

INFORMATIONAL VIDEO STORYTELLING FOR CHILDREN BY CHILDREN:
EXPLORING NEW DIRECTIONS IN LEARNING AND MAKING MEDIA IN THE
CLASSROOM

by

Tatyana Terzopoulos

BAA, Ryerson University, Toronto, Ontario, 2001

A thesis

presented to Ryerson University and York University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

In the program of

Communication & Culture

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2017

© Tatyana Terzopoulos, 2017

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION FOR ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF A THESIS

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

I authorize Ryerson University to lend this thesis to other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research.

I further authorize Ryerson University to reproduce this thesis by photocopying or by other means, in total or in part, at the request of other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research.

I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

INFORMATIONAL VIDEO STORYTELLING FOR CHILDREN BY CHILDREN: EXPLORING NEW DIRECTIONS IN LEARNING AND MAKING MEDIA IN THE CLASSROOM

Tatyana Terzopoulos

Master of Arts, Communication and Culture

Ryerson University and York University, 2017

This research makes a case for the importance of children-specific non-fiction media content in a digital age. Drawing from my professional experience making children's television, I piloted a media education and video production curriculum with a grade eight class at an independent, all-girls school in Toronto, Canada. This paper contextualizes my research by outlining the informing framework of participatory culture and several related concepts which intersect media studies, children's culture, and pedagogy; it also presents my reflections on creating and testing the curriculum. To both complement my creative research-as-practice and participatory action research approach and chronicle the research project, I created a website (<http://betweenproductions.wixsite.com/comcult>). It features curriculum materials and research documents, including samples of the students' work and their reflections; I also produced a short video that incorporates a mix of student and researcher video footage to illustrate one group's experience creating their final project.

Acknowledgements

I have been fortunate to receive the support of many incredible people throughout my master's studies. To my Supervisor, Dr. Jennifer Jenson: I entered graduate school with concrete ideas of what I wanted to accomplish. Thank you for helping me to reign in my expectations and stay focused and for being available to talk through the many troubleshooting moments along the way. Your guidance and support made my school site research possible and solidified my desire to continue research related to children and educational media. To my Committee, Dr. Izabella Pruska-Oldenhof and Dr. Miranda Campbell: thank you for keeping me motivated and your insightful feedback throughout this process. Dr. Pruska-Oldenhof: you have opened my mind to new ways of thinking about media storytelling and technology that have been pivotal to me on this new path. To my classmates Vanessa, Laura, Sara, and Alice: I am glad our lives connected and so grateful for our chats and adventures. Laura and Sara: being able to share my field research journey with you was one of the highlights of the last two years. Thank you for donating your time, positive energy, and documentary filmmaking skills. I also owe thanks to Rick Grunberg for helping me navigate the process of equipment booking and to Nick for your technical support in the field. To the Principal, educators, and the grade eight students I had the pleasure to get to know and work with: thank you for your enthusiasm and creativity as well as your patience. Being welcomed into your school is an experience that has motivated me to continue down a research path and I hope that you learned as much from me as I learned from you. Paul and Jo Ann: I appreciate how both of you have always had your door open for the many times I was stumped by academic life and procedures. Finally, to my Mom, Dad, and Inga: you have always cheered me on and listened to my ideas and dreams. Your faith in me has helped guide me through the rough patches of graduate school and words cannot express how grateful I am to have your unwavering support. Thank you.

Table of Contents

Abstract	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
List of Appendices	vi
Introduction	1
Research Motivations	3
The Creative Project	6
Informing Framework & Related Concepts	8
Part A: Designing the Research Study	14
Part B: Designing the Curriculum	19
Part C: Conducting the Study and Facilitating the Curriculum	27
Conclusion: Future Directions	47
Appendices	50
References	53

List of Appendices

Appendix A	Website Information	50
Appendix B	Screenshots: Homepage, Full Curriculum Page and Documents List, Individual Session Page	51

