

## INTRODUCTION

### *An Ethos of Visual Pedagogy*

The second half of the twentieth century was marked by the global expansion of communications media and a burgeoning visual culture, radically altering the dissemination and production of information and knowledge. Education, widely espoused as the principal instrument of social change, was fundamentally challenged and transfigured by this process. Visual media culture was perceived as a threat to literacy, but also touted as a potentially powerful tool for educators. Behind these variously phobic and euphoric reactions to communications technology was an increasingly undeniable apprehension that any stable conception of literacy was being eroded.

In a 1975 world conference organized by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization), one of the central projects was the evaluation of recent literacy campaigns throughout the developing world. According to UNESCO's report, the success of these literacy campaigns related directly to the revolutionary transformations of the societies in which the campaigns took place.<sup>1</sup> In 1987, reflecting on his literacy work in postliberation Guinea-Bissau, where thirty languages and multiple discourses vied in a period of intensive global-

ization, Brazilian theorist of education Paulo Freire commented on the extraordinary role that “reading the world” played in various countries’ reinvention of their educational and social systems.<sup>2</sup> Though no less true, the focus on language and literacy as the chief entities measured to chart progress in countries undergoing radical societal changes in the postwar period overlooks a crucial reality of that era.

To focus exclusively on language literacy and speech is to overlook the visual and graphic means of knowledge production and reproduction that played a major role in strategies of resistance and social transformation. Media and visual culture were extraordinary forces in contexts where education—broadly construed as a set of means of societal transformation—came under the influence of the global circulation of information and the means of knowledge and meaning production. The period in which Freire wrote was rife with projects devoted to experimentation in the use of new media and visual culture in the very sorts of contexts that concerned him: Third World cultures, colonized and post-colonial countries, and oppressed populations in the First World. The publication of Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* in 1970 spawned three decades of scholarship in education built on the premise that pedagogy is a form of cultural politics, not a science of knowledge transmission. It is by now a commonplace of education theory that pedagogy as cultural politics exists beyond the confines of classrooms and spaces where education is the explicit agenda. But today there is still only a limited understanding of the place of visual culture, and especially visual media culture.

*Visual Pedagogy: Media Cultures in and beyond the Classroom* steps into a breach in our understanding about the role of the visual and media in the broad cultures of education and pedagogy during the late twentieth century. The 1980s and 1990s saw an explosion of work in critical and feminist pedagogy—writings that theorized the class, gender, race, and cultural politics of schooling in light of previously underconsidered factors such as students’ life experience and popular cultural forms, including television and new media. The explicitly pedagogical function of popular media in the daily lives of students became an object of particular focus in these writings, which were strongly influenced by cultural studies. But this work most forcefully put forth critiques of media, seeing the media as means of social indoctrination and inculcation into Western capitalist models of knowledge and citizenship. Witness the

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technophobic proclamation of founding critical pedagogy theorist Peter McLaren, writing in 1999:

Communications networks—the electronic servo-mechanisms of the state—with their propulsions and fluxes of information that have grown apace with capitalism, make this hegemony not only a tenebrous possibility but also an inevitability as they ideologically secure forms of exploitation so furious that every vulnerability of the masses is seized and made over into a crisis.<sup>3</sup>

*Visual Pedagogy* takes as its starting point a blind spot, perhaps even a bias, in critical pedagogy that dates back to Freire's foundational work and extends forward into the body of work known as critical pedagogy that was produced in the last three decades of the twentieth century. This blind spot is the place of the art-media-technology nexus in the politics of pedagogy. The bias is that the visual is a more base, even primitive, and also untrustworthy form of knowledge transmission and production—a modality used by dominant forces to seduce naive populations into compliance. Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* put forth the argument that to acquire literacy is not simply to learn the techniques of reading and writing but to gain the ability to think critically and to use language—in the forms of reading, writing, and speech—as politicized action. Freire first formulated this agenda in a context of left agrarian reform, so his work emphasized speech and (secondarily) writing as modes of politicized action. But he wrote during a period when technologies of the word were being transformed through new media forms such as television and computers in public education and other public spheres of teaching and learning. These media supplemented the hallowed forms of the embodied and written word with electronic and digital image and text. Whereas embodied speech, for Freire, carried the aura of authenticity, electronic and digital image and text were viewed by his followers as seductive techniques of institutional and bureaucratic control. The visual media were disparaged for their perceived status, on the one hand, as “primitive” or culturally indigenous forms of communication, and, on the other, as the pedagogical tools of global capitalism.

The early transformation toward visual and media pedagogies globally and across areas beyond education remains relatively undertheorized in critical pedagogy, except with guarded interest. *Visual Pedagogy* zeroes in on this blind spot—the visual technologies of pedagogy—to

provide it with a history and a future. It corrects the bias of critical pedagogy by acknowledging those early instances where a pedagogical use of media and visual education functioned more complexly than either an oppressive tool of the state or a revolutionary technique of the oppressed.

