare service user, even though she was aware of my recent depression and hospitalization.

There is also another connection between these two rhetorical events in addition to the silence: young mothers were involved in both of these projects as participants. I assume that the teacher in the seminar interpreted correctly the question I addressed to her as a critique. She decided to respond to this critique by resorting to the fact that the student, who had made the character in the middle of labor, had recently given birth to a child. Why did the art educator choose to bring up the motherhood of that student? Did she suggest that the student had obtained a need to compose such an image because she had become a mother at young age? Did the teacher assume the student would experience some kind improvement in her well-being, empowerment? The workshop conducted by my friend also positioned young mothers in the need of an intervention for enhancing their well-being and, possibly, for empowering them.

I do not find it necessary to analyze the seminar incident; there is no need to compose a thesis in order to prove that the presentation of the asylum assignment and the discussion it evoked in the seminar were stigmatizing, humiliating, and dehumanizing. The theory is already there. One can pick up virtually any existing work from the field of disability studies and use it to refute any attempt to justify or defend this particular event within Finnish art education discourse (e.g. Derby, 2009, 2011; Eisenhauer, 2008a, 2008b, 2009). What is more interesting to me is that what was not said in the incident and what emerged in the conversation between me and my friend: the silence surrounding mental disabilities and particularly the silence of the mentally disabled subject.

Mental disabilities appear frequently in the discourses of Finnish art education, mainly through the language of art therapy and special education, as well as the art and well-being discourse. In this thesis I elaborate on the notion of empowerment, a therapeutic orientation within Finnish art education. I provide here a brief introduction of the notion of empowerment [voimauttaminen, voimaantuminen] as it has emerged within Finnish art education during 2000s.

There has been an extensive discussion on the benefits of art for preserving well-being in the Finnish welfare society in many areas of society during the last decade. This discussion can be divided at least into two approaches. There is the discussion on the significance of creativity for welfare society as a valuable strategy for the prosperity of domestic economy. This approach poses creativity as a vital factor in the Government's innovation politics. Through this perspective creativity functions as a key factor in achieving economical efficiency through its application on both private and public sector (Ministry of Education, 2003, p. 8; 2006; Ministry of Labor, 2005, pp. II, VI, 40, 44; von Brandenburg, 2006.)

The other discussion explores the potential art bears in promoting well-being, as it is understood in the context of health and social care (Liikanen, 2010; von Brandenburg, 2008b). Or, in turn, how health and social care could be deployed within art education. Within art education, the social and health care approach is more common than the one with economical orientation, although integration of art education and the corporate world has been suggested (Fontell, 2006). This inclination might derive from the Finnish art education's long-standing relationship with art therapy.

As early as in the 1968, students from the Institution of Industrial Arts, the predecessor of Aalto University's School of Arts, Design and Architecture, conducted art therapy in Lapinlahti hospital in Helsinki (Girard et al., 2009, p. 33). From 1974, the school, now bearing the name University of

Industrial Art Helsinki, launched in cooperation with Therapeia-foundation a three–year pilot program for training art therapists. In 1986 UIAH started a four-year degree programme for art therapist training. Even though different art therapy courses and programmes have been arranged by different institutions and organizations, only the therapists graduated from UIAH have been considered qualified art psychotherapists by TEO, the predecessor Valvira, or the National Supervisory Authority for Welfare and Health. (Girard et al., pp. 38–40.) UIAH's Art therapist training programme was discontinued in 2003. Similar training is currently arranged by Suomen Mielenterveysseura or The Finnish Association for Mental Health. (kuvataideterapia.fi).

In BA and MA programmes of art education in Aalto University, intermediate and advanced courses on art therapy are offered for all students. Study guide in Aalto University's WebOodi lists seven courses on therapy and therapeutic art education practices: *Introduction to Art Therapy* [Johdanto taideterapiaan], *Images of Contemporary Culture – Traumas in Art and in Therapy* [Nykykulttuurin kuvia - traumat taiteessa ja terapiassa], *Corporeality and Interaction in Art Therapy* [Kehollisuus ja vuorovaikutus taideterapiassa], *Art Therapeutic Practices for Special Groups* [Taideterapeuttiset menetelmät erityisryhmille], *Art Therapeutic Practices, Special Groups, and Therapeutic Approach* [Taideterapeuttiset menetelmät, erityisryhmät ja terapeuttinen asenne], *Orientations and Research of Art Therapy* [Taideterapian suuntaukset ja tutkimus], and *Group Process in Art Therapy* [Taideterapian ryhmäprosessi]. (Oodi.aalto.fi)

The concept of well-being is also explicitly present in the curriculum of master's degree programme in art education. The programme includes a focal area titled *Art and well-being* [Taide ja hyvinvointi] (Kauppila & Kotti, 2012, p. 200). In 2012–13 this module includes courses *Art therapy oriented practices, special groups and therapeutic approach* [Taideterapeuttiset menetelmät, erityisryhmät ja terapeuttinen asenne], *Group*

process in art therapy [Taideterapian ryhmäprosessi], and *Community art education (participatory textile printing project)* [Yhteisötaidekasvatus (osallistava painokangasprojekti)] (Kurkela, 2012).

The notion of empowerment emerged against this background. In the late 1990s Miina Savolainen, a student of art education and photography, started developing a method of photography for improving the well-being of adolescent girls who she had been working with in a children's home during several years (Savolainen, 2008, p. 145). Savolainen noticed that all the residents of the children's home shared certain experiences: a fear caused by negligence (Ibid., p. 146) and "difficult experiences and rejection in the childhood" (voimauttavavalokuva.net). She thought that the residents of the children's home could benefit from a process of self portrait photography, through which they could start to see themselves in an alternative, a more compassionate way. This could help them to learn to look at themselves with increased acceptance (Ibid., 178). With these adolescents Savolainen conducted her first project of empowering photography which would be called the *Loveliest Girl in the World*.

Savolainen introduced the project and the practices she had been developing to her master's thesis advisor Pirkko Pohjakallio, asking for recommendations for the theoretical basis onto which the project and her thesis could be structured. Pohjakallio suggested that Savolainen could look into a recently published doctoral dissertation which discussed the concept empowerment [voimaantuminen] (Siitonen, 1999). Drawing from the theorizations found in the dissertation and some other sources Savolainen structured and developed the method and discovered its name: the Empowering photography. (Pohjakallio, 2013.)

The first Loveliest Girl in the World exhibition, presenting photographs from the project, was held at Annantalo Arts Centre in Helsinki in 2003. The project was presented as a

community art project and the participants were introduced as co-authors of the photographs. The exhibition attracted publicity and elicited interest on both the project and the method. Savolainen and the empowering photography have appeared frequently in media: in television, radio, magazines and newspapers, and she has received several notable awards.

In her bestseller photo-book *Maailman ihanin tyttö—The Loveliest Girl in the World*, Savolainen describes the method and the original empowering photography project (2008). Savolainen discusses the project more extensively and with a more theoretical approach in her master's thesis (2005). Exhibitions consisting of the photographs from the Loveliest Girl in the World have been shown in museums and galleries in Finland and abroad. In February 2013, YLE, the Finnish Broadcasting Company, announced that they are looking for participants for a television series based on the Empowering photography, *Valokuvan voimaa*, which will be hosted by Miina Savolainen (Huttunen, 2013).

Savolainen's project and the concept of empowerment have been under discussion in art education literature and journals by several authors (e.g. Pusa, 2006, p. 2; Pääjoki, 2005, 2006; Sederholm, 2006; Strömberg, 2006; von Brandenburg, 2008b). Alongside with Savolainen's thesis, empowerment has been included as a key-term in eight master's theses from the programme of art education at Aalto University in the last decade (Guthwert, 2012; Kinnunen, 2007; Raasakka, 2006; Riestola, 2010; Riikonen, 2012; Salmiola, 2004; Strang, 2009; Valtonen, 2009). Empowerment has also been discussed outside the field of art education. Ministry of Education's publications on strategies for promoting well-being through art discuss empowerment and the empowering photography (Liikanen, 2010; von Brandenburg, 2008b). A book on photography therapy includes a chapter on empowering photography (Halkola et al., 2009). Empowerment has also been applied in theses from health and social care pro-

grammes in universities of applied science (Alijoki, 2009; Haapamäki, 2012; Valtanen, 2009; Välilä, 2009).

The notion of empowerment in the Finnish art education discourse has obtained a radically different meaning from that of critical pedagogy and theories based on the tradition of critical theory. The former emphasises the notion of empowerment as an inner process within the individual, while the latter depicts empowerment as a project of social justice in relation to multifaceted and complex forms of mechanisms of power within the society, and is concerned with endowing oppressed minorities with power.

The volume of the empowerment discourse has increased during the last ten years, but the works discussing or deploying empowerment remain composed mainly by authors who are not considered as someone who might need empowerment. Therefore, the principles of equity and subjectivity, which the rhetoric considers necessary for the realization of empowerment, need to be juxtaposed with the de facto participation of the empoweree-subject within the discussion.

Disempowered Rhetoricity

The language of empowerment implies that the subject's needs for empowerment emanates from the lack of well-being, with reference to psychological or mental well-being, instead of physical well-being. Art education's well-being discourse in Finland, which I have only briefly touched upon, requires investigation with regard to the relations it poses between the subjects participating the processes of promoting well-being. In this thesis, I approach the well-being discourse of art education by focusing on one of its sub-discourses, the language of empowerment. *Empowerment*, as it is used in the context of art education, has not yet been ex-

posed to critical analysis, and no extensive meta-analysis on the discourse has been conducted.

The proliferation of the use of *empowerment* as a concept and as an educational practice calls for critical deconstruction. I am especially interested in the ways the subject who supposedly needs empowerment, the empoweree, is constructed and represented through the empowerment rhetoric. It appears that the conversation on empowerment is mainly conducted by art educators with a will to empower, or, at any rate, to promote or enable empowerment for another subject. The subjective accounts of the individuals who are presented as empowered are included in the discussion only through brief quotations. Thus, the theme of silence discussed earlier surfaces in the discussion on empowerment as well.

Even though the rhetoric of empowerment rarely employs explicitly the concept of disability, it appears that the alleged need for empowerment is portrayed through gestures that reflect typical cultural narratives of disability (Sandahl & Auslander, 2005b). Empowerment is not defined as therapy nor does it present itself as a cure for mental disabilities, but it is attributed with an ability to improve problems in an individual's emotional or cognitive well-being, such as low self-esteem and excessive shame (Savolainen, 2005, pp. 123, 176). Empowerment is also frequently defined as "therapeutic", by Savolainen and other authors (Halkola, 2009, p. 19; Savolainen, 2005, pp. 1, 19, 122, 148, 169, 220; 2009, pp. 211, 222). Empowering photography is also suggested by Savolainen to be employed in different therapies and in a variety of health and social care practices (voimauttavavalokuva.net).

This adhesion to the language and practices of therapy makes it important to approach the rhetoric of empowerment through the perspective of disability studies. Disability studies is a theoretical framework and orientation which applies strategies from multiple disciplines from human sci-

ences, social sciences, and medical sciences. It views disability as a social and cultural construct and aims for social change by identifying and critiquing forms of discrimination and oppression that the disabled individuals experience in the society.

Discourse analysis is frequently employed by disability scholars in research on the ways disabilities are understood and discussed within the society. The notion of rhetoric enables engaging discourses in a way that promotes the self-aware and self-determined participation of the subject who is subjected to applications of discursive power. *Rhetoricity* refers to the position and role of the subject possesses within the discourse, which is determined by his/her the access to relevant knowledge and efficient rhetorical strategies.

One could question the application of disability studies in the analysis of the rhetoric of empowerment. The individuals whose empowerment is under discussion are not explicitly referred to as disabled in the rhetoric, although the need for empowerment is depicted deriving from a disability common to welfare children (Savolainen, 2005, p. 116). I do not argue whether the empowerees are disabled or not—identifying someone disabled by another individual is considered as a form of social control and oppression from the disability studies perspective. What I am interested in, however, is the resemblance of empowerment rhetoric with certain cultural narratives and representations of disability, which are considered problematic and offensive by disability scholars.

Referring to mental illnesses or disorders as disabilities in the first place may evoke resistance: the Finnish translation of disability, *vammaisuus*, does not traditionally apply to what would be called mental or psychiatric disabilities in English disability studies vocabulary. In Finnish, *vammaisuus* encompasses physical, sensory, developmental and cognitive disabilities, while the psychiatric disabilities are referred to mainly as illnesses and disorders. *Disability studies* is translated by Finn-

ish disability scholars to *vammaistutkimus*, which tends to exclude mental disabilities. I have tried to think of ways to modify the language of Finnish disability studies for making it more inclusive with regard to mental disabilities, but eventually I realized that there is no relevant reason for maintaining the division between disability and mental illness/disorder. Therefore, I prefer to use the concept of mental disability [psyykkinen vammaisuus, henkinen vammaisuus].

The seminar incident described in the first section of the chapter implies certain power relations that made possible the occurrence of a discursive event of that nature. The empowerment rhetoric, however, remains more ambiguous in terms of power. As the concept itself implies, empowerment is supposed to supply the individual with a power she/he has not possessed before, or to make visible the power that the individual inherently possesses, but which has remained invisible to him/herself. It is explicitly and repeatedly stated in the empowerment rhetorics that the power of the photographer can and should be dismantled or discharged during the process of empowering photography (Savolainen, 2005, pp. 172, 218; 2009, pp. 211–212). If power is understood as a complex set of mechanisms, and as relations, in effect, something between subjects rather than something within the subject, the very possibility of empowerment through a process like the empowering photography becomes unlikely.

The theory of the empowering photography defines power as an inherent component of the relationship between the photographer and the model in all photography: the photographer wields power through his/her access to strategies of photographic representation, which endows him/her with the power to control the ways the model becomes depicted in the photographs. The empowerment rhetoric suggests that this power can be dismantled through a dialogue, in which the implications of power are articulated to the model and

thus deactivated (Ibid., p. 1; 2009, p. 211–212). Does not the relation between the empowerer and the empoweree, as any relationship between two individuals with distinct statuses, inevitably induce some inequities and privileges, no matter how subtle or ambiguous they would seem? Even if we assume that this kind of power-neutral relationship could be established, I would still maintain that whenever coupled with educational, therapeutic, and economical systems and processes, the complexity and number of power relations increase, thus preventing the realization of equality between the counterparts of the empowerment process.