Introduction

Mass media programming represent a key portion of children's leisure time as a source of entertainment. In a digital age, they are also increasingly playing a role in children's socialization as well as their informal education. In 1979, Neil Postman called attention to the struggle between the 'first curriculum' of the mass media and the 'second curriculum' of schools. By the turn of the twenty first century, children's culture scholars Joe Kincheloe and Shirley Steinberg were claiming that corporate-produced children's culture had replaced classroom instruction as "the producer of the central curriculum of childhood" (2004, p11). Indeed, as a result of the digital revolution, mass communication media such as television have contributed to the widening contrast between children's worlds inside and outside school, the former becoming exceedingly passive and the latter becoming a source of enthusiastic activity (Buckingham & Sefton-Green, 2006; Stack & Kelly, 2006).

Canadian children and youth growing up in the 80s and 90s had access to informal schooling through programming such as news-magazine and documentary-style content such as CBC's *Street Cents* and Global's *Popular Mechanics for Kids*. These shows embodied one of the core purposes of mass media content and the technology that transmits it— to inform. They accomplished this function while also giving children and youth a voice, treating them like valued members of society, and encouraging their active participation as citizens. In spite of increased access to and use of online digital content and social media, Canadian children between the ages of 9-12 still watch the majority of their media programming content on a 'traditional' television screen (Shaw Rocket Fund, 2010). The current media programming landscape is notably lacking the diversity of prior decades: television content produced for Canadian children consists mainly of animated series and sitcoms (Shaw Rocket Fund,

2010; Caron, Caronia, Hwang, Brummans, 2010) as well as content that blurs the lines between entertainment and advertising (Asquith & Hearn, 2012). Canadian children have expressed a common desire to see themselves and their lives more directly reflected in the television programs they watch (Caron, Caronia, Hwang & McPhedran, 2012), acknowledging the homogeneity of the programs produced for them.

As a former creative professional who worked for over a decade in the media production industry, I recognize that creating more diverse television content is not that simple. Canadian production companies and broadcasters are navigating a challenging media landscape by generally forgoing non-fiction or informational programming for tweens because it does not bring a good return on investment: it is expensive to make, lacks international appeal, and has a limited shelf life. However, with the ongoing disruption of the traditional media industry model comes potential for new directions in children's content. In the span of 2004-2007, reports such as *Pew, Teens, and Social Media* reveal how youth are embracing this new era: activities such as sharing digital media content has risen from 57% to 64% with a growing trend towards self-authored artistic content (Lenhart, Madden, Smith & Macgill, 2007). Scholar Henry Jenkins suggests that a transformation via a 'grassroots creativity' amongst amateur creators will reshape the media landscape: "This bottom up energy will generate enormous creativity, but it will also tear apart some of the categories that organize the lives and work of media makers [...] A new generation of media-makers and viewers are emerging which could lead to a sea change in how media is made and consumed" (Blau as cited in Jenkins, 2009, p. 9). This shift draws attention to the evolving roles and responsibilities of children's media producers and educators. It also calls into question how to better include children's voices through diverse media content; it further questions how curriculum might better prepare children to participate in these digital spaces.

Research Motivations

My interest in conducting media-related research was borne out of my experiences working as a freelance creative professional in the Canadian media production industry for 15 years. I embarked on my research journey at a particularly turbulent time in the history of mass communication media production and distribution in Canada. In fact, my career in media production tracks with the transition from analog to digital television production and broadcasting technology; the birth of YouTube along with other digital and social media platforms occurred at the midpoint of my journey. While I was fortunate to work in freelance creative roles such as creator, director, producer and writer on over a dozen different series for both Canadian and international audiences, I can attest to the increased competitiveness and uncertainty within the industry. It has created a conundrum: the need for experimentation but a general fear of risk. Therefore, I entered graduate school with the general goal of producing scholarship on Canada's evolving media landscape and a desire to explore research design that incorporates creative experimentation.