The transition from voice and writing to media transmission and a visual logic of knowledge production occurred not only in elite Western institutions but also in the Third World settings that were the basis for Freire's early ideas about pedagogy. It was in the latter settings that new media became a venue for the long arm of global benevolence in education. From the late 1950s through the 1970s, the Third World was tapped as a testing ground for the educational-technology systems that would transform educational philosophy and practice in U.S. schools and institutions in the 1980s and 1990s. With the introduction of computers, television, and global communications networks in the postwar period, the technologies of language literacy, tacitly understood by Freire to be reading and writing pure and simple, underwent a transformation that was far from merely formal. New media technologies (and by *new* I mean those that became ubiquitous following the Second World War, including television and computers) transformed what it meant to speak, to read, to write, and to think—and hence to know and to have agency. Visual and media forms came to be commonplace in producing and circulating knowledge not only by and in the interests of the West but also by and for the revolutionary, marginalized, and resisting cultures that were the focus of Freire's attention.

It was not until the late 1980s that Freire would focus on media technology, with the opening of the Central Laboratory for Educational Informatics and the launching of a program to set up computers in public schools of São Paulo, Brazil, during the years that Freire led the Bureau of Education (between 1989 and 1991). Yet Brazil's innovative television network TV Globo had played a key role years earlier in overthrowing the dictatorship—during the very years that Freire wrote his influential first book. (The pedagogical function of TV Globo is documented in chapter 7.)

The generation of writers who took up Freire's work saw a direct application for his theories about the Third World at home in the urban public schools of the United States. Peter McLaren, Michael Apple, Henry Giroux, Ira Schor, and David Trend, among others, saw the ap-

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plicability of Freire's theories of oppression and empowerment in these locales, and they used his work to introduce an advocacy model of critical pedagogy into education. David Trend, more than any of these authors, has noted the role of media technology in furthering left critical pedagogy within and beyond schools. He describes experiments with media technology in the U.S. public schools of the 1970s as a brief period of liberal formalism, a period when the structure of learning was emphasized over culturally specific content, downplaying differences of race, class, and gender.<sup>4</sup> Hands-on work with media technology, he suggests, made it possible for students to understand and engage in the technological means of knowledge production and reproduction. But in the 1980s, Trend explains, the period when students engaged in the means of production was short-lived. The Reagan administration's policies and budget cuts resulted in a climate where hands-on student participation in educational media process and production was reduced to simple classroom media viewing.

The research that supports *Visual Pedagogy* complicates and challenges Trend's account of this shift, taking the story back to the 1950s and forward to the digital revolution of the 1990s. Some of the U.S. schools where hands-on media systems were piloted were test sites for the same sorts of media education systems that had already been tried in more distant sites such as American Samoa. In the latter sorts of places, the goal was to streamline and cost-cut the delivery of education, and in some instances to reduce discourse to the global common denominator of images, not to level difference through students' hands-on knowledge production. The visual and technology-heavy pedagogy that informed these experiments strove for uniformity and ease of information delivery, aiming as well to circumvent the necessity for native teachers and human interaction in the process of preparing subjects for a world in information and culture that was newly global.

In this era of globalization, these Third World media education experiments were both testing ground for, and counterpart to, similar experiments in U.S. public schools populated by poor, immigrant, and African American student bodies. This is not to say that the U.S. foundations and government entities that influenced education policy and practice globally saw these two populations as alike; rather, they saw them as posing similar problems in their overall economy of forging a global economy of pedagogy. The desire for cost-efficient ways to edu-

cate large numbers of people for the benefit of serving larger and more diverse populations in a globalizing economy was one factor that motivated the testing of educational media locally and at a distance. This was true not only in schools but in public institutions such as museums, where the mission to educate had become an explicit agenda. Another view that held sway was that language difference and illiteracy could be surmounted using graphic and visual symbols to introduce “more complex” discursive forms. This concept was supported by Jean Piaget’s popular theories of child psychology, which considered symbolic language acquisition as a more primitive, basic precursor to the complexities of learning written language. This point is explained at length in chapter 6 that is not about education per se but about the pedagogical mission of African colonial and postcolonial cinema. What Third World and marginalized cultures “at home” shared in common, then, according to education funders and policy makers, was their “primitive” relationship to the world of the symbolic. One of the interventions *Visual Pedagogy* will make in later chapters is to challenge the belief that the visual occupies a lower level of knowledge than writing. This view held sway not only in mainstream educational policies at midcentury but also in the theories of media in education (like McLaren’s, quoted earlier) that condemn visual media as the tools of capitalist seduction.

