

1. This film is quite intriguing as you have delved into the one of the prestige schools in the world. What triggered you the most?
2. What does 'veritas' mean? How does that term relate to your film?
3. In your film, you showed that Harvard has been a training ground for the elite and maintaining close ties with the U.S. government. Can you tell us more about that?
4. Many world's leaders have graduated from Harvard, including Bill Gates and Barak Obama. How does Harvard affect the globe politically and economically?
5. What are the challenges you encountered while making this film? How did you overcome?
6. As you know, Seoul National University has high prestige in Korea. How can you relate your discovery from Harvard to SNU?
7. How did you feel when you were named Best Documentary Film Director at the 2011 New York International Film Festival?

1. People admire HARVARD. However in your film a dark face appears. Could you please tell us the reasons for making this film?

I'm Korean and ever since the US army arrived in South Korea in 1945, my country's destiny has always depended on the US interests. For instance, in 1980, when we had a people's uprising in Gwangju (my hometown), people fought courageously against the military dictator to achieve democracy. At that time, the US national security elite supported the dictator Chun du-hwan and gave a green light to suppress the uprising by permitting transferring South Korean paratroopers to Gwangju. So it is natural interest for me to try to understand American ruling elites. Who are these people? Where do they come from? I found my answer at Harvard. In 2005, I attended Harvard Summer School to study English and had opportunity to participate in many events there. Based on my observations, I soon realized that it is a center of American Imperialism.

However, people see Harvard just as a prestigious university and that might be true. But what is not true is that people see it as a neutral place because it is an educational institute. Harvard has been deeply involved in formulating state policy and foreign affairs. They have produced some of worst national security advisors like McGeorge Bundy, Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brezinski and others. But interestingly, Harvard has a fairly progressive public image and they are also very proud of their history. I found this contradiction very intriguing. It is a similar phenomenon people all around the world praise America as a country for freedom and democracy even though they have caused so many wars and military interventions. I thought there is some similarity between Harvard and America and was curious how this myth or illusion has formed. I believe that by unveiling Harvard's true character, we will be able to see and understand the essence of the US.

2. In the 1920's we see the role of Harvard students as strike breakers. Could you give some more details for the readers of our festival journal?

In the film, I mentioned two events: the Lawrence Strike in 1912 and the Boston Police Strike in 1919. The Lawrence strike was one of the great textile strikes in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. It was a remarkable strike for the cooperation among immigrant workers and for the role of women. Lawrence textile workers were working under terrible condition with low wages and many of them were women or children. It is said that one third of the men and women died before the age 25. The workers started to strike and it was called "Bread and Roses," <sup>named after</sup> a poem written by James Oppenheim. As the strike continued, the Massachusetts government brought in militia, and Harvard sent students there to mobilize under the motto "Defend your class!" Harvard College students were even given exam credits if they volunteered to serve with militia. It is one clear event that shows Harvard's true character. At that time, the President of Harvard was Abbott Lawrence Lowell, from a Boston Brahman family that attended Harvard generation after generation. His relative Francis Cabot Lowell was a successful businessman for whom the city of Lowell, another textile city near Lawrence, is

named. So it was not surprising that Harvard cooperated with the mill owners in a very friendly manner.

The Boston Police Strike was another similar event. The police went on strike to achieve their trade union and wage improvement. The ruling class didn't like it. President Lowell encouraged students to join a temporary police force and 144 students enlisted as a special force to maintain law and order. Other records reported that about 200 Harvard athletes and businessmen stepped in. According to a union organizer, "Harvard students marched across the Massachusetts Avenue Bridge" and "They helped break the strike essentially."

If you wonder why a university would provide strike breakers, look at this way. Harvard is a prestigious university but at the same time, it is the second largest employer in Boston area. As an employer, Harvard's reputation is not so impressive. In fact, it is known for the most sophisticated anti-union campaign and has never given anything without a fight. That is a key point to understand the real Harvard.

3. Rich, white and male. Three keywords for describing Harvard; we see them in your film. What should we understand from today's Harvard?

I think it is important to understand the roots of Harvard as a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant (WASP) institution. This explains everything. The college was originally a place to train Puritan ministers and it still holds its values. It's the same in America. It looks like a free country but if you look at the power stream, it is composed of a very narrow spectrum of people. Think about how President George Bush justified Iraq War as god's mission. Don't forget that Harvard was a college where the rich sent their kids to be the next leader. Let's look at the Harvard Corporation, the university's top decision body. It is the oldest corporation in the Western hemisphere and is comprised of only seven people including a president and treasurer. It is a self-perpetuating body and all meetings are held in secret. Until the 1980s, members had been all white males. After 350 years, they finally expanded to 13 because of heavy criticism of Harvard Corporation but it is still very anti-democratic, which reveals Harvard's true character.