As an art educator with mental disabilities, I often feel uncomfortable with regard to the discourses on mental disabilities within the field. This discomfort emanates from the difficulty to recognize myself in the representations of these different discourses. These discourses, vocabularies, and theories fail to access my experience and perspective as a disabled subject; they even fail to acknowledge my subjectivity. The existing discourses concerning mental disabilities—the empowering, art therapy, and special education—all employ languages that are structured around the notion of healing. Even though the rhetoric of empowerment strives to distance itself from the explicitly medical language of special education and art therapy, it might nevertheless be implicitly informed by the fundamental themes of therapy. The language of empowerment rarely makes explicit references to mental disabilities, at least not through psychiatric or psychological vocabulary. However, in spite of not identifying itself as therapy, the language of empowerment embodies some characteristic dynamics of therapy: the recognition of the need for empowerment in the individual by the empowerer, and the conveying of this perceived need to the individual him/herself, as the empoweree may not be aware or able to perceive this need (Savolainen, 2008, p. 151). There is something in the individual that an empowerer–art educator is

able to perceive and recognize as a need for empowerment, and this identification of the need or lack through is carried out with the knowledge and expertise the empowerer possesses.

The discussion on empowerment shares the problematics of the more general disability issues in art education: the absence of the voice of the mentally disabled subject, as the discourses on disability in Finnish art education are mainly conducted by non-disabled individuals. This configuration reiterates the power relations that are evident throughout the history of psychiatry. The status of disability in Finnish art education resembles the status it has in the United States. John Derby claims that the discussion on disability in the field of art education is mainly based on the perspectives of special education and art therapy. This orientation leads to exclusion of the first-hand perspectives of disabled teachers, students, and researchers from the discourse. (Derby, 2011, p. 95.)

As the discussion on disability within art education is mainly conducted by non-disabled professionals, it therefore embodies the Foucault's notion of psychiatry as "a monologue of reason *about* madness" (Foucault, 2006a, p. xxviii, emphasis in original). This organization endows the art educator with the ability, competence, and power to *know* the disabled subject. The art educator recognizes the disability with his/her objective gaze and she/he knows the disability with therapeutic and pedagogical knowledge she/he possesses.

The prevailing power relations within art education are entwined with the discourses on mental disabilities that reside in society and the dominant culture. The so-called medical model reduces mentally disabled subject into an object of knowledge, and disability into illness. It ignores the theoretical endeavours disability scholars have promoted, such as critical analysis on the language on disability, deconstruction of the representations of the disabled individuals, and the

notion of stigma and the mechanisms through which stigmas are created and maintained.

I employ Foucauldian theory for examining how the power relations, mechanism, and apparatuses embedded in the psychiatric tradition might inform the interaction of the empowerer and the empoweree in the context of art education. This discussion on empowerment pertains to a more general endeavor within art education for acquiring an impression of expertise in the terms of mental and social well-being. This maneuver is propped by utilizing certain practices that echo the pivotal themes of psychiatry and therapy, while simultaneously maintaining a distance from the explicit psychiatric language in order to avoid the requirement for competency.

The empowerment narrative is so strong that it inevitably informs the understanding of the subjectivity of the student in art education in general. Therefore, the implications of empowerment on art education call for research. The rhetorics we adopt and employ when engaging discourses both reflect and influence our understanding, and it is not insignificant how and by whom these discussions are conducted.

We need to explore how the discourses on mental disabilities in the dominant culture and media inform the ways a mentally disabled individual perceives his/her status in the culture and society. Or, how the dominant narratives of disability, structured around the notions of loss, grief, and lack, influence the lives of individuals who do not have an access to alternative depictions and counternarratives of disability. I consider myself privileged because of my access to disability theory and communities. They provide me support for disrupting, deconstructing, and resisting the roles offered by the dominant narratives, and for constructing new ones.

The use of the concept of empowerment within art education bears potentially problematic implications—as does the whole well-being discourse. Viewing empowerment as a discursive and rhetorical construction enables identifying the

underlying conceptions and schemes that constitute our understanding as art educators on disability, power, and subjectivity.

Questioning Empowerment

I approach the problems of subjectivity and power in the empowerment discourse through the following questions. *How the disabled subjectivity of the empoweree is represented through the rhetorics of empowerment, as it is employed in the discussion concerning the Loveliest Girl in the World and the method of Empowering Photography; and what implications does this representation pose for the rhetoricity of the empoweree?* As mentioned above, the literature on empowerment is mostly written from the perspective of the empowerer. Therefore, it is necessary to critically investigate the inequalities that might derive from this asymmetry. In order to analyze this relation in a meaningful way, the initial question must be coupled with the question *how the subjectivity of the empowerer is represented within the rhetorics?* Finally, the relation of the empoweree and the empowerer is approached through the question *what kinds of implications of disability emerge in the relation between the empoweree and the empowerer?*

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I end this chapter with a brief overview on the structure of this thesis. In *Literature Review*, I introduce the primary authors and works around which the theoretical framework of the thesis is structured. The approach is mainly based on Foucauldian interpretation of the history of psychiatry and its relation to power/knowledge; and on the theorizations posed by disability scholars from both within and outside the field art education. *Methodology* presents the methodology used in this thesis, which is a rhetorical analysis based on strategies and emphases of critical discourse analysis. *Data*

chapter presents the data set analyzed in the thesis and describes the process of collecting and selecting data. In *Interpretation*, I analyze the data through the theoretical and methodological framework. In *Conclusion*, I present the findings and elaborate on their implications for future research on disability within the field of art education.

2. Literature Review

I approach the questions of power and subjectivity within the language of empowerment through two perspectives. The theoretical background of this thesis consists, firstly, of problematizations and strategies posed by disability studies, and secondly, on Foucault's theorizations of madness and psychiatric power. Strategies of disability scholars intersect frequently with Foucault's, but both of them also employ distinct approaches.

Because disability studies has not been explicitly applied in Finnish art education literature as a theoretical approach, I begin the chapter with an overview of disability studies; its key concepts and objectives, and its applications in art education research in the United States. I also discuss its status in other fields in Finnish academia. I mainly employ theorizations by three disability scholars, two of which come from the field of art education. Jennifer Eisenhauer is the first researcher to approach disability issues in art education through disability studies, employing a disclosure of her own disability as a research strategy. John Derby studies possibilities of connecting perspectives and goals of art education and disability studies and includes an autopathographic narrative of his disability in his doctoral dissertation *Art Education and Disability Studies Perspectives on Mental Illness Discourses* (2009). Margaret Price discusses implications of mental disabilities in the discourses and practices of higher education in *Mad at School: Rhetorics of Mental Disability and Academic Life* (2011).

Foucault's work on history of mental illness and psychiatric power has impacted disability studies' problematizations of mental disabilities. Even though the postmodern theorizations on disability elaborate on issues and problematizations that remain outside of the reach Foucault's analysis, his meticulous work on the hegemonic history of psychiatry, the discursivity of power, and its objectification of disability through positivist medical science remain relevant to the

current critical inquiry on mental disability. *Psychiatric Power* (2006b) and *History of Madness* (2006a) shine a light on the functioning of the power relations and historical understanding of mental disabilities in the contemporary practices of mental health promotion through non-medical methods, such as therapeutic art education. I end this chapter with a summary of the key concepts and their implications for this study.

Disability Studies—Activism and Politics

Disability studies is an interdisciplinary academic movement which views disabilities as complex phenomena with cultural, social and political implications. It combines theoretical and methodological perspectives from social and human sciences and medicine (Eisenhauer 2008a, p. 19). Price (2011) defines disability studies as "foremost a social and political perspective" and a "theoretical and activist stance", emphasizing its objective of creating social change and equity (p. 4). Disability studies has emerged during approximately the last 30 years (Sandahl, & Auslander 2005, p. 6). The first PhD programme in disability studies in United States was established in 1998, at the University of Illinois (Mitka, 1999, p. 595). Disability studies examines the ways disabilities emerge and exist as complex cultural and social phenomena, and the forms of discrimination and oppression that reside within their underlying relations and structures. Strategies of disability studies resemble other social justice theories, such as women studies, queer theory, and critical race studies. Disability scholars have introduced a specific concept for mechanisms of oppression and stigmatization of the disabled: ableism. Ableism's resemblance to such concepts as racism and sexism stresses the seriousness and extent of the impact of the able privilege on the lives of the disabled individuals.

Eisenhauer suggests that ableism should be raised as a form of cultural oppression in art education curriculum, alongside with racism, sexism and homophobia (Eisenhauer, 2008a, p. 8).

Disability studies has critiqued the ways disability is understood and represented in the dominant culture. This analysis often discerns the conception of disability into three categories: the *functional–limitations* or *medical model*, the *sociopolitical model*, and the *affirmative model*. Throughout history, there have been various explanations for the origins and causes of disabilities, some of which are religious or superstitious. Disability studies, however, mostly directs it critique on the medical model, because it is considered as the dominant way of describing and discussing disability in various discourses within the Western culture during and after the emergence of disability studies in the last decades of the twentieth century.

The medical model implies understanding of disability as a pathological or biological property, locating it within the disabled individual. In addition to its narrow notion of disability, propped by the alleged objectivity of medical science, the model is also accused of favoring certain problematic conventions and practices concerning disabilities. For example, Sandahl and Auslander (2005c) assert that the medical model portrays people with disabilities, in any given context, as "'patients', a role that is often infantalizing, pathologizing, and disempowering" (p. 129). The medical model renders the disabled subject as a passive and helpless object, dependent on his/her non-disabled carers. The medical model is critiqued as an underlying structure behind a majority of the non-medical discourses on disability found in cinema and television, education, journalism, legislation, etcetera.

Disability studies has historically held a strong emphasis on physical and sensory disabilities, and mental illness has been included in disability studies' scope only recently (Price, 2011., p. 4). This inclination presumes a physically disabled

subject with an able mind. This is apparent in the image of a remarkable theoretical physicist with Lou Gehrig's disease, who is un*able* to move or speak unassisted, but who nevertheless is *able* to compose influential theories about time and space. Price discusses the problems that arise when an individual whose profession consists of thinking and processing of knowledge acquires a disability that affects the functioning of the mind.

In 1991, Doug Blandy and his colleagues became the first scholars to explicitly suggest that art education should replace the functional–limitations model or medical model with the socio-political model of disability (Derby, 2009, p. 17). The sociopolitical model critiques the medical understanding of disability for its failure to reach the social, political and cultural aspects of disability. The sociopolitical model positions disability more or less within the relation between the individual and the society, claiming that disabilities emerge as the society's incapability or reluctance to take into account the diverse needs of the citizens. A wheelchair user's *dis*-ability to use stairs is not an individual flaw, nor a biological condition, but social discrimination and exclusion executed through architecture.

Recently, there has been an effort to create a perspective on disability that would complement the sociopolitical model. The affirmative model suggests an alternative approach for understanding disabled subjectivity: it preserves the sociopolitical orientation's critique on the medical model, but asserts that it assumes, to some extent, the medical model's notion of disability as fundamentally a problem, a loss, personal tragedy, and deficiency. The affirmative model maintains that disability should not be perceived essentially as a problem to be fixed, but rather as an integral characteristic of the disabled subject, in effect, not so much something that the subject has, but something she/he is. The affirmative model endorses notions of disability culture and community,

proposing that the disabled individuals form a cultural minority, a group with common social and political experience and interests (Eisenhauer, 2008a, pp. 8–9; Linton as cited in Price, 2011, p. 4). The amalgamation of the sociopolitical and the affirmative model offers a more refined understanding of disability and subjectivity while maintaining the political orientation towards social equity (Eisenhauer, 2008a, p. 9). It has been noted that, in spite of the disability activists' persistent endorsement of the sociopolitical model, the dominant culture's adhesion to the medical model has mainly remained unaffected (Sandahl & Auslander, 2005c, p. 129.)

Disability studies is an academic extension of the disability rights activism that emerged in the 1970's in the United States, endorsed by organizations such as Disability People's Movement, also known as Disability Rights Movement (Eisenhauer, 2008a, p. 7). In Finland, discrimination and oppression of the disabled have been raised by Kynnys ry, or, the Threshold Association as well as other associations. Kynnys is a non-governmental organization founded in 1973 by disabled students, and has since advocated the rights of the disabled individuals and communities. (Kynnys.fi.) The major civic organization for mental health patients, Finnish Central Association for Mental Health, was established by patients, their families and mental health professionals in 1971 (Mtkl.fi). Thirty–one disability associations, including the Threshold Association and Finnish Central Association for Mental Health, form a coalition Vammaisfoorumi, or Disability Forum (Vammaisfoorumi.fi).

In 1981, the United Nations' International Year of Disabled Persons increased the awareness of the civil rights of the disabled in Finland and pointed out the need for disability research. A unit of disability studies is located in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Business Studies in the University of Eastern Finland. It was originally established by the request of local disability associations. The unit celebrated its 20th

anniversary in 2012, and it remains the only one of its kind in Finland at the moment. (Uef.fi.) However, individual researchers from various fields and universities, who share an interest in disability, have formed the Finnish Society for Disability Research. In 2011, the association and other disability organizations, in cooperation with several foundations and private companies, donated 170 000 euros to the University of Helsinki for establishing a professorship on disability studies. (Vammaistutkimus.fi.) The objective of enforcing the status of research on disability is included in Finland's current government programme (Programme of Prime Minister Jyrki Katainen's Government, 2011, p. 106).

As it seems, the status of disability studies in Finnish academia appears to have improved during the last decades. However, its implications for critical research on mental disabilities remain uncertain. In Finnish medical language, as well in the everyday language, mental illnesses are not referred to as disabilities, but rather as illnesses, disorders, or mental health problems. Individuals with mental disabilities are called mental health rehabilitees, mental health patients, or mentally ill. Also in the international discourses mental illnesses have been discussed through disability studies only recently and remain in the marginal of its focus (Price, 2011, p. 98).

I follow Price's example of endorsing coalition politics in disability studies and activism. I employ the term *mental disability* as it comprises the psychiatric disabilities, as well as the cognitive disabilities and the autism spectrum. Price reminds that the disabled individuals have been confined and segregated with diagnoses and classifications of medical science, and we would benefit from questioning and problematizing these boundaries and start identifying mutual interests and goals. This collaborative strategy does not, however, imply that we should not acknowledge the differences between different disabilities. Price merely argues that we should sim-

ultaneously raise general issues of disability *and* specific questions regarding singular disabilities. Disability should be understood as a common human experience, but different disabilities also evoke need for acknowledging their specific implications. (Ibid., p. 18.)

Disability scholars often stress that they do not want to vilify psychiatrists, therapists, or other medical professionals: the development of medicine and health services have inevitably benefited the majority of us (Derby, 2009, p. 68; Sandahl & Auslander, 2005c, p. 130). However, the critical inquiry on medical knowledge and practice is necessary because of its vast influence on the language on disability within various non-medical discourses.