Even if we were to focus on the U.S. context alone, it is not clear that leveling difference is what the 1970s experiments with learning technologies in U.S. schools were all about. We need to look not only at the training of students to use media systems but also at the influx of technologies designed to streamline and cost-cut in education delivery. The philosophy of the electronic classroom intersects complexly with the philosophy of hands-on media production training. As Ira Shor explains, a pedagogical philosophy of vocationalism under the name of career education blossomed in the U.S. public school system in the early 1970s.<sup>5</sup> Hands-on experience with media was one of the career skills worth cultivating in public school workforce training. Technological know-how did not replace book learning. Rather, it was a class-based register of knowledge that ran beneath the academic track. The liberal view of media production’s potential to transform the politics of difference in schools forwarded by David Trend comes up against the class, gender, and race biases inherent in both the “vo-tech” imperative and the idea of the television as a cost-effective teacher substitute. The value of

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both systems for training a global workforce was not lost on educators involved in transforming education in Third World settings.<sup>6</sup>

I do not mean to downplay the radical potential of programs that engage students in the visual, the popular, or the technical means of media production. *Visual Pedagogy* takes a strong advocacy position throughout regarding the activist and even revolutionary potential of technical hands-on practice in classrooms. I write as a media educator who was involved in public education reform and projects that encouraged marginalized students to gain agency within their communities through hands-on media production. I do, however, want to complicate the politics of agency implicit in much left critical pedagogy, as well as to challenge the overarching suspicion of engagement with popular media and mainstream institutions that runs throughout that body of work. The agency and voice gained through the labor of challenging the “culture of silence” (Freire’s term) in education is always articulated through institutions and the technologies they sponsor and use. The pedagogical uses of media described here demonstrate the degree to which engagement in media technology and its institutions is not a choice but an inevitability of life in a late-twentieth-century culture shaped by an ethos of the visual and of media pedagogy.

No situation better illustrates the conditions of the culture of media pedagogy in which this book was written than the digital transformation of schools in the 1990s. During that decade, schools became only one of numerous institutional sites where networked computers were introduced, ostensibly to democratize information and knowledge for the broad U.S. populace. Schools are the focus in the discussion that follows, but they are paradigmatic of the media pedagogy mind-set that escalated in public cultures of the late twentieth century. If the link between technological and pedagogical intervention was suddenly and dramatically instilled in the national political imagination at the height of the Cold War, it was more thoroughly transformed into a cultural imperative over the decades that followed. When digital technology emerged at the center of the national culture and economy in the 1990s, it was almost unquestioned that digital media would be central to pedagogy, and that pedagogy would be the key to the potential of a new democratic media form that would go beyond education proper. U.S. president Bill Clinton made this assertion in 1996, at the height of a much publicized wave of attention to the promise of digital and computer media in the

classroom and beyond: “We know, purely and simply, that every single child must have access to a computer, must understand it, must have access to good software and good teachers and to the Internet, so that every person will have the opportunity to make the most of his or her own life.”<sup>7</sup>

The idea that computer access is every U.S. schoolchild’s right—that this is something “we know, purely and simply”—came into its own in the 1990s. By the end of the decade, media and communications technology had become ubiquitous in classrooms across the United States. Debates shifted from the question of whether computer and audiovisual technology belonged in educational settings to how it should be used. Indeed, the idea of computer access as every citizen’s right in a democratic society was a motif that characterized not only the Clinton administration but also the platforms of countless politicians and educators right and left of Clinton, including Freire during his leadership of São Paulo’s Bureau of Education. The U.S. call for a computer on every schoolchild’s desk is rooted in a vision of the United States as world leader in an information-based global economy. But it is a call that issued from the smallest and most vulnerable of nations as well, representing for them a basic condition of survival in a global economy. This vision finds its paradigmatic expression in schooling but extends beyond education to stand for new visions of society, global and local. Witness the U.S. Education Department’s 1996 report “Getting America’s Students Ready for the 21st Century: Meeting the Technology Literacy Challenge”: “Computers are the ‘new basic’ of American education, and the Internet is the blackboard of the future. . . . If we help all of our children to become technologically literate, we will give a generation of young people the skills they need to enter this new knowledge- and information-driven economy.”<sup>8</sup>

In the 1990s, information technology was transformed from a useful resource to the key to literacy and, indeed, to success in the “knowledge- and information-driven economy” of the twenty-first century. The Internet replaced the blackboard as the symbol of the schoolchild’s mind as virtual tabula rasa waiting to be inscribed with the knowledge needed to survive in the world of the future. In the same year that this Education Department report was released, a national poll reported that “U.S. teachers ranked computer skills and media technology as more ‘essential’ than the study of European history, biology, chemistry, and physics;



than dealing with social problems such as drugs and family breakdown; than learning practical job skills; and than reading modern American writers such as Steinbeck and Hemingway or classic ones such as Plato and Shakespeare.”<sup>9</sup>