Next, about Harvard's racism, we can look at two categories: Harvard's discrimination toward people of color and Harvard scholars' efforts to promote white superiority under the name of science. The latter part wasn't only Harvard professors but scholars in general at that time, but as the most important university in the US, Harvard professors were in the forefront of spreading American eugenics. Prof. Richard Levins explains this phenomenon as an action of class defense to justify slavery by using racist arguments. What is not known is how Nazi scholars got racist ideas from American scientists.

As I described in my documentary, Harvard has been a place for males. It was only in 19<sup>99</sup> that Harvard officially became co-educational by merging with Radcliffe. Until the 1960s, women couldn't attend Harvard directly and before World War 2, they were not allowed to enter into Harvard classrooms. Charles Eliot, who was the president of Harvard for 40 years (1869-1909), made clear

that Harvard wouldn't receive women. He said that "The world knows next to nothing about the natural mental capacities of the female sex." Many women fought to achieve their right to be educated, but the number of female faculty members is still extremely small.

Today, Harvard is one of the most cosmopolitan universities in the world. Women are more than 50% of the student body and one third of students are people of color. It is now more focused on its global influence as they produced international leaders all around the world. For instance, many presidents in Latin America have been graduates of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. Today's Harvard seems less focused in sex or color but more eager to achieve its global domination.

4. Would it be possible for you to share a memory or a moment from the shooting of your film with our readers?

I made this documentary without any outside funding. My partner, who is an American professor and longtime activist, supported it. Anyway, I had to do most of the work by myself: research, outlining, filming, editing, writing, translation, etc. When I conducted interviews, people often asked me if I was alone. Then I said, "Yes. I'm a real independent film maker!" Then they laughed at me and became more supportive. It took more than a year to finish this documentary and it was painstaking yet fun. When I started, I wasn't even sure if I could finish it. Also, Harvard is tough place to film. So many things are so-called "exclusive" where they wouldn't allow me to film. Sometimes I was stopped by guards or officers. I'm not an American and didn't want to get into trouble. But I would go back another time. I also got a lot of help from my partner and other people who were thrilled about this project.

Our Questions on labor film fest

1. What do you think about the labor film fest? Could you please tell us some about the labor film fest in your country?

I think labor film is extremely important. I used to organize the Human Rights Film Festival in Gwangju, my home town where the uprising occurred in 1980. The town is often called a center of social movements in South Korea. So, I have screened many labor films there. South Korea has an outstanding workers' movement history and major unions usually have their own media teams. Through the media team, they often record their struggle and share with outside as well. We also have the Seoul International Labor Film and Video Festival run by Labor News Production (<http://www.lnp89.org/xel/>) since 1997. I haven't followed their recent activity, but one thing is clear, ~~that~~ the labor movement is under tremendous attack after very right wing President Lee Myong-back took office in 2008. The South Korean government stopped supporting both Seoul International Labor Film and Video Festival and Seoul Human Rights Film Festival since 2008.

2. Do you think that labourers and the suppressed ones are represented enough in the movies?

It is obvious that the movies or media don't show enough about the real lives of real people. At the Left Forum in New York City this year, one panelist joked that "the only reason I watch movies is because it is so unreal." Capitalism hides production behind the screen. Instead it is focused on consumption and turned everyone into consumer. Just look at American TV shows or Hollywood movies. It is all about fabulous fashion, police struggles, secret agents, actions, romance, or patriotism. It doesn't show the real struggle happening in our everyday lives. Even if someone makes more realistic one, it is very difficult to have screenings because the major film festivals or theatre would reject it. That's why the labor film festival is very important.

3. In the labor film fest we see that the directors do not only focus on working class in the classical manner such as mining industry or big factory workers. In your opinion, to what extent and in which varieties should a director consider "labor" while aiming labor film festivals.

Today the definition of "labor" is so broad. We should define it more flexibly. The word "labor" doesn't apply to just mine workers or the auto industry anymore. It is also true that even within the working class, the gaps can be huge. Neoliberalism has changed many aspect of "labor" or "labor movement." I don't think the labor film festival should just stick with labor films. For example, it could extend to human rights as labor's rights are often related to basic human rights. What about education or discrimination between male and female workers? These <sup>should be</sup> are all included as labor films.

I also think we should look at more analytical films rather than just focusing on individual event. For instance, today, there is a serious conflict between full-time workers and part-time workers in South Korea, a struggle that has deep impact to weaken labor movement. It is rather intentional and what we need are analytical attempts to understand this phenomenon as a whole. We are witnessing a very critical moment in history: the crisis of Capitalism. As the "Arab Spring" continued with the "Occupy" movement and is spreading to the whole world, I can predict there will be more films about social movements produced, and I wish to encounter these films at labor film festivals as well.