ABLEISM AND STIGMA

Disability researchers demonstrate that subjects with disabilities experience socio-cultural oppression through mechanisms of ableism and stigmatization. As mentioned above, ableism refers to the multitude of cultural and social structures, relations, practices, and conventions that discriminate the individuals with disabilities while simultaneously favoring nondisabled individuals. These constructs are mostly created, justified, and maintained by non-disabled individuals. Stigma refers to the stereotypical presumptions that are associated with disabilities.

The fear of stigmatization may prevent individuals from seeking treatment, which can lead to a delay in cure and rehabilitation (Aromaa, 2011). Stigmas also inform the attitudes and expectations towards disabled subjects. For example, violent behavior is an attribute that is frequently linked to the mental disabilities. Popular media reinforces the stigma significantly: a survey conducted in United States reveals that the characters with mental disabilities in television are depicted as 10–20 times more violent than mentally disabled indi-

viduals in U.S. population and 10 times more violent than the non-disabled characters of the television programs. On the contrary, individuals with mental disabilities are actually more likely to become victims of violence in comparison with general population (Diefenbach, 1997, p. 289.) The stigma of violence is so strong, that we can immediately tell that a person is mad, based on a mere description of the crime found from a brief news report. It is also socially quite acceptable to make such a reference without any information on the mental health of the criminal. Even when the suspect has not been diagnosed with any mental disabilities during an extensive mental examination, it still appropriate to label him/her or the crime "sick" or "ill". Other mental disability stigmas are the inability to be a parent, spouse, employee, or a citizen (Derby, 2009, p. 7; Eisenhauer, 2010; Price, 2011).

All stigmas are not composed of negative attributes such as violence, narcissism, and self-pity. Perhaps even more fundamental problems are embedded in the discourses that cherish a positive attitude towards the disabled individuals or certain disabilities (Kuppers, 2005, p. 153). A form of this kind of positive stigma is the exaggerated caution not to insult the disabled individual in any way, based on the assumption his/her life is already very hard. Another strategy is highlighting the sameness of the disabled and the non-disabled individuals by avoiding acknowledging, mentioning, or discussing the disability. A common stigma derives from the stereotypical survivor or overcomer narrative. Through this narration disability is depicted as a source of sadness and constant suffering, which can, however, be defeated with the persistence determination of the disabled individual. Portrayal of the disabled individuals as heroic survivors and overcomers is patronizing and humiliating, and it emphasizes the otherness of the disabled individuals. The negative and the positive stigmas both share a mutual problem: they are mainly conducted by non-disabled individuals. This results in

simplified, stereotypical and objectifying portrayals of the disabled individuals that fail to acknowledge their subjective experiences.

A questionable rhetorical strategy within the language is the use of vision impairment as a metaphor of powerlessness. Disability researchers have critiqued the use of disability metaphors as offensive (Derby, 2009, pp. 157–161; 2011, p. 104). Disability metaphors are quite common in everyday language: for example, a child who refuses to act according to the given instructions is "deaf", one can be "blind" to the prevailing circumstances, individuals lacking rhetoricity are "mute", and an argument which is poorly constructed may (at least in Finnish) "limp". The list goes on, and I have not even touched upon the mental disability metaphors. The disability metaphors embody the ableist perspective which renders disability essentially as a loss and a deficiency (Ibid., 2009, p. 161; 2011, p. 104–105). Derby suggests that while disability metaphors are common in everyday language, they should not be used in the professional art education literature (Ibid., 2009, p. 250).

LANGUAGE AND RHETORICITY

Discourse is often employed in theoretical traditions that are interested in the relations of knowledge, language, and power. Disability scholars have approached disability through concepts of discourses and discursivity, acknowledging the oppression that cumulates from the constant repetition of particular discourses (Eisenhauer 2008a, p. 18). Price employs rhetorics as a key concept for engaging discourses of mental disabilities in academia. Her discussion on rhetorics imposes an active role on the disabled subjects within discursive systems. Rhetoric can be used to challenge the "silencing in, and exclusion from, representation" within a multitude of discourses (Kuppers, 2005, p. 153).

The discursivity of the psychiatric knowledge is often ignored, because it has rigorously constituted itself as an objective and neutral perspective on mental disabilities. (Price 2011, p. 35.) This strategy for claiming an objective perspective on a complex phenomena such as mental disabilities, is called the god-trick (Ibid., pp. 35, 53). Through the god-trick psychiatry renders itself as the producer and the sole possessor of objective truth about mental disabilities. Disability scholars have critically studied the major texts of psychiatric knowledge such as the different editions of Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) by American Psychiatric Association (APA). DSM's are critiqued for their reliances with representatives of pharmaceutical companies and the employment of cliques of researchers who cite mainly each other's research. This bias resulted in the strongly increased status of medication in the treatment of mental disabilities. While Price acknowledges that many disabled individuals have benefited from psychiatry, she nevertheless maintains that psychiatry is not neutral knowledge on the mental disabilities, but rather an "agent of normalization, state control, and multicultural oppression" (Ibid., p. 35).

A subject with mental disability can participate in the major mental disability discourses, such as, psychiatry and psychology through rhetoric. These discursive systems should be analyzed as rhetorical endeavors, precisely because they claim neutrality on the level of rhetoric as well as on the level of knowledge. Rhetoric is also an instrument for understanding other discourses on mental disabilities, such as the ones in media, art, and entertainment.

Through rhetoric the mentally disabled subject can disrupt the dominant discourses by distorting, problematizing, ridiculing, and ignoring their rhetorical strategies and devices. She/he can reject the object-status imposed by the medical model and become a rhetor within the discourse. Through

rhetorics she/he can influence the ways disabilities are constructed and understood in the society and in culture.

Kairotic space is the site of a rhetorical exchange. The concept encompasses the cultural, historical, and material surroundings of the conversation as well as its social meanings and implications. Price also uses infrastructure to refer not only to the physical and material settings where a rhetoric exchange occurs, but also to the discursive factors affecting and surrounding it (Ibid., p. 223). The position of a subject within the kairotic space is referred to as rhetoricity. A subject with strong rhetoricity possesses a status which brings credibility, has an access to knowledge relevant to the discussion, is familiar with other rhetors of the discussion, and possesses strategies of communication and knows how to put them into use effectively.

Rhetorics of disability has been discussed through performativity: disabilities are performed by the disabled in the same way postmodern theories maintain that gender, sexuality, and ethnicity are actualized through performing in a social realm. (Sandahl & Auslander, 2005b, p. 2.) This notion emphasizes the premise that disabilities do not emerge neutrally within the social realm. Performing one's disability does not apply only to the active disposal of one's disability but also to the attempt to conceal the disability, in effect, the performance of able-bodiedness. This passing off as non-disabled is a common strategy employed by individuals with mental disabilities. One can use it to avoid the stigma of mental disability, but this performance makes it difficult to participate in discourses on disability as a disabled subject, which is necessary for deconstructing and transforming the dynamics of the able privilege.

DISABILITY STUDIES AND ART EDUCATION

"Nothing about us without us" is the motto used by the early disability rights advocates, who claimed a leading role for the disabled individuals in every discussion and politics concerning disabilities in every area in the society, including education, jurisprudence, employment, rehabilitation, and academic research. In spite of the decades of disability activism, art education in United States has failed to recognise disability as a sociopolitical issue, even though it has a long history with social justice theories. Art education has also mostly ignored the first-hand perspectives of the disabled. (Derby 2011, p. 95.) The discourse renders disabled students as dependent of the "non-disabled educators, paraprofessionals, and peers" (Ibid., p. 96). Apart from Derby and Eisenhauer, art education has not acknowledged the disability studies' objectives (Eisenhauer 2008b, p. 17).

In disability studies in general, art practices have been actively applied within critical disability context for less than twenty years. Prior to the appearance of disability informed art, the art in disability context was primarily conducted by non-disabled professionals "willing to impose art as therapy on disabled individuals". (Sandahl & Auslander, 2005b, p. 6.) Literature on disabilities in art education has employed mainly the language of inclusion, accommodation, mainstreaming, and therapy (Eisenhauer 2008a, p. 7). Disability discourses in Finnish art education are also conducted mainly through the language of special education and art therapy. At the moment, the programme of art education in Aalto University does not provide courses on disability studies.

Derby and Eisenhauer have posed suggestions for discussing disability within art education in the United States's context. Art education's inclination towards art therapy and special education should be challenged by disability studies approaches. The stigmatization of the disabled individuals in

and through visual culture and the biased depictions of mentally disabled in media must be recognized (Ibid., 2008b, p. 14). Discussion on disability and fine art should concern not only disabled artists who have succeeded in their career in spite of their disabilities, but also artists from the *disability art movement*, in effect disabled artists who critique through their work the dominant disability discourses, and explicitly discuss their subjective experiences of complex implications of disabilities (Ibid., 2008a, p.9). Ableism should be recognized by art education and juxtaposed with other mechanisms of discrimination, such as sexism (Ibid., 2008a, p. 10).

THE HUMANIST SELF AND THE POSTMODERN SUBJECT

Eisenhauer (2006) calls for critical deconstruction of the notion of the subject in the discussion on media and popular culture in art education in the United States, which she calls the *language of bombardment*. It is a concept for the a notion of subjectivity which is based on unidirectional conduit metaphors of communication, which positions children and adolescents as vulnerable objects of media "messages", and also objects in relation to the teacher–subject. The critique of the modes of subjectivity in the language of bombardment draws from problematizations similar to the ones disability studies poses on the dominant discourses and narratives of disability, that follow the functional–limitations model's portrayal of the disabled individual as a passive object and victim.

The language of bombardment refers to discourses that suggest that children and adolescents are constantly bombarded with potentially harmful media messages and therefore need the guidance and protection by the art educator. This discourse preserves simple subject/object dichotomies. This "normative discourse of liberal humanist subjectivity" is in conflict with more complex postmodern theorizations of

the subject in visual culture based art education. (Ibid., p. 157.) The humanist understanding of the self manifests in simplistic understanding of the relationship between the subject and the object. This relation is based on dichotomies such as viewer/viewed, student/teacher, and active/passive. This characteristically unidirectional relation is constructed through conduit metaphors that portray communication as a one–way process between the sender and the receiver. Eisenhauer argues that this idea of sending and receiving messages leads to seeing the subject as a victim. Even ideas of resistance and "critical reading" assume this active/passive dichotomy by deploying the premise that the receiver needs literacy in order to be capable of protecting him/herself against the bombardment. (Ibid., p.158.) The humanist subject is constantly at the "risk of losing 'actual' self" when confronted with the dangerous and harmful texts of visual culture. Especially girls are often portrayed as fragile and vulnerable to the influence of popular culture. The discourses on its effects on girls render the girls as pathological subjects (Pipher as cited in Eisenhauer, 2006, p. 159). This pathologization implies that the subject is in a need of protection, treatment, or therapy. In Finnish art education, a discourse similar to the language of bombardment is the discussion ordered around the notion of the *flood of images*, which positions the art educator as someone whose objective is to save the children from drowning to the perilous stream of images of the popular visual culture (Tervo, 2011).

Eisenhauer suggest a *language beyond bombardment* for challenging the dominant rhetorics. It critiques the idea of subject as a helpless victim and proposes a notion of the subjectivity as unfixed, complex, and ongoing. The language beyond bombardment critiques the idea of self as coherent and essential entity and the rendering of the individual as "unique, fixed and coherent" (Weedon as cited in Eisenhauer, 2006, p. 160). A language beyond bombardment assumes

that children and adolescent are active participants in the visual culture whose relations to its representations and ideologies are complex, reciprocal, and dissonant.

Foucault, Madness, and Psychiatric Power/knowledge

The theoretical framework of this study combines disability studies perspectives with Foucault's theorizations on the society's orientation towards insanity as portrayed in History of *Madness* (2006a) and *Psychiatric Power* (2006b). A gap of twelve years lies between the two studies on the subject. When Foucault held his lectures at Collège de France under the title of Psychiatric Power in 1973–74, he had already published *The Birth of the Clinic* (1963), *The Order of Things* (1966), and *Archeology of Knowledge* (1969). A decade following the publication of History of Madness also witnessed the rise of the anti-psychiatric movement which deployed the Foucault's work as an instrument for its critique. Foucault, however, did not share the movement's objective of attacking the psychiatric institution as a wielder of power nor its endeavor for rendering this power as violence (Foucault, 2006b, p. 344). He was more interested in the discursive power of psychiatry, the strategies through which it manipulated subjects and the ways it connected up with other systems of disciplinary power within the society (Ibid., p. 53).

Foucauldian theory delineates the processes that preceded the positivist medical perception of madness in Western culture. It explores the basis on which the subsequent notions of disability and illness are founded, and reveals the limitations it imposes for our understanding and discourses. Foucault also investigates the power relations that emanate from the asylum power and manifest themselves in every mechanism within society that is supposed to be therapeutic

and healing—including therapeutic and empowering art education.

Foucault's work can also be interpreted as autopathographic. Autopathography is a research strategy that disrupts the dominant, objectifying narratives of disability through the disabled subject's autobiographical narration (Derby, 2009, p. 170). As a student, Foucault was hospitalized after experiencing episodes of depression and an attempted suicide in 1948. In spite of the depression he finished his degrees in philosophy and psychology. In the early 1950's Foucault worked as a psychologist at the Hôpital Saint–Anne. Even though he does not explicitly refer to his experiences as disabled, Foucault nevertheless obtained multiple perspectives on madness and psychiatry: the experience as a patient in a psychiatric hospital and as a client of a psychoanalyst; a professional of psychopathology within a medical institution; the philosopher–historian in regards to the archeology of madness and genealogy of psychiatry; and finally, an artist with his multidimensional and anti-rational language for reconstructing and conveying the extreme subjectivity of madness (Foucault, 2006a, p. 517).

PRE-PSYCHIATRIC MADNESS

Foucault begins his analysis on madness with the disappearance of leprosy from Europe in the late Middle Ages, which left behind empty lazar houses in the outskirts of towns. However, these spaces did not remain uninhabited for long: they were soon occupied by individuals that harbored different afflictions, but which at any rate equaled the abhorrence evoked by the lepers. The "game of exclusion" started over again, based on the structures the former practice of banishment had created. (Foucault, 2006a, pp. 3–4.)

Throughout the Middle Ages, madness was perceived as a sign of the end of times and the last judgement. This percep-

tion also echoed the Christian notion about the world being madness in the eyes of God, and on the other hand, the idea of an individual being closer to God through his/her madness. (Ibid., pp. 29–31.) During the Age of Enlightenment, madness was distanced from this religious notion and it became relocated in relation with Reason: madness now emerged as a form of unreason. It ceased to function as a window into the infinity of God and turned instead into a mirror, which reflected nothing but the absence of reason, nothingness. While madness had earlier been perceived as a lightning bolt–glimpse of the ultimate truth incomprehensible for humans, it now appeared as mere error, an individual's separation from truth. (p. 249.) Madness was not thought to be of divine origin anymore, but instead a result from the immorality and irrationality of the individual.