This embrace of new media technology as the heart of the educational system coincided with the penetration of personal computers and the Internet into all corners of everyday life and commerce. It is easy to see that the late 1980s and 1990s were a watershed period in the incorporation of new media technology as an essential element not only of education but also of all sectors of everyday life for the upper- and middle-class populations of the United States. Education played a pivotal role in this process of making computer technology ubiquitous in everyday life and symbolic of that cornerstone of cultural survival, literacy. Certainly many of the parents of the upper- and middle-class children who used computers at school were themselves simultaneously encountering computers and the Internet at work. But children raised on video and home computer games were crucial participants in spreading the computer from facilitator of mundane everyday transactions and mindless home recreation to core educational and communications technology. Their school experiences led them to carry the skills and enthusiasm about the “enriching” aspects of living life on the screen and on-line into the private space of the home, affording home computers for children a degree of acceptability they had not previously held. The incorporation of computers into mainstream education unlinked the technology’s image relative to youth from the mindless repetition and violence that was the received view of video game systems such as Nintendo. The question was no longer whether children should own or use a computer but how their (necessary) encounters with computers should be regulated. Networked computers, by the century’s end, had become a ubiquitous feature of the image of the good life of middle- and upper-class American families.

The impact of these transformations was not limited to middle- and upper-income populations. As Clinton’s assertion suggests, in the 1990s computer access was a goal—indeed, a symbol—of the mission to educate the broader U.S. public, to prepare all citizens for life in the twenty-first century. Computers and the Internet were introduced to the lives of the poor and working classes through initiatives to make computer use commonplace in public schools, libraries, and museums—institutions shaped by a mission to educate the broad public. Children attending

public schools transmitted the idea of the computer as symbol of learning and literacy to their parents, whose experiences with these technologies were more likely to have occurred through depersonalized forms like bank machines and the supermarket checkout line. In the mid-1990s, computer information systems and the Internet were introduced to public libraries, community centers, and even clinics, where video and computer kiosks were set up under the auspices of the consumer self-health initiative, which was an outgrowth of the media education ethos of the decade. Previously employees of the government, university, and business sectors and those who could afford home networked computers had access to the personal side of computer use, even if only through illicit work-time activities. Subsidized institutional access, through plans such as the National Information Infrastructure, linked the poor and working classes to the personal side of computer use.

The media technology ethos that characterized the last decade of the twentieth century was not as sudden or new as it may appear. This book traces some of the events and circumstances in the media and education sectors that led up to and made possible these transformations. In the late 1950s and 1960s, television was a major feature in discussions about the classroom of the future. The era of Sputnik, space technology, computer experimentation, and broadcast television brought us an array of experiments in which media technology was introduced as a pedagogical tool in classrooms across the United States and its postwar protectorates. During this period, proponents of media education saw a flip side to the image of television as mindless mass entertainment. Television held the potential to usher in a new sort of pedagogy and cultural knowledge that would be in keeping with a future in which technology would be integral to work and life for citizens of the world leader in democracy. The roots of the information-technology-democracy nexus so apparent in Clinton's technology access platform can be found in this earlier way of thinking about television's potential. During the early years of the medium's success as a consumer technology and its incorporation into the American home, television was at the center of a discourse that made media literacy a core component of postwar literacy and knowledge. The massification of education and cultural survival in an era of globalization and technological transformation and connectivity necessitated experiments with new communications technologies, including television, in institutions where public education was mandated.

This book will trace an ethos of media pedagogy in and beyond schools after the Second World War. I will not, however, make the claim that media education originated with media technologies that rose up during this period—broadcast television and computer technology. In tracing the roots of media education, we could easily look back to the origins of the printing press. Pictorial and graphic illustrations in books can be cited as part of a history of media education. Motion picture films were used as educational tools before the rise of television; there is abundant evidence of an explicit, organized media education movement that gave rise to the educational film markets that existed in the United States and Europe well before the Second World War. Professional discussions took place through a transnational society devoted to film education that began publishing its own journal in the 1930s. One could argue that media education's origins coincide with the cinema itself, with the *actualité* films of the mid-1890s. Certainly educational films were a feature of European and American public classrooms well before classrooms were equipped with televisions or computers. Film has been a crucial pedagogical tool in the political and cultural reeducation of illiterate peoples in countries undergoing political revolutions and cultural transformations.

The chapters of *Visual Pedagogy* are grouped in two parts. Part 1 is generally concerned with projects occurring in, or closely linked to, school settings. Part 2 takes as its focus the pedagogical techniques and strategies of media projects in sites outside of formal educational institutions. I have made an attempt to maintain a historical chronology in ordering my examples, but the theoretical orientation of this division has led to some inevitable exceptions. It is important to note that although this book addresses work in film, television, video, and computer-based media, I do not propose a close link between shifts in media and the developments I am considering. As history has shown, the advent of newer electronic media doesn't merely displace and preempt the continued use of older media such as film or radio.