As a master's student, I revisited my specific interest in the future of non-fiction or informational content for children. I have a long history with this genre, with my first foray into producing children's non-fiction television programming taking place while completing my final year of media undergraduate studies in 2001. Several classmates and I developed a concept for a documentary style television series for children and produced the pilot episode for our major practicum project. The program, which we called *SWAP-TV*, had a simple premise: two children traded places for two days to experience life in another child's shoes. Our project garnered TVOntario's interest and when we graduated, we partnered with an established production company to bring the series to life. We produced a total of 39 half-hour episodes, featuring 78

different children, their family, friends, and communities, from across Canada; the series also earned a Gemini Award in 2004 in the Best Children's or Youth Non-Fiction Program or Series category. During my graduate studies, I have reconsidered this project's significance in relation to my greater professional and academic goals. I had long considered *SWAP-TV* to be a special experience because it was my first professional production that also happened to be a project I had co-created. I have since identified the significance of the series in that it resulted in a transformative experience for me while simultaneously offering a unique learning experience for so many of our child participants.

I had originally intended on pursuing a career in screenwriting which I believed was well suited to my creative yet introverted nature. *SWAP-TV* was a unique opportunity to launch my career in a pivotal way. In negotiating a role on this series along with my co-creators, I was thrust into producing and directing episodes with complex filming logistics and uncontrollable variables that are part and parcel of documentary-style productions, with the added considerations of working with children. My 'fish-out-of-water' experiences often paralleled that of the participants. As sort of a trial by fire, I was required to rapidly and simultaneously hone my creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, and problem solving skills— all of which have become important 'new literacies' or '21st century skills' in a digital age. The children who participated in the series had the unique opportunity to share their lives with the children they traded places with as well as to present their experiences and perspectives to a larger audience of children across the country. I recall that many participants were intrigued with an insider's look at the production process, which was a significant shift from the traditional role of viewer. In many cases, I observed that even a more reserved participant's confidence would rise as he or she was made to feel part of the production team and to feel as though his or her perspectives and

ideas mattered. This speaks to video production's potential to offer a deep learning experience for students. Meanwhile, it has been fascinating to observe the societal group for whom I spent the bulk of my career creating content, via procedures and formats established in an era dominated by broadcast television, become the one most embracing of a user-driven environment of web videos and social media. It has made me aware of my growing distance from children's lived experiences and reignited my belief that children's content should include children's voices and perspectives as well as diverse content that includes informational or non-fiction programming. Graduate school presented me with the opportunity to experiment at a time of great flux in the current mass digital media production and broadcasting industry and to approach my research by drawing from my practical experience as a media maker. I was also inspired to consider children's media from a different perspective to encourage new ideas and to explore my own evolution from a children's media producer towards a children's media education scholar. Therefore, I felt that a creative and interdisciplinary research project was a more useful approach for me rather than traditional scholarship.

The Creative Project: Designing and Facilitating Video Production Curriculum

Situated at the intersections of pedagogy and media studies, this research responds to the growing centrality of mass media content and digital and social media technology in children's lives, the participatory turn in contemporary culture, and the challenges that emerge in supporting children's learning and their development of relevant skills, commonly referred to as 21st century skills or new literacies.

As a creative project, I piloted a media education curriculum unit that focused on non-fiction/ informational video production at the middle school level. First, I designed the unit and then, facilitated it with a small class of eight female eighth-grade students ages 13-14 who attended The Athena School (pseudonym), an all-girls private school in Toronto. Composed of five weekly 2-hour in-class sessions over a two-month period, the curriculum reflected a blend of media literacy and video production. It included instruction, discussion, several small scaffolded video assignments as well as a final video group project. The students' final videos were screened and discussed with the grade six students at the same school in a sixth and final session. Through this project, I investigated the opportunities and challenges around designing media education in a digital age. I also experimented with curriculum that centres around video production and non-fiction content for children. Finally, I explored how a children's media producer might support the design of curriculum that teaches about and through media.