During the seventeenth century, the mad individuals ended up in the newly-established institutions, the houses of confinement, along with others who had voluntarily abandoned reason—and morals—of the society, including the gamblers, the alcoholics, the unemployed, the prostitutes, and the homosexuals. The houses of confinement and the so-called general hospitals functioned as kinds of quasi-prisons for individuals who were considered potentially dangerous. They could be conveniently placed in these institutions without proper legal proceedings.

In the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century, some general hospitals and houses of confinement arranged commercial spectacles in which the mad were put on display in a zoo-like setting. The notion of the animality of madness, reflecting its recent resituating it in Nature, was also visible in the infrastructure and the conventions within the asylum (p. 147). This rendering of the mad individuals as animals and beasts justified their inhuman treatment (Foucault 2006a, p. 435). Placing the mad on display embodied a new strategy of control, which deployed observation as power and as the

source of knowledge. This objectification anticipated the role gaze would take in the medicalization of madness (p. 145). Madness, now being positioned as an object for the medical gaze, would be detached from its religious and ethical backdrops and confined on the "level of nature, the level of things". (Foucault, 2006a, pp. 182, 524.)

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the notion of madness as non-reason and nothingness was gradually abandoned as inconsistent with the premises of the rising scientific positivism. Madness would not be seen as emptiness anymore, because positivist thought was only concerned with objects of scientifically measurable and perceivable, positive existence. From now on, madness would be realized only through its perceptible features, in effect, symptoms. (Foucault, 2006a, p. 337.) Observation and gazing emerged as instruments for identifying the madness within an individual (p. 307). Madness became established as an object of perception and it was humiliated by forcing it to act as an object for itself (Foucault, 2006a, pp. 388, 499).

The objectification did not characterize only the formation of the medical knowledge and practices. It also spoke of the public's orientation toward the mad, or, as they had been recently labeled, the mentally ill. The former abhorrence the mad individuals had evoked was gradually accompanied by curiosity, which would turn into "pity, then humanitarianism and social concern" (Foucault, 2006a, p. 394). This "fall into objectivity" in the medical as well as the public consciousness collided with the extreme, omnipotent subjectivity, which characterized the former understanding of madness (Foucault, 2006a, pp. 320, 443.)

From now on, madness would be disconnected from the ancient religious existence and its subsequent status as unreason, and relocated within the Nature. In spite of the new "objectivity" introduced by the developing judicial and medical notions of madness, it preserved its relation with vio-

lence, crime, and death. The fear evoked by the mad and the horror of losing one's mind did not die away along with the positivist turn: the "swarming chaos" of madness would not cease to haunt the public consciousness and curiosity in spite of the endeavor for constituting madness as a medical phenomenon (Foucault, 2006a, p. 137).

THE PROTO-PSYCHIATRY

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, psychiatry was not considered firstly as a medical endeavor, but rather as an instrument of public hygiene. The title of the first journal of psychiatry in France reflects this very notion: Annales d'hygiène publique. (Foucault, 2003, p. 118.) The primary function of psychiatry was not to cure or to heal but to remove from the society the individuals who posed a threat to the society and the public safety. The asylum institution assumed the function formerly occupied by the general hospitals and the practice of confinement was hence preserved in the new establishment.

In the end of the eighteenth century, Philippe Pinel was appointed as the chief physician in the Salpêtrière hospital in Paris. He is considered as the founder of humane treatment for mentally ill, and is often depicted in paintings and sculptures giving orders to free the insane (women) from their chains. However, it is unclear whether Pinel actually was the one to prohibit the use of shackles; and from Foucault's perspective it is irrelevant, because he maintains that the "moral treatment" Pinel developed was even more restrictive form of confinement and control than the former physical constraints. Foucault's analysis questions the assumed philanthropy and humanism of psychiatry and claims that what Pinel induced was not the liberation of the mad but an "objectification of the concept of their liberty" (p. 515).

Since the asylum was not a medical or scientific institution, there was disagreement on the organization of the asylum hierarchy: who should hold the ultimate power in the asylum, the doctor or the administrator? Eventually, the doctor acquired the status of the head of the asylum, due to the knowledge he possessed about madness, or mental illness. Mental illness was to be governed by medical power/knowledge (Foucault 2006b, p. 340).

This notion of knowledge as the source of authority characterized the whole asylum institution: psychiatry had to be constituted as consistent with positive science (Foucault 2006a, p. 426). The status of psychiatry as a scientific endeavor had to be highlighted in order to conceal its incompatibility with the principles of scientific positivism (Foucault, 2006a, p. 508.) Because psychiatry did not succeed in establishing itself as a natural science, it had to justify itself through social defense: psychiatrists reminded the society that not only every criminal could be mentally ill, but that every individual with mental illness could be criminal. (Foucault, 2006b, p. 250.) The legal understanding of insanity influenced the evolution of psychiatric knowledge, and the classifications of mental illness that developed through the judicial practice resembled what would be constituted as diagnoses. (p. 127.) The scientific observation of mental illness was more or less subtly based on the former moral perception of madness (Foucault, 2006a, p. 523). The pathological and determinist understanding of madness tried to cast off the social and moral aspects of madness, while it unconsciously constituted its practices on the ones that had prevailed in the houses of confinement, and actually preserved a connection with this former ethical view. (p. 159.)

The pivotal elements of psychiatric power were eventually taken up also outside the asylum institution (Foucault, 2006b, p. 192). Foucault examines the connections between asylum psychiatry and disciplinary institutions such as school and

prison. He shows that the practices originated in the asylum space were adopted in a variety of organizations. He positions nineteenth century psychiatry as a foundation underlying other institutions that shared the purpose of controlling and observing individuals. Omnivisibility, the legitimation of the authority through the knowledge she/he obtains, grouping individuals according to categories, such as age or gender, identification and exclusion of deviant individuals—these conventions were quite similar in various institutions of the society (Foucault, 2006b, p. 67.) Psychology derived from psychiatric power and it was soon coupled with almost every institution in the society. (Foucault, 2006b, p. 191.) Eventually, psychology achieved the status of truth about human (Foucault, 2006a, p. 453). Psychiatric power is also the theoretical basis upon which pedagogy is constituted (Ibid. pp. 67, 190).

Foucault distances his theorizations from the anti-psychiatric movement of the 1960's, but he employs the concept of anti-psychiatry with an altered meaning: he stresses the importance of anti-psychiatry as a strategy for questioning the psychiatrist's authority and power to decide on one's mental condition, and as a struggle against technologies of normalization (Foucault as cited in Lacrange, 2006, pp. 350, 353). Anti-psychiatry, as a political movement, started to take shape after the Second World War, and it was at the height of its power in the 1960s (Lacrange, 2006, pp. 356–9). Foucault's use of anti-psychiatry to refers to the events in the asylums of the nineteenth century. He exalts the hysterics of the period as the "first militants of anti-psychiatry" (Foucault, 2006b, p. 254). Foucault deploys militant language in his reconstruction of these events in order to highlight the complex relations of psychiatric knowledge, power, and treatment, and to present the relationship between the psychiatrist and the patient as one of power and control rather than of care and treatment (Davidson, 2006, p. xvii.).

Foucault calls the emergence of hysteria a "maelstrom" instead of epidemic: a struggle between psychiatrists and the hysterics. Foucault suggests that the hysterics demonstrated resistance against the psychiatric power through various maneuvers. During the nineteenth century, psychiatrists produced diagnostics and therapeutic apparatuses for managing hysteria. The hysterics, in turn, reacted to the theories by adopting and displaying the symptoms that the psychiatrists had "observed". As it became increasingly difficult for psychiatry to maintain the its scientific status, the more dependent the psychiatrists became of the hysterics' will to play the role psychiatry had endowed them with; therefore the hysterics ultimately held the power to legitimize the asylum psychiatrists. (Foucault, 2006b, p.)

The collapse of the psychiatric knowledge and practices that had been organized around hysteria shares the embarrassing fate with the general medicine of the time. The hands of a physician, which had formerly possessed the miraculous power to heal, suddenly, in the light of Pasteur's findings, turned out to be the very source of contagion within the hospital space. In a similar way the asylum, with the psychiatrist as its sovereign master, turned out to be not the site of observation and cure, but rather the very origin of hysteria. (Foucault, 2006b, p. 341.)

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The discourses on disability within art education are informed by the languages of therapy and healing. The mechanisms of these discursive practices impose limitations for understanding the subjectivity of a mentally disabled individual. Therefore it is necessary to disrupt these rhetorics and propose new ways for discussing mental disabilities within art education.

This thesis investigates the subjectivity of the powerless individual in the language of empowerment. Foucault notes

that psychiatry does not study mental illnesses—it creates them: they are discursive constructs that bear cultural, political, historical, and social implications and intentions. (Foucault, 2006b, p. 335.) Empowerment is a discursive and ideological construct; and the need for empowerment is mainly articulated by the empowerer.

The language of empowerment is examined through the concepts of stigma, power, and rhetoricity. The interpretation is based on these concepts posed by disability studies, and on the Foucauldian analysis on the power and knowledge in the psychiatric tradition. These approaches form a synthesis for discerning implications of ableism, power, knowledge, and language in the empowerment rhetoric. In the following chapter, I introduce the methodological strategies that I use in the analysis of the data.

3. Methodology

In this chapter, I describe the methodological approach through which the data analysis is conducted. The data analysis in this thesis is based on Price's (2011) rendering of critical discourse analysis, which is specifically adjusted for examining discourses on mental disability. As a scholar of English specializing in rhetoric and composition, she uses it for analyzing the discussion on mental disabilities within higher education in the United States. Her analysis comprises, among other topics, different versions of DSM manuals, media discourses on school shootings, and accessibility of academia for the students and faculty members with mental disabilities.

Critical discourse analysis is not a specific or well-defined methodology or theory but a broad research orientation or movement which is interested in the relations of power, language, and knowledge within the society (Fairclough, Mulderrig, & Wodak, 2011, p. 357; Price, 2011, p. 29). Price (2011) refers to critical discourse analysis as *theory/methodology* to highlight the amalgamation of these two aspects (p. 29). In this thesis, theory and methodology are treated in accordance with this notion.

Critical discourse analysis is concerned with the relation of language and ideology, and it implies that every discursive endeavor embodies some ideology. Hegemonic, or the dominant, discourses are also an object of interest for critical discourse analysis.

The data reviewed in this thesis is is not extensive enough to constitute a discourse. Therefore, instead of conducting a discourse analysis, I approach the language of empowerment on the level of rhetoric. I modify the Price's discourse analysis for accessing the rhetorics used in the discussion on empowerment. I examine the data for identifying the rhetorical strategies and devices it employs, including the characteristic phrases and metaphors, as well as the repetition of certain verbs, adjectives, and pronouns.

Rhetorical approach to mental disabilities explores the ways they are discussed within discourses and what kind of rhetoricity is allowed for the individuals with disabilities participating the discourses (Price, 2011, p. 26). Rhetoricity is the concept Price employs for identifying the subject's status and position within a discourse. The concept of rhetoric comprises not only our representations of ourselves, but also the culturally and socially produced and maintained understandings through which we are perceived and identified. Furthermore, rhetoric is not only a mode of representation, "mere rhetorics", but the complex social structures and conventions framing our everyday lives.

> Rhetoric is not simply the words we speak or write or sign, nor is it simply what we look like or sound like. It is who we are, and beyond that, it is who we are allowed to be. (Price, 2011, p. 27; emphasis in original.)

Price uses the rhetorical approach for identifying different orientations employed by the non-disabled educators in interaction with the mentally disabled students in higher education. Price discusses, for example, the recent "emotional turn" in academic discourse, especially in the context of pedagogical research, and its implications for mental disability discourses. She discusses the relation of emotion and mental disability through three stances or habits, titled (1) *Emotional but Not Crazy*, (2) *Teacher but Not a Therapist*, and (3) *Diagnose and Heal* (Price, 2011, p. 47).

Habit 1 delineates the vaguely argued and often tacit, but nevertheless rigorous practice of maintaining the divide between 'normal' and pathological emotions through rhetorical strategies. Habit 2 explores the tendency of teachers to stress the fact that they are not professional therapists. Price does not contest the notion itself, but she asks why, exactly, teachers have to make that disclosure with such vigor, and what implications does this approach have for mentally disabled

students. The third habit describes the desire among teachers to recognize and identify the student's mental disabilities and to help him/her to heal through the intervention by the (mentally "normal") teacher. (Ibid., pp. 47–56.) The teacher's desire to help inevitably renders the student as "Other", reinforcing the normal–pathological dichotomy.

LIMITATIONS AND PARAMETERS

Through the data analysis I examine the depictions of powerlessness and power in the rhetorics of empowerment. I do not explicitly analyze the Loveliest Girl in the World project itself, nor do I evaluate the effectiveness of the method of empowering photography or its therapeutic value. The focus is on the language of empowerment and the representations of disability and power constructed through it. Next chapter discusses the body of data, which is perceived as a representative of the empowerment rhetoric.

4. Data

In this chapter, I introduce the data through which the language of empowerment is analyzed: texts from the field of art education, which explicitly deploy or discuss the concept of empowerment. The emphasis of the analysis is on the language of empowerment as it appears in Miina Savolainen's master's thesis *Maailman ihanin tyttö : voimauttava valokuva* [The Loveliest Girl in the World : The Empowering Photography] (2005), a photobook *Maailman ihanin tyttö—The Loveliest Girl In The World* (2008), her article *Voimauttava valokuva* (2009) in *Valokuvan terapeuttinen voima* [The Therapeutic Power of Photography], and the official web page of the empowering photography, voimauttavavalokuva.net. I examine Savolainen's work as a basis of the discussion and the most extensive and influential body of literature on the subject.

I provide samples from articles by other authors that comment, critique, employ, or develop the concept of empowerment. Through the data I outline the evolution of the empowerment rhetorics during the last decade. The chapter ends with positioning the art education's discussion on empowerment in the context of the art and well-being discourse.

THE CONCEPT OF EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment is usually translated as *voimauttaminen* or *valtauttaminen*. These concepts are structured around two distinctive notions of power: *voima* or *valta*. *Voima* refers to strength or energy: it positions power within the subject, as an inner attribute or property—like a charged battery. *Valta*, in turn, positions power as relations between subjects, or subjects and institutions. *Valta* refers, for example, to the ability of the subject within the social sphere to cause an impact in his/her life or in the life of another subject. *Valta* evokes connotations of violence, force, and coercion, and it emphasizes the political and social qualities of power. Several

authors of the Finnish monograph on critical pedagogy, *Kriittisen pedagogiikan kysymyksiä*, deploy *valtauttaminen* as the primary translation for empowerment (Aittola, Eskola & Suoranta, 2007). However, in Finnish art education discourses, *voimautuminen* is preferred. Savolainen (2005) compares the differences of the concepts and explains why she uses *voimautuminen*: the empowerment she promotes is foremost an inner process of the subject (pp. 21–22).