Chapter 1 considers an educational television project carried out by the U.S. government in the South Pacific territory of American Samoa from the early 1960s to the early 1970s, and its relationship to the broader educational television movement engineered by the Ford Foundation on the U.S. mainland. The Samoa educational television initiative is an important but underconsidered moment in the history not only of

education but also of broadcast television. It stands as a striking example of government and private-sector collaboration on a project that could be deemed paternalistic media education imperialism. The project also provided the model for later educational public television initiatives by the U.S. cable and broadcast industries (e.g., Educational Television, or ETV; Instructional Television, or ITV; and Networked Educational Television, or NET). The Samoa project, within the history of the Ford Foundation's broader educational television initiatives on the mainland, reveals the crucial connections among education, media, and state power in the postwar period.

The early educational television initiatives led by the Ford Foundation were part of its efforts to foster greater federal involvement in public education. Their ETV projects were an attempt to use technology to alleviate what educators, the government, and the public perceived as a postwar crisis in education—a crisis that was blamed for U.S. inadequacy in the global race for technological, and thus military, superiority during the Cold War. Motivated by this Cold War ideology, the Ford Foundation's vision of television as a tool for reducing school staff needs and standardizing curricula drove the foundation to play a central role in the battle for federal regulation of broadcast television, culminating in the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967.

Educational television became implicated in social regulation and the centralization of authority through overtly pedagogical techniques exercised beyond the boundaries of the educational institution proper. Although the Ford Foundation's efforts to apply media technology to education were largely geared toward increasing efficiency, an indirect outcome was that pedagogical techniques were transported into the public sphere as educational programming was broadcast not only in schools but in public and domestic spaces. Sites previously out of reach of the pedagogical arm of the state (the home, the community center) were transformed into virtual classrooms. Hence the discussion of the Ford Foundation's media education projects is crucial to understanding the pervasive role of media pedagogy beyond schools.

The chapter's main argument is that testing televisual education projects in "remote" sites such as Samoa was crucial to instituting media education as a viable pedagogical approach on the U.S. mainland. Moreover, federal involvement in education policy and federal regulation of the media were parallel developments driven by the country's rapidly

changing role in the global economy after the Second World War. These two developments were increasingly harnessed to each other through the intersecting interests of social and economic bodies, including private foundations and government entities. Examining the Samoa project provides insight into how pedagogical authority became central to shifting relationships of power within an increasingly technological and global society.

Chapter 2 examines the place of mass, popular, and subcultural visual media in the classroom. I begin with a review of the extensive literature critiquing popular culture, beginning with the legacy of the Frankfurt School in theories of pedagogy and media literacy. I then turn to more recent theories that propose that popular media is a legitimate source of knowledge and culture, and that students make productive use of popular media texts in their social formation. Finally, I consider whether these latter approaches do in fact provide an adequate model for challenging hierarchies of pedagogical authority. I ultimately suggest that these approaches, though important, provide limited potential for intervention in conventional models of pedagogical authority. The missing link in these approaches is a way of positioning and understanding the student as media producer or author. Media production is an important means of generating student engagement in questions of agency, authority, and knowledge production, and the primary aim here is to advocate for a particular pedagogical approach that maximizes the potential of student media production to address issues of gender, sexuality, and national and cultural identity. Its arguments draw on Stuart Hall's critical observation that cultural identity is a productive and political process equally about imagined futures and imagined pasts—a process that is severely limited when classroom discourse is confined to mainstream broadcast media or media texts that fall within the academic canon.

Chapter 2 thus aims to expand the debates about media pedagogy to include three intersecting projects. The first is to acknowledge the importance of teaching techniques of media analysis in schools. The second is to emphasize the value of popular and subcultural (locally produced, alternative) media in the classroom. The third is to promote the introduction of students to techniques of media production. Central to this chapter is a consideration of the relationship of this overall agenda to the history and development of culturally diverse and inclusive curricula. It advances a theory of media pedagogy that shows the crucial links be-

tween a specifically visual pedagogy and the challenge to conventional relations of pedagogical authority in and beyond the classroom.

The latter part of chapter 2 considers the work of a variety of alternative educational media projects set up in and for schools, including the Educational Video Center (New York City), Rise and Shine Productions (New York City), Strategies for Media Literacy (San Francisco), and the Community Television Network (Chicago). These institutions participate in a highly productive institutional border crossing with schools, helping to institute new media pedagogies—a point that is central to the particular cases examined in the next two chapters.

Chapter 3 considers media productions by HIV/AIDS advocacy and social service agencies during the early 1990s. In a sense, these are case studies extending the arguments made in the previous chapter. The focus is videotapes intended for use in the New York City Board of Education's "Children of the Rainbow Curriculum." This was a set of guidelines for creating diverse and inclusive multicultural grade school curricula that included, among other things, safer-sex education guidelines. Proposed in the early 1990s, the Rainbow Curriculum was hotly debated and eventually shelved. I consider how video production and distribution worked with this set of guidelines and helped progressive educators negotiate relationships across institutional borders. These videos brought together like-minded independent media producers, health care service providers, students, educators, and activists in powerful alliances. Like the previous chapter, chapter 3 considers the ways that independent media organizations engage with young people and youth culture at the grassroots level, strategically working with schools to reach youth audiences at their own levels—a theme that will be developed more extensively in chapter 4.