In this paper, I discuss these topics while reflecting on my experience designing and facilitating the media education curriculum sessions. I also created a supporting website (<https://betweenproductions.wixsite.com/comcult>) as a visualization and an interactive chronicle of my journey that incorporates students' perspectives. This creative project was designed to

support my overarching goals of fostering children-specific non-fiction or informational media content in a digital age, highlighting the value of video making as a learning experience, and encouraging research and other collaborations between media practitioners and educators.

Informing Framework: Participatory Culture

The challenge with research that investigates the relationships between children, media, education, and society is that it is interdisciplinary with scholars approaching issues from a myriad of traditions and applying their own terminology to similar concepts and ideas. I found participatory culture to be a useful framework for a project that situates young people in the social process of communication and media creation within the classroom while recognizing the media as a powerful source of informal education outside of it.

Participatory culture is a term coined by Henry Jenkins (1992) to describe a culture that consumes, creates, and circulates media content. The concept emerged out of Jenkins' investigation of popular media fan groups in the early 1990s. In his effort to shift the view of these groups as "cultural dupes, social misfits, and mindless consumers" (p. 22), he revealed the participatory practices within many of these fan communities. Jenkins posited that the point of transformation from a fan culture to a participatory culture occurs in the act of creating and sharing new texts inspired by favourite media programs and characters. Proposing these ideas in the early years of the internet, he would later apply the term convergence culture to describe the shift in media technology from analog to digital and the increase in production and circulation practices of a developing participatory culture (2006). Within the field of media studies, participatory culture becomes particularly useful in acknowledging the evolving definitions of media 'user', 'viewer', and 'creator'. In 2009, as digital and social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter were growing in popularity, Jenkins and his research team produced a white paper as part of the MacArthur Foundation's heavily funded initiative for research into youth and digital media entitled "Confronting the Challenges of Participatory

Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century”. They identified five key characteristics of participatory culture as

relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one’s creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices. A participatory culture is also one in which members believe their contributions matter, and feel some degree of social connection with one another (at the least they care what other people think about what they have created). (Jenkins et al., 2009, p.3)

While Jenkins’ scholarly roots lie in media studies, the 2009 white paper presented participatory culture for consideration within the educational realm. Whereas historically, education served the core function of preparing children for adult life as workers, there is growing consensus that students now require a process that will both acknowledge the ways they are already participating through engagement with digital and social media platforms and guide them towards more general participation in public life. Scholars have since expanded upon the concept of participatory culture, including David Buckingham (2013) as well as Delwiche and Henderson (2013) who proposed an ethical framework which considered: access, connectedness, rule making, contribution and freedom and later defined three participatory culture subgroups: consensus cultures, creative cultures, and discussion cultures. Delwiche and Henderson (2013) have also advocated for interdisciplinary research to better explore this concept and analyzing it in relation to the converging fields of media studies, pedagogy, and political economy to uncover news directions in knowledge sharing and education strategy and to rethink traditional ownership structures.

As an interdisciplinary-rooted concept, participatory culture inspired and informed the overall design and delivery of my media education curriculum. To further ground my project at the intersections of media studies, pedagogy and children's culture, I explored several related concepts spinning out of participatory culture including: media education and media literacy, as well as design literacies and multimodal theory.

Participatory Culture and Media Education/ Media Literacy

As my research involved exploring children's relationship with media in a classroom setting, I felt it necessary to understand the legacy as well as the challenges of media literacy education in a digital age prior to designing my curriculum. Jenkins et al.'s case for a new set of literacies follows several decades of conversation around media education, complicated by debates around defining literacy, a term rooted in print media. Various related terms that consider literacy in a digital age have emerged, including: information literacy, technology literacy, multimodal literacy and new media literacy and scholars have attempted to build links and comparison of new literacy studies, new literacies studies, new media literacy studies, media literacy, and multiliteracies (Gee, 2010). Media literacy education is not a pedagogy in the traditional sense in that it does not have firmly established principles, canon of texts or demonstrated teaching techniques (Share, 2009). Thus, strands of media education have emerged over time, representing different approaches. As television broadcasting began in many countries around the world during the 1930s, a desire to investigate how society would be negatively impacted through 'effects research' was born. Children were considered to be a special societal group in need of protection and therefore interest around how they would be affected by television developed along with the earliest movement: protectionism. Len Masterman, one of the key figures in media education theory published the seminal text "Teaching the Media"