> Siitonen distances his definition from the roots of the concept of empowerment, in which a part of the tradition is connected to granting power. According to Siitonen's theory, the human him/herself is the source of power. The human also finds the powers to help him/herself. However, she/he can also gain power to his/her own process from the presence of a helper who has already experienced empowerment him/herself. Empowerment does not occur in solitude, but in cooperation with other people. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 22.)
>
> *Siitonen tekee eron empowerment-käsitteen juuriin, jossa osa perinteestä on kytketty vallan antamiseen. Siitosen teorian mukaan ihminen itse on voiman lähde. Ihminen itse löytää myös voimat itsensä auttamiseksi. Prosessissa mukana olevan voimautuneen auttajan olemuksesta voi kuitenkin saada voimaa myös omaan prosessiin. Voimautumista ei tapahdu yksin, vaan toisten ihmisten kanssa työskentelemällä. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 22.)*

Other interlocutors in the empowerment discussion of art education follow Savolainen's example by deploying almost exclusively *voimautuminen*. This distancing from the origins of empowerment implies a move from the political, social, and economical understanding of power into a more individual perspective.

THE LOVELIEST GIRL IN THE WORLD AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE METHOD

In 1994, Savolainen, a twenty-year old student of social education, started working in Hyvönen children's home in Helsinki. She became bothered by the atmosphere, which she describes *heavy*. This heaviness was partially induced by the reduction on financing in social work, deriving from the concurrent recess. In this situation, Savolainen wanted to bring to the community of the children's home "joy, lightness, and imagination", which she felt had to be a part of childhood and adolescence. (Rastas, 2005, p. 22.)

While working at Hyvönen, Savolainen started taking photographs of the children and adolescents. At first Savolainen worked intuitively with the camera. She had acquired strong personal experiences of using photography for processing her own family relations and experiences of growing up. Eventually, during the years which Savolainen spent photographing the children, she started to believe that through photography she could show the children and adolescents the goodness she could easily see in them, but which seemed to be invisible to themselves. (Rastas, 2005, p. 23; Savolainen, 2008, p. 147.)

In 1997 Savolainen started studies in the programme of art education in the University of Art and Design Helsinki. She also studied in the department of photography at the university. In 1999 Savolainen started a project with ten girls from the children's home: Mira Alanne, Ann-Mari Anttila, Paula Anttila, Tuula Koskela, Nina Laurin, Milla Makkonen, Monna Makkonen, Petra Parvikoski, Jenna Pystö, and Tiina Siitonen. Through the project Savolainen wanted to offer a possibility for the children to become photographed by her in the way they really wanted to become seen. Through photography she could show the beauty and the goodness she saw in them (2008, p. 147, 168; 2009, p. 219).

During the project Savolainen planned and carried out photography together with the children. They would discuss in detail the different aspects of the photography: the clothing, the site, the season, and time of day, and especially what the children wanted the images to convey and express. The first Loveliest Girl in the World exhibition was held at Annantalo Arts Centre in 2003. It gained a lot of interest, publicity, and approval, and it multiplied the number of visitors of the gallery. The adolescents were presented as artists and co-authors of the pictures, as equal with Savolainen. The girls found the project meaningful for them and felt that it had a positive impact on their well-being.

> I think that our pictures show for the very first time in my life who I really am. My soul is in these pictures. (Monna Makkonen in Savolainen, 2008; translation in original.)
>
> *Meidän kuvissa musta tuntuu ensimmäistä kertaa mun elämässä, että niistä näkyy se, joka mä ihan oikeasti olen. Mun sielu on näissä kuvissa. (Monna Makkonen in Savolainen, 2008.)*
>
> ~
>
> Posing for the camera felt really bad and oppressive, since I was never given the chance to be the centre of attention before. But seeing the photos made me so happy – I was beautiful and special! When I look at my pictures I feel whole and strong. (Jenna Pystö in Savolainen, 2008; translation in original.)
>
> *Kuvauspaikoilla kameran edessä poseeraus tuntui tosi pahalta ja ahdistavaltakin, koska en ollut ikinä saanut olla huomion keskipiste. Mutta kuvat nähtyäni ilostuin hurjan paljon: olen kaunis ja erikoinen! Kun katson mun kuvia, musta tuntuu että olen ehjä ja voimakas. (Jenna Pystö in Savolainen, 2008.)*
>
> ~

> The photos have made me special, unique. I still feel the same, even though the photo sessions are now over... I know that I'll be all right. It's been really great to be a part of such a big project. I believe this is something so big it'll help a lot of people in the future. (Ann-Mari Anttila in Savolainen, 2008; translation in original.)
>
> *Kuvat ovat tehneet musta erikoisen, uniikin. Vieläkin tunnen samoin, vaikkei kuvia enää otetakaan. Mä tiedän, että mä pärjään. Mun mielestä on ollut tosi hienoa olla mukana näin isossa projektissa. Mä uskon, että tämä on jotain niin suurta, että se tulee auttamaan vielä monia ihmisiä. (Ann-Mari Anttila in Savolainen, 2008.)*

In addition to the several exhibitions in galleries and museums throughout Finland, the exhibition has travelled in numerous countries in Europe, as well as in the United States and Canada. Savolainen often discusses the method in exhibition openings, seminars, and other related events. Savolainen and the project have received several notable awards in Finland from various organizations and institutions, including the Culture Award of Finnish Medical Society Duodecim 2005, Young Photographer of the Year 2005, and the State Award for Children's Culture in 2006.

Savolainen has constantly developed the method of empowering photography and trained people from different fields in method courses. In 2006,the empowering photography was endowed with the status of a registered trademark. It is owned by Savolainen. At the moment the Empowering photography courses are held in many cities in Finland in cooperation with different organizations and institutions. Two kinds of courses are available: professional method courses and open for all courses. In Aalto University, Aalto PRO arranges basic of empowering photography for professional educators, care workers, and therapists (8 credits) and an advanced course (40 credits) available for students who

have completed the basics course and are willing to deepen their knowledge and skills.

Savolainen's master's thesis Maailman ihanin tyttö : voimauttava valokuva (2005) presents the theoretical basis of the method of empowering photography and a detailed description of the Loveliest Girl in the World project. The photobook *Maailman ihanin tyttö—The Loveliest Girl in the World* was published in 2008, and it has subsequently become the "Finland's most beloved photobook" (voimauttavavalokuva.net). It includes discussion on empowerment in a more compact form and through a more approachable language, in comparison with the Savolainen's thesis. She also discusses "the most well-known photography therapeutic working method" in a book on photography therapy, *Valokuvan terapeuttinen voima* (Halkola, 2009, p. 19; Savolainen, 2009).

THE DISCUSSION ON EMPOWERMENT

As stated above, the main focus of this study is not on the project's photographs, or in the method of Empowering photography, but on the art education's language on empowerment: in effect, how empowerment is discussed within the field. Savolainen's work plays a fundamental role in the analysis because of her pioneer status in discussion and because she has produced the most extensive body of literature available on the subject.

In the following, I demonstrate how the discussion on empowerment has progressed after Savolainen's introduction of the concept. The Loveliest Girl in the World has been discussed by art educators in *Stylus* (Laitinen et al., 2009; Rastas, 2005), in *Synnyt/Origins* (Pusa, 2006; Pääjoki, 2005, 2006; Rankanen, 2011; von Brandenburg, 2009a, 2009b), and in *Kuvien keskellä* (Sederholm, 2006; Strömberg, 2006). Even though the concept and the method have been employed in a

growing number of fields by several authors, there still exists only very little discussion on the concept itself.

Marjatta Bardy and Juha Varto served as the supervisors of the Savolainen's master's thesis. Their statements are mainly positive and approving. Both supervisors agree on the importance and effectivity of empowerment. According to Varto,

> Savolainen truly shows, that with the aid of artistic activity, and photography too, it is possible to find, within a human, powers that were already considered lost, and through these powers she/he can possibly elevate him/herself on the level of self-respect. (...) the girls can gain eye-opening and power-evoking energy out of art education. Miina Savolainen has used the whole repertoire of art education for empowering, through which the adolescents, who have grown suspicious and mistrustful, but in reality nevertheless sensitive, start to believe in themselves and in other people, when their self-portraits start to take a new shapes in the form of images and the form of explanation. (Varto, 2005.)

> *Savolainen todellakin osoittaa, että taiteellisen toiminnan avulla, myös valokuvalla, on mahdollista saada esille jo menetetyiksi luultuja voimia ihmisestä, ja näiden voimien avulla ihminen ehkä pystyy nostamaan itsensä itsekunnioituksen tasolle. (...) tytöt voivat saada taidekasvatuksesta silmiä avaavaa ja uutta voimaa synnyttävää puhtia. Miina Savolainen on käyttänyt koko taidekasvattajan repertuaaria voimaannuttamiseen, jolla epäluuloisiksi ja epäuskoisiksi kasvaneet mutta silti todellisesti yhä herkät nuoret alkavat uskoa itseensä ja toisiin ihmisiin, kun heidän omakuvansa alkaa muotoutua uudelleen niin kuvana kuin sen selittämisenäkin. (Varto, 2005.)*

Varto's criticism is limited in the excessive length of the thesis and the resultant lack in coherence. Bardy's assessment is even more favorable. She acknowledges the thesis' extensive elaboration on power, but contemplates on the possibility of

a positive use of power. Bardy puts a lot of value on the thesis and the method.

> I think this work is highly significant for the field of child welfare. The emphasizing of the uniqueness of every individual through the power of accepting gaze deconstructs stereotypes, of which everyone involved can feel gratitude, including people close to the adolescents. (Bardy, 2005.)
>
> *Lastensuojelun kenttää ajatellen näen työn erittäin merkitykselliseksi. Jokaisen yksilön ainutlaatuisuuden korostuminen hyväksyvän katseen voimalla purkaa stereotypioita, mistä kaikki osapuolet voivat kokea kiitollisuutta, myös päähenkilöiden läheiset. (Bardy, 2005.)*

Bardy ends her report by asserting that she would approve Savolainen's work as a licentiate thesis, if the university would have such a degree.

In an interview of Savolainen in *Stylus*, Marja Rastas refers to the Loveliest Girl in the World as an "extraordinarily multidimensional combination of art and ethical education philosophy" [poikkeuksellisen moniulotteinen taiteen ja eettisen kasvatusajattelun yhdistelmä] (Rastas, 2005, p. 22). The 100th anniversary book of the Association of Art Educators, *Kuvien keskellä*, also includes discussion on empowerment (Kettunen et al., 2006). Helena Sederholm discusses the Loveliest Girl in the World project in her article on the significance of process in the conventions of contemporary art. She discusses the project employing the language and vocabulary used by Savolainen.

> (...) the pure, whole visual world of the art photography project becomes juxtaposed with the burdensome experiences of the girls' life stories. In the photography process the adolescents have learned to look at themselves more gently and to repair the traces of disgracing gazes. Accepting one's self-portrait is a metaphor for accepting

> one's self. Every human has the right to feel unique, loved and complete, to be the main character of his/her life. (Sederholm, 2006, p. 50.)
>
> *(...) valokuvataideprojektin puhdas, eheä visuaalinen maailma rinnastuu tyttöjen elämäntarinan raskaisiin kokemuksiin. Kuvausprosessissa nuoret ovat opetelleet katsomaan itseään lempeämmin ja korjaamaan häpäisevien katseiden jälkiä. Omakuvan hyväksyminen on itsen hyväksymisen metafora. Jokaisella ihmisellä on oikeus kokea itsensä ainutlaatuiseksi, rakastetuksi ja ehjäksi, olla oman elämänsä päähenkilö. (Sederholm, 2006, p. 50.)*

In *Kuvien keskellä*, art educator Minna Strömberg claims that empowerment, in fact, has existed long before the success of the *Loveliest Girl in the World*. Strömberg maintains that she has used a similar method in art education practice herself years prior to the publicity gained by the Savolainen's project and method.

> The use of mental images as empowering, self-reinforcing and supporting method is not a new phenomenon. However, Miina Savolainen's award–winning empowering girl pictures have raised the method into a broader attention and use. I have worked in a somewhat similar fashion myself already in the 1990s (...) (Strömberg, 2006, p. 67.)
>
> *Mielikuvien käyttö voimauttavana, itseä vahvistavana ja minuutta tukevana keinona ei ole uusi ilmiö. Miina Savolaisen monia palkintojakin voittaneet voimauttavat tyttökuvat ovat kuitenkin tuoneet metodin vielä laajempaan käyttöön. Itse olen työskennellyt jo 1990–luvulla hiukan samaan tapaan (...) (Strömberg, 2006, p. 67.)*

The feedback on the Loveliest Girl in the World and empowering photography has been almost exclusively positive. This applies to the feedback posed by individuals with varying perspectives and backgrounds, including the project's participants and their parents, the exhibition visitors, and art

educators. Art education scholar Tarja Pääjoki is one of the few commentators who have taken an openly critical and polemical stance towards the project and the language of empowerment. Pääjoki's critique is directed on the strategies of representation of gender and childhood (Pääjoki, 2005, 2006).

> (...) it is shocking to see, that many girls wanted to be photographed as princesses and fairies in consent with this very stereotype, as a part of a natural landscape and with gaze directed away from the camera. They appear in the pictures as aestheticized objects. The images evoke a question, is this still the most acceptable way for a child and an adolescent to be visible. (Pääjoki, 2005, p. 5.)
>
> *(...) on järkyttävää nähdä, miten monet nuoret tytöt halusivat tulla kuvatuiksi juuri tämän stereotypian mukaisina prinsessoina ja keijukaisina, osana luonnonmaisemaa ja katse poispäin kamerasta. He näyttäytyvät kuvissa estetisoituina objekteina. Kuvat saavat kysymään, onko tämä edelleen lapselle ja nuorelle hyväksytyin tapa näkyä. (Pääjoki, 2005, p. 5.)*

Pääjoki also mentions, but does not refer to, the negative feedback the project has elicited.