The conflict over the Rainbow Curriculum provides the basis for my consideration of disparate forms of community media intervention in complex pedagogical struggles. Effective pedagogical media strategies must be formulated in relation to particular institutional discourses. In this instance, though, pedagogy is at the center of an extremely broad public debate about authority (over, in this case, children's sexuality and lives). The public crisis about curriculum that ensued from the Rainbow documents occurred because the community recognized that pedagogy is, in the case of sexuality, so clearly also in the hands of authorities who operate outside the school and the family—health educators, commu-

nity organizers, activists, and so forth. This chapter thus drives home the point, made throughout this book, that the dispersion of pedagogical authority is not always such a bad thing—that is, pedagogical authority can be deployed from a range of social positions to accomplish a range of effects.

In chapter 4, I expand on the discussion about the conjuncture of participatory or peer education and new media technologies in progressive education by analyzing educational video projects and computer programs based on the peer education model. The range of examples extends from in-school peer education participatory video projects, such as those described in chapters 2 and 3, to computer interactives produced by and for youth through nonprofit organizations working in conjunction with, or through funding from, federal, state, and municipal government agencies. These agencies include boards of education and health and welfare entities. I conclude by discussing educational computer programs designed for communities outside the limits of schools, to demonstrate the impact of the peer education model beyond the education system and into other areas, including public health and social welfare.

I continue to expand on the argument in earlier chapters that alternative work with new media in education cannot take place outside institutional boundaries. This work is ideally suited in organizations that exploit their marginal or ambiguous relationship to entities such as schools, government programs, and official education channels. The projects described here exploit the contradictions among their various funders, sponsors, and institutional frameworks, evading oversight and long-held policies in the process. This situation harks back to the discussion in chapter 1 about the foundation of an ambiguous relationship among government, schools, and educational entities—a relationship that has become typical of education broadly conceived in the late twentieth century. Such situations often enable visual media to play a therapeutic role in the classroom, allowing students to work through issues (sex, drugs, violence) more often elided from the curriculum.

Chapter 4 scrutinizes utopian concepts of democratizing knowledge through new media technologies by launching a critical dialogue about the increasingly pervasive presence of instructional technologies in the broader culture. Interactivity, the buzzword of instructional technology discourse, is considered at length. Some advocates of interactivity have

argued that this modality is potentially a more democratic, less didactic educational form than the unidirectional instructional broadcast model. I challenge this simple equation of mechanical choice and increased agency in knowledge production in order to propose an understanding of interactivity that is at once more broad and more limited. I suggest that “interactive” media incorporate a range of techniques beyond those that involve mechanical selection. In many instances, television or video can be said to have been made to function “interactively,” if we understand interactivity to mean an engagement of the user in the production of knowledge and meaning, and not simply in the mechanics of making “choices.”

The programs described in the second half of the chapter—those originating outside schools—have something in common with the museum education programs described in the next chapter. Much of the work covered here is known to me through my experience as curator of an art museum education program from 1994 to 1997.<sup>10</sup>

Chapter 5 considers contemporary museum exhibition technologies as they parallel the local-global nexus of educational television described in chapter 1. The museum, an institution whose emergence is wedded to the rise of the modern Western nation-state, is an exemplar of the historical connection between visual modes of knowledge in Western science and social science, on the one hand, and political rule, on the other. As an institution of the state, the colonial museum traded on both the material spoils of colonial endeavors and the discourses that surrounded these endeavors. This process had its reciprocal form in visually oriented modes of education in the colonial setting (this point is discussed in detail in chapter 6).

The opening of museums to the general public coincided with the institution of public, and eventually mandatory, schooling in the United States. Indeed, in this country, education was a major motivating factor in the development of the public museum and has remained a core, though in many cases understated, element of museum policy. As Tony Bennet, Pierre Bourdieu, and others have shown, the museum has played a major role in the reproduction of classed, gendered, racial, and national identities and communities. Bourdieu emphasizes the contemporary public museum’s ability to exclude and include subjects on the basis of class distinction—a function inherited from the institution’s royal origins.<sup>11</sup> However well the late capitalist museum maintains its



function in the reproduction of upper- and middle-class taste, though, the transformation of many museums into public institutions around the turn of the century entailed the formation of cultural programs meant to encourage the education of a broader audience. As Bennett points out, the nineteenth-century museum was more generally an institution for organizing working-class people around nonthreatening cultural practices.<sup>12</sup>

Although the twentieth-century museum culture explored by Bourdieu and others does function on some level to exclude the working class to reproduce differences of class, race, and sexuality, the dynamic described by Bennett nonetheless remains an important pedagogical agenda of the contemporary museum. “Education of the general public” continues to be a critical disciplinary mandate, especially when it becomes a subtle and implicit agenda in museum policies and structure. This mandate is exemplified in museums’ recent attempts to “democratize” and broaden their audiences through large-scale educational curatorial practices (e.g., blockbuster exhibitions). I situate these recent practices in the history of museums’ construction of ideologies of national identity among a broad museum-going public. This is an explicitly pedagogical and media-dependent set of practices.

The second nonschool instance of pedagogical authority that I consider is the paternalistic program of media education in colonial and postcolonial West Africa. In chapter 6, I look at the use of documentary and fictional cinema by French colonial forces as means of educating and indoctrinating West African subjects, and the strategic appropriation and transformation of these techniques by postliberation West African directors. Popular and liberation West African cinema may not seem an obvious choice for this book, but these cinemas were grounded in an explicit discourse of visual pedagogy. This discourse extended from nineteenth-century European anthropological and missionary practices in West Africa to the twentieth-century ethnographic documentary. It bore explicit links to Western child development theory—that is, to theories of education and child rearing used widely in Europe and the United States. The basis of a central portion of Western teacher training was also the basis of colonial educational strategies.

Chapter 6 brings full circle the work begun in chapter 1 on the Ford Foundation by taking up once again the relationship among colonial practices, techniques of pedagogical authority, and media culture. Peda-

gological techniques traverse disciplinary and national boundaries, and the work here uncovers some surprisingly direct ties between pedagogical theory (theories of child development) and colonial techniques of social discipline (developmental policies and colonial educational programs). This chapter offers the book's most detailed analysis of theories of visual culture and literacy—precisely because these theories “grew up” in joined discourses of colonial and pedagogical authority.

Chapter 7 considers an example of postwar media technology in São Paulo, Brazil, a city that was far from technologically underdeveloped but was nonetheless designated “Third World.” Brazil developed a relatively huge television industry despite its lack of development in other areas (education, resources, health, and so on). The chapter focuses on a municipally sponsored collaboration between community-based videographers and mainstream television in São Paulo. This is TV Anhembi, a hybrid political-pedagogical performance and video project that emerged out of the unique political and media landscape of São Paulo in the late 1980s and early 1990s. These years were also pivotal in the formation of a new media pedagogy in the United States. TV Anhembi came into being through an unlikely alliance among local video activists, government agencies, and the mainstream Brazilian television industry. I use the example of TV Anhembi to stress the particularity of the Brazilian media landscape and its various distinct groups.

TV Anhembi also provides a useful comparison or counterpoint to alternative media projects in other regional and national contexts. In light of the reconfiguration and reregulation of communications networks (including the information superhighway and the cable and telephone conglomerates) faced by U.S. community media organizations in the late 1990s, the example of TV Anhembi can help to rethink terms such as “community” and “alternative media.”

### *Why a Transnational Approach to Reading Visual Pedagogy?*

The case studies that make up *Visual Pedagogy* focus mainly on U.S. media education and a broad national ideology of media pedagogy. However, the ethos of visual pedagogy did not develop only or primarily in the United States. Examples of it in other countries provide important information and insight into the broader culture of pedagogical media. Moreover, the U.S. media context of the late twentieth century

includes examples of transnational, global, and cross-cultural initiatives. A discussion of the role of the United States in forging a global educational mediascape is therefore a necessity. In two of the three non-U.S. based cases I consider, American Samoa and West Africa, the contexts were chosen because they provide instructive examples of the stakes of the United States and France in establishing themselves as benevolent leaders in introducing media technology—and hence knowledge and status in the global market—to underdeveloped regions. Chapter 6 considers U.S. and European education and child development theories that both drew from and informed colonial techniques of education and indoctrination in the 1950s. The instances of colonial and postcolonial pedagogical media that I consider in the first and last chapters of this book, then, underscore the pervasiveness of the visual- and media-based techniques of pedagogical authority that I attempt to theorize. These techniques cannot adequately be considered within their apparent national or institutional boundaries. The third case that is not U.S. based, TV Anhembi in São Paulo, Brazil, was selected because it provides useful insight into the potential for creating a community-based high-tech media education agenda in the Third World through a local and progressive government.