> (...) this opposing perspective has not been publically visible in the same way that the appreciation the project has received. I talked in a seminar with a few children's home workers about how the project looks from the angle of their everyday care work. (...) For these women, the beautiful images and the idealistic circumstances of the photography process appeared as escapism and vain eccentricity in relation to the hectic and onerous everyday reality of carework. They also wondered, how the pictures' clichéd and objectifying image of women could be good for young women. (Pääjoki, 2006, p. 61.)
>
> *(...) tämä vastakkainen näkökulma ei ole ollut julkisesti esillä samalla tavoin kuin projektin saama kiitos. Keskustelin eräässä*

> *seminaarissa muutaman lastenkotityöntekijän kanssa siitä, miten projekti on näyttänyt heidän perushoitotyönsä valossa. (...) Kauniit kuvat ja valokuvausprosessin idealistiset olosuhteet suhteessa hoitotyön kiireiseen ja kuormittavaan arkeen olivat näille naisille todellisuuspakoa ja "hörhöilyä". Samoin he ihmettelivät sitä, miten kuvien kliseinen ja objektivoiva naiskuva voisi olla hyväksi nuorille naisille. (Pääjoki, 2006, p. 61.)*

Critique of this kind is very rare in the data; the overall tone of the discussion is positive. I have not been able to find openly negative or critical statements by those who have been closely involved with the project.

ART AND WELL-BEING

The language of empowerment adheres to a bigger whole, in effect, the *art and well-being discourse*. *Art and well-being* or *art and health* is an international movement or endeavor with slightly differing emphases and implications in different countries. It has emerged mainly during the beginning of the 21th century, and it is prevalent, for example, in the National Alliance for Arts Health and Wellbeing in the United Kingdom and in the Arts and Health Australia in Australia (Artsandhealth.org; Artshealthandwellbeing.org.uk). Even though this discussion has proliferated only during the recent years, it is suggested that the connection between art and health has been important and strong throughout the history, before the emergence of the current scientifically oriented notion of health. The movement explores and promotes the ability of art to enhance health in various ways. The movement entertains a holistic understanding of health and well-being, which includes the social and cultural aspects, and considers the dominant model of health insufficient for discussing well-being of humans in a meaningful and comprehensive way.

In Finland, the ideology of art and well-being has been embraced by many institutions. For example, the Ministry of

Education and Culture has published surveys and reports on the subject. Cecilia von Brandenburg (2008) has produced a report on relation of culture and well-being for the ministry and Hanna-Liisa Liikanen (2010) composed a report with proposals for enhancing welfare through art in the programme *Art and culture for well-being*.

> The aim of the Art and culture for well-being programme is to promote well-being and health by means of art and culture and to enhance inclusion at the individual, community and societal levels. The three priority areas in it are: 1) culture in promoting social inclusion, capacity building, networking and participation in daily life and living environments, 2) art and culture as part of social welfare and health promotion, and 3) art and culture in support of well-being and health at work. (Liikanen, 2010, p. 5; translation in original.)

In these above-mentioned publications the notion of empowerment is explicitly employed in a number of occasions (Liikanen, 2010, pp. 25, 26, 27, 28, 34, 39, 59, 60, 61, 70; von Brandenburg, 2008, pp. 11, 18, 20, 41).

> Art can help the individual or the community by increasing the deployment of new resources and by reinforcing indirectly coping and adapting to social change. Empowerment that takes place through artistic practice can function as a part of social work and health promotion work. (von Brandenburg, 2008, p. 20.)
>
> *Taide voi auttaa yksilöä tai yhteisöä lisäämällä uusien resurssien käyttöönottoa ja vahvistamalla epäsuorasti elämänhallintaa ja sosiaaliseen muutokseen sopeutumista. Taiteellisen työskentelyn kautta tapahtuva voimaantuminen (empowerment) voi toimia osana sosiaali- ja terveydenedistämistyötä. (von Brandenburg, 2008, p. 20.)*

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> Empowerment (the increase of one's power) can occur through participation in culture activity, which possesses social objectives. Implicitly it can reinforce coping, ability to deal with problems, and accelerate cultural and social change. (Liikanen, 2010, p. 39.)
>
> *Empowerment (voimaantuminen, oman voiman kasvu) voi tapahtua osallistumalla kulttuuritoimintaan, jolla on sosiaalisia tavoitteita. Epäsuorasti se voi vahvistaa elämänhallintaa, kykyä selviytyä ongelmista sekä nopeuttaa kulttuurista ja sosiaalista muutosta. (Liikanen, 2010, p. 39.)*
>
> ~
>
> An individual wants to feel and ensure that his/her life is meaningful. It is the precondition for mental, physical, and social well-being. Art and cultural activity are pivotal elements for the experience of good life and everyday life, in which the significance of immaterial well-being is emphasized. Personal experiences, creative resources, involvement, and interaction with other individuals enable empowerment, personal development, and maintenance of functioning/coping. (Ibid., p. 25.)
>
> *Ihminen haluaa arkielämässään kokea ja tehdä elämänsä mielekkääksi ja merkitykselliseksi. Se on edellytys henkiselle, fyysiselle sekä sosiaaliselle hyvinvoinnille. Taide ja kulttuuritoiminta ovat keskeisiä elementtejä hyvän elämän ja arjen kokemiselle, jossa korostuu aineettoman hyvinvoinnin merkitys. Omat elämykset, luovat voimavarat, osallisuus ja vuorovaikutus toisten ihmisten kanssa mahdollistavat voimaantumisen, itsensä kehittämisen ja toimintakyvyn ylläpidon. (Ibid., p. 25.)*

The master's programme in art education in Aalto University has a course module titled *Art and well-being*, which in the academic year 2012–2013 includes courses on art therapy and community art: *Art therapy oriented practices, special groups and therapeutic approach* [Taideterapeuttiset menetelmät, erityisryhmät ja terapeuttinen asenne], *Group process in art therapy* [Taideterapian ryhmäprosessi], and *Community art education*

(participatory textile printing project) [Yhteisötaidekasvatus—osallistava painokangasprojekti]. The alternative course modules are *Art Pedagogy, Activity in Art Field, Media Culture*, and *Environmental Culture*. (Kurkela, 2012.)

The courses included in the Art and well-being module embody the tendency within Finnish art education to integrate therapeutic aspects in its practices. The potential of therapeutic practices for art education as well as the differences between art therapy and therapeutic art education have been discussed for example by Mimmu Rankanen (2011). In her article in Stylus Taija Ala-Vannesluoma, an art educator who is interested in therapeutic practices, positions empowerment as a part of therapeuticity:

> In the teaching of an art educator who has adopted a therapeutic basis for his/her practice, an atmosphere that is safe, relaxed, and respectful towards student and artworks, is emphasized. The familiarity and pleasantness of the environment have a role in the creation of good feeling and empowerment through art making. (Ala-Vannesluoma, 2009, p. 19.)
>
> *Terapeuttisen lähtökohdan työhönsä omaksuneen kuvataideopettajan ammatinharjoittamisessa korostuvat toiminnan turvallinen, kiireetön sekä oppilasta ja taidetöitä arvostava ilmapiiri. Ympäristön tuttuus ja miellyttävyys luovat osansa taidetyöskentelyn kautta syntyvästä hyvästä olosta ja voimauttavuudesta. (Ala-Vannesluoma, 2009, p. 19.)*

Ala-Vannesluoma also states that even though it might be difficult for an art educator to teach with a therapeutic approach in classroom, "(...) a therapeutic situation is born when an individual experiences on the emotional level that she/he has become understood and accepted the way she/he is" [terapeuttinen tilanne syntyy kun ihminen kokee tunnetasolla tulevansa ymmärretyksi ja hyväksytyksi sellaisena kuin on]. (Ibid.)

In 2005 the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma launched the program *Rohkeus, ilo, kriittisyys – Taide hyvinvointiyhteiskunnan uudistumisessa* [Courage, Joy, Criticality—Art in the Reformation of the Welfare Society]. A book *Taide keskellä elämää* [Art in the Middle of Life] was published as a part of the project (Bardy et al., 2007). The over forty articles included in the book discuss the relation of art and well-being in different contexts, including mental health rehabilitation (Nevala, 2007; Sand 2007), art education (Sederholm, 2007), and community art (Hiltunen, 2007; Mäki, 2007).

In this chapter, I have introduced the documents that constitute the data set, which I use for examining the rhetoric of empowerment. The data includes Savolainen's texts, which are central in the analysis, and comments and responses on the subject by other authors. In the next chapter I proceed to analyze the data according to the methodological and theoretical background presented in the previous chapters

5. Interpretation

In this chapter, I examine how the rhetoric of empowerment constructs the powerless subject and his/her relation to the empowerer. Rhetoric is not merely the expressions, words, and phrases used, or other messages conveyed through multimodal means of communication: it consists also of the words and statements that remain unsaid. The notions and concepts that the language deploys can be thought of as film negatives, in effect, they reveal the significations that are left unpronounced in the positive: a subject who is defined as someone who needs empowerment, is rendered disempowered or powerless. A subject who needs healing is ill. A subject who needs repairing is broken. A subject who needs an opportunity to see oneself as whole sees him/herself as unwhole, incomplete. I examine the depiction of powerlessness within the empowerment rhetoric by analyzing how the narratives of disability found in the dominant culture, and on the other hand, in the the alternative narratives posed by disability scholars, inform to the language of empowerment. I conduct the analysis of the relationship between the empowerer and the empoweree through the concepts of power/knowledge, stigma, and rhetoricity.

The first subchapter concentrates on the question of power within the language of empowerment. In the rhetoric of empowerment, the imbalance of power between the empowerer and the empoweree is depicted as something that can be completely removed by the empowerer. I start by elaborating on the notion of power as it is explicitly discussed in the rhetoric and move on to the unarticulated implications of power that become perceptible when juxtaposed with the theoretical framework employed in this thesis.

The second subchapter discusses the theme of *subjectivity* within the language of empowerment. I approach the rhetoric's construction of the empoweree-subject through the concept of rhetoricity. The data analysis also examines the notion of gaze in the empowerment rhetoric. I analyze this

discussion by contrasting it with Foucault's theory of seeing, looking, and power in the tradition of psychiatric practices, as well as with the problematizations of gaze posed by disability studies.

Disabling Power, Disabling Knowledge

This section elaborates on the function that knowing is endowed with in the empowerment rhetoric and on the implications it has for the power relations of empowerment. The explicit accounts and definitions of power in the data are compared with the more implicit power dynamics discernible on the rhetorical level of the language. Through the analysis on power I examine how the language of empowerment embodies themes and practices that are rooted in the rhetorics of psychiatry and therapy.

As stated, the language of empowerment has adopted the translation of power, *voima*, which bears connotations of strength, energy, and intensity, as opposed to the concept of social and hierarchical power emphasizing manipulation, difference, and relations, *valta*. *Voimauttaminen* is used almost exclusively in art education literature.

The problem of power within the empowering photography is explicitly discussed in the data. The asymmetry of the power relation between the photographer and the model is portrayed as inherent in all photography. This power must be deconstructed in order to create equality, and equality, in turn, has to be achieved before empowerment becomes possible (Rastas, 2005, p. 25; Savolainen, 2005, pp. 1, 22, 23, 146, 218; 2008, p. 197; 2009, pp. 211, 218). Savolainen often uses perfective aspect when describing the process of dismantling the power, stressing that the deconstruction occurs completely, ultimately.

> A photograph may function as a source of empowerment process only when the use of power connected to the conventions of photography is [entirely] deconstructed/dismantled. (Savolainen, 2005, pp. 1, 218.)
>
> *Valokuva voi toimia voimautumisprosessin lähteenä silloin kun valokuvan käytäntöihin liittyvä vallankäyttö puretaan. (Savolainen, 2005, pp. 1, 218.)*
>
> ~
>
> The power of the photographer which is normally connected to photography is [entirely] deconstructed and the photography session is constructed as a dialogic interaction. (Savolainen, 2008, p. 197.)
>
> *Valokuvaamiseen tavallisesti kytkeytyvä kuvaajan valta puretaan ja kuvaustilanteesta rakennetaan dialoginen vuorovaikutustilanne. (Savolainen, 2008, p. 197.)*
>
> ~
>
> (...) the tradition of photography includes lots of unconscious or conscious use of power, which has to be initially [completely] deconstructed. (Savolainen, 2009, p. 211.)
>
> *(...) valokuvauksen perinteeseen sisältyy paljon sekä tiedostamatonta että tietoista vallankäyttöä, joka on ensin purettava. (Savolainen, 2009, p. 211.)*

In some cases, the rhetoric applies more subtle or ambiguous phrases, which do not clearly define whether the removal of the power is partial or absolute (e.g. Savolainen, 2005, 22, 23, 146; 2009, p. 218). The equality between the photographer and the model is presented as an obligatory requirement for the possibility of the actualization of empowerment: the photography within the Loveliest Girl in the World has been carried out with "unconditional equity" (Ibid., 2009, p. 223; 2005, p. 16).

The deconstruction and the discharging of the power can be accomplished through a dialogue between the photographer and the empoweree, in which the implications of power in the conventions of photography are clearly articulated and identified. The empoweree must be provided with knowledge about the forms of power that reside in the practices and history of photography (Ibid., 2005, p. 22). The power in photography derives from the photographer's skill in the use of the representation strategies of photography, his/her control over the end result, and from the myth of the evidential value of photographs (Ibid. 2009, p. 212).

The Foucauldian approach to power depicts it as a dynamic, fluid, and complex set of mechanisms and relations. This understanding renders power as something, which cannot be simply neutralized; in fact, it suggests that power is very difficult to even perceive and depict. This notion of power imposes an imbalance on the relation between the empoweree and the empowerer, which emanates from the unequal access to relevant knowledge between the subjects. For example, a professional photographer obtains knowledge about the history, theory and practice of his/her medium, which she/he has acquired through years of studying and working. It is impossible to convey this knowledge briefly to an individual who has only little experience and theoretical knowledge on photography. In the context of care work, the problem of inequality in terms of power and knowledge emanate from the welfare worker's access to detailed information on the life of the individual child, while she/he can control efficiently what the child gets to know about him/herself.

Savolainen (2009) is aware of the use of photography in early psychiatry and deploys it as an example of wielding power through photography in an unethical way (p. 212). However, the rhetoric of empowerment reflects the pivotal themes of psychiatry; diagnosis, treatment, and recovery.

Even though empowering photography is not presented as a legitimate form of psychotherapy, it is defined as a "therapeutically aligned pedagogic method", and its therapeutic and healing properties are discussed extensively (Savolainen, 2005, pp. 1, 19, 122, 169, 174; 2009, pp. 211, 216, 219, 223). The first Finnish textbook on photography therapy describes empowering photography as the "most well-known photography therapeutic working method in Finland at the moment" [tunnetuin valokuvaterapeuttinen työmuoto tällä hetkellä Suomessa] (Halkola, 2009, p. 19). Therefore, since the notion of empowerment is deeply embedded in the language of therapy, and endowed with an ability to heal, it tacitly renders the empoweree ill or disabled, or, at any rate, positions him/her in the danger of becoming either one.

Foucault positions psychiatry as the origin of the organization of power in a variety of institutions in the society. The strategies of control used in school and in asylum share the key elements: limitation of freedom through spatial and temporal confines, the use of punishment, constant evaluation and documentation, the required acceptance of the reality that the institution constitutes as truth, and the attempt to effectuate change in the individual. (Foucault, 2006b, p. 189.) Empowerment is also partially rooted in the psychiatric tradition. It does not explicitly adhere to the psychiatric terminology, but it does assume its key structures: the trained professional legitimized through knowledge, the recognition of the need for empowerment by the professional, and healing through empowerment.

Psychiatric knowledge bears also other implications in the rhetorics. Savolainen refers to an article that was published in a 2004 issue of Anna, a popular Finnish women's magazine, in order to demonstrate a problem concerning the accessibility of psychiatric treatment for the residents of children's homes. Journalist Jussi Jokelainen had worked a period of one week in a children's home in order to acquire experienc-

es for the article (Savolainen, 2005, p. 127). Savolainen uses a single event documented in the article as an example of the need for psychiatric care. She states a problem in the child welfare that is obviously very serious: children with a need for acute psychiatric treatment are often denied proper care, because they are considered to be already receiving treatment in the children's home. Savolainen uses an event that is described in the Jokelainen's article as an example of need for psychiatric treatment.

> A small child starts to become restless after a day which has included happy moments and time spend together with others, and does not calm down in spite of the persistent efforts by the calmly behaving adults. Later on, things start flying inside the house, windows break, yelling and swearing are heard. Eventually, the child has to be held by several adults. She/he accepts a sedative which is prescribed to her for emergencies, but the whole episode lasts four hours until the child calms down. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 127.)
>
> *Pieni lapsi alkaa onnellisia hetkiä ja yhdessäoloa sisältäneen päivän jälkeen muuttua levottomaksi, eikä pitkäjänteisestä yrityksestä huolimatta rauhoitu aikuisen rauhallisella otteella. Myöhemmin alkavat tavarat lentää, ikkunat särkyä, kuuluu huutoa ja kiroilua. Lopulta lasta joudutaan pitelemään monen aikuisen voimin. Lapsi suostuu ottamaan hänelle hätätilanteita varten määrätyn rauhoittavan lääkkeen, mutta koko kohtaus kestää neljä tuntia, ennen kuin lapsi lopulta rauhoittuu. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 127.)*

This excerpt exemplifies an extension of psychiatric power/knowledge in a non-medical discourse. Particular behavior, such as aggression and agitation, can instantly be identified as symptoms of a psychiatric condition—by an individual who does not posses psychiatric competence and who has not even met the individual. The passage does not specifically identify the psychiatric condition appearing in the article,

nor suggest that what kind psychiatric treatment it requires, but nevertheless, Jokelainen, Savolainen, and the reader, too, can agree on the necessity of a psychiatric intervention.

THE ECONOMICS OF EMPOWERMENT

The relation of power and knowledge in the empowerment rhetoric is clearly discernible in the discussion on the competency requirements of the helper. Savolainen critiques the strictness that professional therapists display in monitoring the boundaries of their field, which forces child welfare workers to be cautious with their attempts to help the children (Savolainen, 2005, p. 220). However, Savolainen keeps a close watch of the limits of the empowering photography: the method is registered as a registered trademark, and in order to become a qualified empowerer, one has to go through a legitimate training. Aalto PRO (Aalto University Professional Development) provides a basic course of the empowering photography (8 credits). (Aaltopro.aalto.fi) The basics course of empowering photography costs 2375 euros. In comparison, a basic course of art therapy (10 credits) in Aalto University's Open University costs 100 euros.

The basics course of empowering photography is offered to education and health care professional. It endows the student with the permission to use the method on the preliminary level. A specialization course on empowering photography (40 credits) is available for those who have completed the basics course. Omnia, The Joint Authority of Education in Espoo Region, has arranged empowering photography training for enhancing functioning and well-being of working communities.

DISABILITY METAPHORS

The rhetoric of empowerment assumes the ableist practice of deploying disability as a metaphor. This is evident, for example, in the title of a section in Savolainen's thesis: "Children's home—Losing the approving eyes" [Lastenkoti – hyväksyvien silmien menettäminen] (Savolainen, 2005, p. 116.) The language of empowerment employs frequently blindness and deafness as metaphors:

> In such cases, parents are *blinded* by their own difficulties and cannot see the uniqueness of the child; thus, the mirror in which the child sees herself is clouded and distorted. (Savolainen, 2008, p. 166; translation in original; emphasis added.)

~

> Because of their own difficulties, the parents are *unable to see or hear* their child and answer his/her needs. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 120; emphasis added.)
>
> *Omien vaikeuksiensa vuoksi vanhemmat ovat kyvyttömiä näkemään ja kuulemaan lastaan ja vastaamaan hänen tarpeisiinsa. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 120.)*

~

> The photographer turns into a mirror, the missing eyes, that tell the model what they see. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 146.)
>
> *Kuvaajasta tulee peili, puuttuvat silmät, jotka kertovat kuvaamalleen ihmiselle, mitä näkevät. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 146.)*

As stated above, disability metaphors are in common use in everyday language, but they should not be used in the professional art education literature because they embody the understanding of disability as a flaw and incompleteness. Another ableist strategy in the empowerment rhetoric is the emphasizing of the fundamental role of seeing in human

development and existence. This theorization suggests that one can truly be human only if she/he obtains the ability to see, and tacitly alludes that subjects with vision impairments lack access to many essential aspects of humanity.

> (...) seeing is deeply connected to the subject's consciousness of his/her existence. (...) Seeing is a fundamental experience of the interaction between humans, and also between the subject and the surrounding world. (...) According to this notion, human being is in a fundamental way structured through seeing and visibility. Not only human interaction and therefore cultural structures as based on visuality, but also the mental structures of a human being; the matter related to thinking, language, and experience, is visual. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 78.)
>
> *(...) näkeminen on myös syvästi yhteydessä ihmisen tietoisuuteen omasta olemassaolostaan. (...) Näkeminen on siis perustava ihmisten välisen, ja myös ihmisen ja hänen ulkopuolellaan olevan maailman välisen, vuorovaikutuksen kokemus. (...) Tämän ajattelun mukaan ihminen on siis keskeisellä tavalla näkemisen ja näkymisen kautta rakentuva olento. Paitsi että ihmisten välinen vuorovaikutus ja siten kulttuuriset rakenteet perustuvat visuaalisuuteen, myös ihmisen psyykkiset rakenteet; ajatteluun, kieleen ja kokemukseen liittyvä aines on kuvallista. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 78.)*
>
> ~
>
> It is important for a small child to be connected to his/her dearest carers by gaze. The constant absence of eye contact and the carer is destructive for the baby. (Savolainen, 2008, pp. 165–166.)
>
> *Pienelle lapselle on tärkeää olla katseella yhteydessä rakkaimpiin hoitajiinsa. Katsekontaktin ja hoitajan läsnäolon jatkuva puuttuminen on vauvalle tuhoisaa. (Savolainen, 2008, pp. 165–166.)*

If the cultural structures, the human interaction, and the mental structures all are visual, the humanity itself remains reserved for individuals without disabilities of vision. Visuality *does* have an enormous influence and a multitude of functions in our culture, but art education should, at any rate, be accessible for individuals with vision impairments as well.

STIGMA

Stigmatization refers to the discursive and social practices through which subjects are labeled, classified, and governed. The stigma of being a welfare child is considered highly offensive and humiliating in the data. The empowering photography is posed as an alternative way for perceiving the welfare children, which can help to reduce the prejudices typically associated with them. The agenda of fighting the stigma is prevalent throughout the data (e.g. Rastas, 2005, pp. 22, 23; Savolainen, 2005, p. 129; 2008, pp. 172, 174–175). An important objective of the Loveliest Girl in the World project is to prove that the participants are much more than just welfare children (Savolainen, 2008, pp. 172, 178). However, the constant reiteration of the participants' welfare status in every context might reinforce the stigma. In fact, the adolescents' welfare background becomes a part of the artworks: pairing the photographs with the disclosure of the backgrounds of the participants is a vital element in the functioning of the photographs as works of art.

Implications of ableism extend beyond the explicitly offensive language and stereotypes of disability in the dominant culture. Disability researchers have discerned typical strategies for representing disability in different discourses "in a positive light". The disabled subject is often depicted through the survivor or overcoming narrative. It depicts the disabled subject as a pathetic character who is imprisoned in or chained to his/her disability, but who, inspite of all hard-

ship, finds a way to obtain him/herself the status of a competent, loveable, individual—a full human. The heroic overcomer is presented as an "inspirational" figure for the rest of "us" (the non-disabled) and also for the other disabled. Overcoming narrative is presumed to be something individuals with disabilities need to feel good about themselves. (Sandahl & Auslander, 2005b, p. 3; Price, 2011, p. 11). The notion of turning the experiences of negligence into strength, that one becomes stronger after facing difficulties portrays the welfare child through a dichotomy: one is either a victim or (through empowerment) a brave survivor.

> We have shown, that great personalities can come from children's homes, unique and strong individuals, that can be seen as pioneers and as symbols for others as well. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 151.)
>
> *Olemme näyttäneet, että lastenkodista voi tulla suuria persoonia, ainutlaatuisia vahvoja ihmisiä, jotka voivat olla muillekin symboleita ja tiennäyttäjiä. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 151.)*

Disability studies criticizes the survivor narrative for being patronizing and objectifying. Derby suggests that the euphemistic terminology of special education—including the concept of special itself—should be avoided in art education literature. It "feminizes, infantizes, and animalizes" individuals with disabilities. The language is mainly produced by non-disabled professionals, and it is questionable whether it reflects the disabled individuals' opinions on what they want to be referred to as. (Derby, 2009, p. 250.)

The Whole Self

Subjectivity is a theme that permeates the empowerment rhetoric. Acknowledging the subjectivity of the empoweree is portrayed as a fundamental aspect in empowerment (Savolainen, 2005, p. 22; 2009, p. 212). Sometimes the subject is

referred to as the "self" (Ibid., 2005, p. 201; 2009, pp. 216, 225). The "self" of the empoweree is presented as something that must be protected in order to preserve its wholeness and coherence. The notions of the subjectivity in the empowerment rhetoric are also assumed by other authors. Helena Sederholm adopts the notion of self-portrait a "metaphor for accepting one's self" [itsen hyväksymisen metafora], and reminds that everyone has the right to feel "unique, beloved, and whole" [ainutlaatuiseksi, rakastetuksi ja ehjäksi] (Sederholm, 2006, p. 50).

Small liberties regarding to the principle of subjectivity are taken on the occasions when Savolainen knows better what the empoweree needs. She recalls that many participants were unwilling to take part in the project, and how it had taken two years to persuade one individual to participate. While admitting that empowering photography may not be suitable for everyone, Savolainen maintains that she "sensed" [aistia] that the refusal the adolescent expressed resulted from her fear of failing in the photographs, and that Savolainen "read between the lines" that she wanted to be persuaded by her. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 42.)

> After two years of soft-soaping, I once again brought up the subject. I had always promised to force her into it, which, I assume, we both thought was fun. (Ibid.)
>
> *Parin vuoden pehmityksen jälkeen otin asian taas puheeksi. Olin aina luvannut pakottaa hänet, mikä taisi olla meistä molemmista kivaa. (Ibid.)*

Occasionally, Savolainen subtly guides the empoweree's subjective thinking process: "if the girls could not come up with ideas, I might suggest a concept: 'I have this thought: could it suit you...?' In cases like this it happened that the adolescents used a few months to absorb the thought and then brought it up as their own idea (...)". (Savolainen, 2005, p. 43.)

A common theme in the rhetoric of empowerment is that of *need*. The empowerees are attributed with a variety of needs. A child has an "enormous need to make others happy, to be a source of joy for them" [olla iloksi toisille ihmisille] and professional caring and safe environment are insufficient in helping a child whose "neediness is bottomless" [tarvitsevuus on pohjattoman suurta] (Savolainen, 2005, pp. 79, 220). A photograph which becomes important for the empoweree proves that its "content, feel [tunnelma], and aesthetics correspond to some deeper need" (Savolainen, 2005, p. 201). A need that overshadows the others is the need to become seen (e.g. Savolainen, 2005, pp. 77, 94, 120, 152, 217; 2008, pp. 145, 179; 2009, pp. 218).

A healing feature in the empowerment is the possibility to see oneself through the eyes of another individual: the empowering photography offers an opportunity to see oneself more objectively (Ibid., p. 123); the method can also help the participant to see him/herself with new eyes (Ibid., pp. 116, 146, 163). The attempt to force the subject to perceive him/herself objectively is a strategy of cure which emerged in the era of protopsychiatry. The truth did not function only as the source of cure, but also as an instrument of control by imposing humiliation of being an object for oneself (Foucault 2006a, p. 499). Psychiatry confined subjects with mental illness into their objectivity, positioning them on "the level of nature, the level of things". (Ibid., p. 524.)

The notions of *looking* and *gazing* occupy several functions in the language of empowerment. At times, gaze refers to the physical and sensory perception; sometimes it is applied as a metaphor for knowing, understanding, recognizing, and accepting. The rhetoric depicts welfare children as invisible, with a longing for being seen.

> The human being's development to him/herself is profoundly based on the experience of becoming seen: other human beings function as mirrors, through which the

> individual forms his/her understanding of who she/he is. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 79.)
>
> *Ihmisen kehitys omaksi itsekseen perustuu syvällisesti nähdyksi tulemisen kokemukseen: muut ihmiset toimivat peileinä, joiden kautta ihminen muodostaa käsityksen siitä, kuka hän on. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 79.)*

Mirror is a metaphor that appears frequently in the empowerment rhetoric. This rhetoric gesture unintentionally aligns itself with the old theme of mirror as a metaphor of madness, reflecting nothing real (Foucault, 2006a, p. 23). The mirror metaphor is employed also in the contemporary discourses on disability: "opening doors or mirrors" are often used in therapeutically ligned imagery (Kuppers, 2005, p. 155).

Savolainen states that she wants to employ the interviews of the adolescents, their parents, and the employees of the Hyvönen children's home as "a resource material equal to the theoretical data [sic]" [Käytän tyttöjen, heidän vanhempiensa ja Hyvösen lastenkodin hoitajien haastatteluja myös teoreettisen aineiston kanssa tasavertaisena lähdemateriaalina] (Savolainen, 2005, p. 19). She justifies this approach through the objective of equality. Marjatta Bardy reiterates this assertion in the thesis assessment report and leaves it unproblematized (Bardy, 2005).