### *Media Culture and Visual Pedagogy*

Audiovisual media have played a pivotal role in the development of pedagogical techniques that have organized and disciplined cultures in and beyond schools.<sup>13</sup> I have noted that visual communication has historically been viewed in a somewhat disparaging light relative to textual reading and writing. Visual literacy has been an inadequate trope for the study of visual culture and media pedagogies because it misidentifies looking and visual modes of knowledge and communication as forms of language and literacy. One does not become “literate” in visual media in anything other than a metaphorical way. The complex and diverse visual modalities that contribute to media cultures require analytical tools and terminology specific to these forms. Jacques Derrida has given us a salient account of the primacy of writing in Western culture.<sup>14</sup> The visual, historically, takes its place alongside oral culture as a signifier of underdevelopment. In chapter 6 I address the low status of the visual in pedagogical theory. The point to be made here is that educational poli-

cies and practices of the second half of the twentieth century figured importantly in the emergence of a vaunted public agenda of education through visual media. The museum, the television industry, the cinema, and public health are just a few settings where the visual came into its own as a respected and even a preferred mode of educational representation. Visual media were regarded as practical alternatives in contexts where low literacy levels were seen as a barrier to education (a factor still sorely underestimated in many public education campaigns). But the turn to the visual, especially in the late twentieth century, has been remarkable even in settings where high levels of achievement in writing and reading are assumed to be the norm. The visual has become a modality of choice, not just a fallback strategy. Linked to emergent state-of-the-art media technologies, visual images and graphics increasingly took on a new cachet relative to coveted knowledge and status during the latter half of the twentieth century. To have media literacy in the late twentieth century was to have privileged access to knowledge. *Media* literacy was, by and large, a vaunted form of *visual* literacy.

Public institutions where pedagogical models are at play have been important sites for the formation of new configurations of community and identity, and also new examples of political agency and resistance. The narratives of media use that make up this book help to support this proposition relative to the two more central theses framed earlier: that in the mid-twentieth century the art-media-technology nexus became central to the politics of pedagogy and that, contrary to the bias within the literature, the visual is a positive force in critical pedagogy. Writing and reading occupied a space of privilege in the Western tradition of education and literacy for most of the twentieth century, making these skills key factors in subjects' identity and status relative to community. Images and graphic representation have since become integral aspects of writing and reading (as in hypertext and the rise of digital over analog modes). And images have earned a new status in some educational contexts, becoming a representational mode of choice with nuances well beyond their previous status as illustration—as visual icing on the textual cake. The visual has thus taken on a new importance not only in the scheme of knowledge representation but in the formation of identity and community relative to how knowledge is accessed and lived. We identify with and through the visual (an immediate example is the use of brand logos as identity signifiers); we increasingly experi-

ence our everyday lives through media in which visual and sound-based representations predominate. The chapters that follow lay out cases in which communities coalesce around new media, in which populations are organized and disciplined around visual principles, and in which resistance is enacted through new media's cultures of image and sound. In all of these cases, the visual is linked to the new. It breaks from the tradition of the textual, that icon of older educational values. Implicit in the ethos of media pedagogy is an elevation of, and allegiance with, the visual as a way of thinking and a way of organizing life, identity, and community. The visual is a renegade form, but one that, by the twentieth century's end, is elevated to being a paradigm of knowledge of the future.

### *Pedagogy beyond Schools*

The claim that pedagogy is not limited to schooling alone deserves further explanation, especially with respect to the proposition that there exists a pervasive and transinstitutional ethos that can be captured in the term "media pedagogy." Schooling no longer represents an isolated period of life coincident with preparatory learning. Continued learning has become a necessity for maintaining one's place in the hierarchy of the global information economy. An array of approaches to learning is integrated with all aspects of living, from work to entertainment to leisure. It is not surprising that debates in North America, Europe, and England about the human right to education underwent significant changes in the late 1990s relative to the information economy. Viewed in the context of media education, the idea of education as a "right for life" must take on the questions of where entertainment media culture ends and media education begins—what it means when leisure and learning coincide. As education becomes integral to the missions of health care, civic life, and cultural activities (museum going, for example), we begin to see the obsolescence of education in the narrow sense—as something that takes place in schools alone.

*Visual Pedagogy*, then, is not solely about media per se, or about education narrowly speaking. It begins with the premise that the science of pedagogy is not limited to schools but is enacted across a range of institutions that draw, sometimes tacitly, on educational theories or work in conjunction with schools to produce and regulate subjects and commu-

nities. I argue, along with education theorist David Lusted, that pedagogy

draws attention to the *process* through which knowledge is produced. Pedagogy addresses the “how” questions involved not only in transmission or reproduction of knowledge but also in its production. Indeed, it enables us to question the validity of separating these activities so easily by asking under what conditions and through what means we “come to know.” How one teaches . . . becomes inseparable from what is being taught and, crucially, how one learns.<sup>15</sup>

Subjects “come to know” in institutional settings that rely increasingly on media forms to produce knowledge. As the twentieth century progressed, media became an integral part of any discussion about the “how” questions in education. How do we teach? Certainly *with media*. How do media function? Certainly *as modes of pedagogy*. Throughout the intensified globalization of the second half of the twentieth century, media technology made a firm union with the science of pedagogy broadly applied, and this union has come to symbolize technological life in the industrialized nations of late capitalism.