The quotations by the adolescents are included in an unedited form, in spoken language. Parents' voices are also written in spoken language as well (Savolainen, 2005, pp. 47, 51, 56–57). Through using direct quotations by the adolescents Savolainen aims to preserve their personal language, which could convey their age and the emotion matter in relation to the process (Savolainen, 2005, p. 19).

> I do not look them in the way, that oh I'm so lovely. Maybe here in Finland too it has been taught, that

you're not allowed to praise yourself or then you're self-satisfied. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 48.)

Een (sic) mä nyt silleen tuijottele, ai vitsi mä oon ihana. Ehkä tääl Suomeski on opetettu sillee, et sä et saa kehuu ittees tai sit sä oot itserakas. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 48.)

~

Well thats a great name, well I thought, that there's a finely figured out name. It is positive, [it] says it fluently. It probably lifts one's spirit, when the exhibition has such a name and all. It is probably lifting for Petra: could she be the loveliest girl in the world? (Ibid, p. 51.)

No se on hieno nimi, no mä ajattelin, että siinähän on hienosti keksitty nimi. Sehän on positiivinen, sanoo se ihan sujuvasti sen. Varmaan se mieltä kohottaa, kun sillä näyttelylläkin on tollanen nimi. Se on varmaankin Petralle ihan kohottavaa: voisko hän olla se maailman ihanin tyttö? (Ibid, p. 51.)

~

I can't say (how I have seen myself with fresh eyes), now you're gonna ask next, what do you mean by fresh eyes? I can't really explain, like, 'cause those pictures just, they just make me feel so good. So, 'cause they're like, well, beautiful. If those pictures would've not existed, then I probably wouldn't look, would've never looked myself more gently. (Ibid. 59.)

En mä osaa sanoa (miten olen nähnyt itseni uusin silmin) , nyt sä sit seuraavaks kysyt, et millä tavalla uusin silmin? En mä oikein osaa selittää, sillai, ku niistä kuvista tulee vaan, niistä tulee vaan niin hyvä mieli. Niin, kun kyllhän ne nyt on sillai, no, kauniita. Jos niitä kuvia ei ois ollu, ni en mä varmaan kattois, ois ikinä kattonu itseäni lempeämmin. (Ibid. 59.)

What does this mean rhetorically? This strategy of preserving the alleged authenticity of the adolescents' and their parents' thoughts by presenting them in an unedited form rather

emphasizes the boundaries between the subjects. The rhetors that are present in the language are portrayed according to their status: only the voices of the objects of art education are included unedited, as a sign of their uniqueness. The voices of Beauvoir, Kristeva, Merleau-Ponty, and Savolainen are included as coherent, clear, and structured. This practice emphasizes the difference between the rhetoricity of the empoweree–subject in comparison with the rhetoricity of the empowerer and the theorists.

GOOD AND LOVELY

The right to be lovely and the need for the experience of loveliness are unchallenged premises in the rhetorics (Savolainen, 2008, p. 4). Why is loveliness necessary? What if the subject would not want to be lovely? What if she/he wanted to be obnoxious, intimidating, or imperceptible? Savolainen draws a conclusion from the abundant feedback by the exhibition visitors that "the pure princesses of the yesteryear" are missed: "innocence is not regressivity". (Savolainen, 2005, p. 105.) The empowerment rhetoric is strongly structured around the unproblematized notion of loveliness. Everybody is entitled to be the loveliest in the world in one's life everybody, and this right should belong to every human being (Savolainen, 2005, p. 16). I do not question the importance of this right, but I ask what loveliness stands for? The rhetoric does not clearly state what loveliness is, but it nevertheless implies it is something that is essential for all humans. This rhetorical ambiguity makes it difficult to discuss the concept. Other authors leave loveliness uncontested as well. Varto writes in the assessment report of Savolainen's thesis, that

> In the life of a woman beauty and loveliness follow her from the cradle and no matter how badly life would treat her and how few tools she would be equipped with for presenting her loveliness, this need apparently lasts

> as long as the girl stays a girl (and a little further from that point, maybe sixty years). (Varto, 2005.)
>
> *Naisen elämässä kauneus ja ihanuus tulevat mukaan jo kehdossa ja vaikka elämä kohtelisi kuinka kaltoin ja antaisi miten vähän tahansa eväitä oman ihanuuden esittämiseen, tarve ilmeisesti säilyy niin kauan, kun tyttö pysyy tyttönä (ja vähän sen ylikin, ehkä 60 vuotta). (Varto, 2005.)*

This excerpt exemplifies the lack of criticality towards the concept of loveliness, which is common in the data. Pääjoki does question the project's renderings of childhood and gender roles, but her critique nevertheless represents an uncommon stance in the discussion on empowerment (Pääjoki, 2005, p. 5; 2006, p. 61).

HEALING NATURE

The language of empowerment echoes the old idea of nature as a cure for the troubled mind, which predates the founding of psychiatry. A popular explanation for the source of mental distress in the eighteenth and the nineteenth century was the restless life in the city (Foucault, 2006a, p. 221). In early psychiatry, nature was considered as a strong cure for ill mind (Ibid., p. 473). This is evident, for example, in the writings of Samuel Tuke: the rural location of the Retreat, the asylum that he administered, was vital for the recovery, functioning as an antidote to the agitating and exciting stimuli of the urban life. In the Loveliest Girl in the World project, the girls who had grown up in the city had an opportunity to experience the nature: a "wounded child gets to be protected in the greatness of nature" [haavoittunut lapsi saa olla suojassa luonnon suuruudessa] (Savolainen, 2005, p. 45; 2008, p. 163).

> Nature brings an experience of sanctity into the pictures and it embodies the variously stained adolescents' long-

> ing for pure, innocent, secret, own, mental/spiritual. (Rastas, 2005, p. 24.)
>
> *Luonto tuo kuviin pyhyyden kokemuksen ja ilmentää monella tavalla tahrattujen nuorten kaipuuta puhtaaseen, viattomaan, salaiseen, itselle omaan, henkiseen. (Rastas, 2005, p. 24.)*

The urban background of the girls is depicted as an additional lack or deprivation. Savolainen accounts how the Hyvönen's children's home used to have a possibility to use a summerhouse on the countryside, and every year the children's home moved there for the summer.

> The employees consider working in the countryside meaningful, children are happier and more peaceful, the summer vacations construct memories, and the place offers a lot to do and to learn. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 127)
>
> *Hoitajat kokevat työn maalla mielekkääksi, lapset ovat siellä onnellisempia ja rauhallisempia, kesälomat rakentavat muistoja ja paikka sisältää paljon luontevaa tekemistä ja oppimista. (Savolainen, 2005, p. 127)*

This arrangement had to be eventually discontinued because it was too expensive. Consequently, the "children and the adolescents have to kill time in the city the whole summer." [lapset ja nuoret saavat tappaa aikaa kaupungissa koko kesän] (Ibid.)

In the rhetoric of empowerment, the popular visual culture is rendered harmful for children and adolescents. Especially the representations of women in media are perceived as a threat for the well-being of girls and young women. The strategies of representation employed in the project's photographs are supposed to critique or disrupt the sexist and objectifying conventions of popular media. Innocence and purity are posed as an antidote to the "oversexualized" gender representations of commercial visual media (Savolainen, 2005, p. 217; 2008, p. 173).

On one hand, the adolescents are presented as artists, they have the copyrights of their pictures, and their subjectivity is stressed continuously. On the other hand, the language employs rhetorical devices that implicitly preserve the labels and presumptions it is supposed to challenge. Attempts to question any aspects of the project are judged for failing to understand that the pictures should not be evaluated in the same way as artworks in general (Rastas, 2005, p. 24). The critics who have raised questions on the project's stereotypical representations of gender are called "art–discussion–cultivated individuals" [taidekeskustelusivistyneitä ihmisiä] and they are accused of interpreting the images outside of their context. Especially "highly educated women" are considered incapable of understanding that the contrast between the pictures' whole, unbroken realm and, the "ugliness of real life is shocking" (Ibid.). Defending the adolescents in this way only highlights their otherness in the art context.

> (...) we challenge the experienced art audience to read new meanings from a familiar visual language, but we discuss in such a manner, that it is understood by a spectator who is unfamiliar with the art discourse. The picture's clear message of the uniqueness of the adolescent is perceived effortlessly. More impalpable visual approach probably would not have been equally therapeutic for the girls or awakening for the audience. (Rastas, 2005, p. 24)
>
> *(...) haastamme kokenutta taideyleisöä lukemaan tutusta kuvallisesta kielestä uudenlaisia merkityksiä, mutta keskustelemme tavalla, jonka myös taidekeskustelua tuntematon katsoja ymmärtää. Kuvan selkeä viesti nuoren ainutlaatuisuudesta menee perille ilman kommervenkkejä. Vaikeatajuisempi kuvallinen lähestymistapa tuskin olisi ollut tytöille yhtä terapeuttinen saati suurelle yleisölle yhtä herättävä. (Rastas, 2005, p. 24)*

Savolainen (2005) maintains that in the project, the girls "do not participate as welfare adolescents, but as experts of girl-

hood and empowerment" (p. 16). However, the experts of empowerment are not equal enough to be entitled to the co-ownership of the registered trademark of Empowering photography. Neither have the co-authors of the photographs of the Loveliest Girl in the World been granted the award of the Young Photographer of the Year. That is not unconditional equality.

6. Conclusion

I begin this final chapter by recalling the objectives of this thesis. I proceed to discuss the findings from the interpretation in the light of the research problem. I end the chapter with recommendations for future research on disability in the field of art education. In *Introduction*, I state that the prevailing discourses on mental disabilities in Finnish art education are problematic, and maintain that they need to be critically inquired. I perceive the language of empowerment as a part of a bigger conversation, in effect, the well-being discourse. I approach the language of empowerment through a rhetorical analysis based on disability studies problematizations and Foucauldian theory on power and knowledge. The interpretation focuses solely on the rhetorical strategies employed in the language of empowerment; the aim is not to evaluate the therapeutic or pedagogical effectiveness of the method of empowering photography, or to analyze the subjective experiences of the participants of the Loveliest Girl in the World project.

Firstly, I ask *how the disabled subjectivity of the empoweree is represented through the rhetorics of empowerment, as it is employed in the discussion concerning the Loveliest Girl in the World and the method of Empowering Photography; and what implications does this representation pose for the rhetoricity of the empoweree?* The portrayal of the empoweree-subject adheres to stereotypical and dichotomous notions of disability: the empoweree is depicted as wounded, broken, unwhole, while on the other hand she/he is also unique, lovely, and a great personality. This gesture represents the ableist assumption that the disabled individuals need euphemistic expressions of disabilities; and that they need to be constantly reminded about their uniqueness. The rhetoric of empowerment claims to promote an alternative way for representing children with a welfare background, but the rigorous reiteration of the status unintentionally preserves the stigma and its fundamental elements.

The empoweree's rhetoricity is controlled through the use of direct quotations that supposedly preserve the "authenticity" of the empoweree's voice. This strategy induces a division between the voice of the empoweree and the voices of the empowerer and the authors cited in the literature. The practice is in conflict with the principle of maintaining equality between the rhetors, which is explicitly articulated in the rhetoric.

The language of empowerment presents certain qualities as essential and universal for humanity; goodness, loveliness, and innocence are qualities that are frequently deployed in the portrayal of the empoweree. This unproblematized humanist perspective inevitably imposes limitations on what the rhetoric allows the empoweree-subject to be.

Secondly, I am interested in how the subjectivity of the empowerer, in turn, is represented through the rhetorics. The empowerer-subject is not explicitly discussed as extensively as the empoweree-subject, but the qualities that are vital for becoming an empowerer are articulated. The empowerer must go through a personal process of empowerment before being able to help others to empower. Therefore, the empowerer is always an empoweree as well. The empowerer must be aware of the power she/he possesses, and she/he has to be willing to reveal the implications of power to the empoweree, and finally remove the power altogether.

The empowerer's rhetoricity differs clearly from that of the empoweree: the empowerer's voice is calm, organized, and rational, while the empoweree's rhetoricity is structured through brief, unedited quotes. The rhetoric requires that the empowerer acknowledges and respects the subjectivity of the empoweree. This is posed as a fundamental requirement for the functioning of empowerment. However, the empowerer is allowed to ignore the principle of subjectivity on special occasions: for example, when she/he knows better what the empoweree truly needs.

Finally, what kinds of implications of disability emerge in the relation between the empoweree and the empowerer? The empowerment rhetoric mainly—but not completely—avoids using disability vocabulary, but is nevertheless deeply embedded in patronizing and objectifying disability discourses. Empowerment is based upon the notions of repairing and healing, which are characteristic to discourses on therapy. In addition, the language of empowerment employs a problematic rhetorical practice: the use of disability, especially blindness, as a metaphor for powerlessness. The use of disability metaphors is considered highly offensive by disability scholars because of its portrayal of disability as a lack, defect, and personal tragedy. The repetition of the therapeutic nature of empowerment unavoidably endows the empoweree with the status of a patient—and positions the empowerment rhetoric within the confines of the functional–limitations model of disability.

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The interpretation of the data in this thesis indicates that the discourses on well-being and empowerment within art education need further research. The empowerment rhetoric evidently embodies certain ableist presumptions and notions, and even though it does not explicitly claim to discuss mental disabilitites, it nevertheless informs our understanding of mental disabilities and their status within art education.

Art education's approaches to mental disability need to be deconstructed and reoriented according to the problematizations posed by critical disability studies. This perspective enables the necessary revision of the dominant discourses on mental disability within art education, which are mainly based on the languages of art therapy and special education.

The conventional view on participation of the disabled individuals within a professional community presumes that the individuals can contribute to the despite of his/her disability.

I suggest, drawing from Foucault and Price, that art education would benefit from our contribution, not despite, but precisely because of our disability.

> The world believes that madness can be measured, and justified by means of psychology, and yet it must justify *itself* when confronted by madness, (...) (Foucault, 2006, p. 538; emphasis added).

Price argues that instead of asserting that the mentally disabled individuals can measure up to the requirements of higher education, the academia needs to "measure up to us" (Price, 2011, p. 9). In the context of art education, this could mean abandoning the dominant renderings of disability as a loss and tragedy, and moving the emphasis from the perspectives of non-disabled professionals to the first-hand experiences, accounts, and narratives by mentally disabled individuals.

The ritual of confinement has not disappeared from our culture: the individuals with mental disabilities remain confined through discourses (Eisenhauer, 2009, p. 10). The exclusion and muting of the mentally disabled subject is evident also in the field of art education in Finland. What we need to do is to start talking back to the discourses that teach us to be silent (Eisenhauer, 2012, p. 8).

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