(1985) where he referred to the mass media as a disease that threatened to corrupt audiences. In Canada, media literacy was introduced into secondary school curriculum in the 1980s and 1990s, referencing Masterman's ideas (Pungente, 2006). Other scholars have encouraged a balance between protectionist and celebratory perspectives in media education curriculum design (Share, 2009) and advocate for media education over media panic (Buckingham 2003, 2011; Buckingham & Strandgaard, 2012). A 'critical media literacy' emerged in the late 1990s/ early 2000s, borne out of the mass media's increasing presence in our lives, citing a need to critical understanding and analysis (Buckingham, 2003, 2008; Hoechsmann & Poyntz, 2012; Kellner & Share, 2007; Lankshear & Knobel, 2008; Rowsell, 2013). Critical media literacy problematized the process of representation and made a case for examining the roles of ideology, power, and pleasure through examining "the production, institutions and political economy that motivate and structure the media industries as corporate profit-seeking businesses" (Kellner & Share, 2007, p. 65). Media literacy education currently emphasizes this deeper analysis of media content across all technological platforms and challenges dominant norms and assumptions (Kellner & Share, 2007); this is achieved through analysis of media texts, how their messages are constructed and information is represented, and how messages are shaped to suit audiences (Hoechsmann & Poyntz, 2012). Meanwhile, media arts education has focused on vocational skills training and creative expression. Several scholars including Jenkins (2006) and Share (2009) suggest incorporating media arts curriculum into media literacy curriculum, arguing that true literacy develops through the process of making or 'encoding' in addition to analyzing or 'decoding'. This type of curriculum becomes more applicable in a participatory culture. Jenkins proposed reconfiguring the goals of media education so that young people view themselves as "cultural producers and participants and not simply as consumers, critical or otherwise" (2006, p. 259). In general, media education has shifted towards a more empowering approach by aiming to prepare

rather than to protect: it aims to support the development of the skills needed to understand and to actively participate in media culture. This aligns with the work of Paolo Freire (1970) and John Dewey (1938/2012), who focused on a critical pedagogy and a progressive education respectively. Increased conversation around ‘new’ digital literacies reflects how living in a digital age demands participatory and collaborative skill sets that go beyond the ability to analyze media content. My curriculum design most closely aligned with Jenkins’ view of making media as a valuable process that enhances media literacy.

Participatory Culture, Multimodality Theory, and Design Literacies

Without prior training or experience as a teacher, it was useful to explore applicable theory that supports multimodal, creative, and collaborative learning experiences to prepare; this aided me in designing my curriculum and prepared me to conduct my research in a classroom setting. Scholars in addition to Jenkins et al. have explored participatory media practices and the concept of a participative pedagogy (Buckingham, 2003, 2008; Ito, 2009; Lankshear & Knobel, 2008; Rheingold, 2013). Jenkins et al.’s list of new literacies aligns with multiliteracies pedagogy and multimodality theory (Bazalgette & Buckingham, 2013; Kress, 1997); these theories acknowledge that learning takes place through a variety of communication modes such as visual, audio, gestural, spatial and tactile in addition to written and oral forms (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009; Kress, 2010). These pedagogies also draw from Piaget’s constructivist theory, which posits that people produce knowledge and meaning based upon their experiences, and Papert’s constructionist learning theory, which promotes student-centred discovery as well as ‘learning by making’ or ‘learning by doing’ (Papert & Harel, 1991). Similarly, Sheridan-Rabideau and Rowsell (2010) draw from multimodality theory to describe a ‘design literacies’ pedagogy based

on the multiple modes (written words, visuals, sound, color, photography, interactivity and hypertextuality) that media producers use to create content. They emphasize the problem-solving potential of digital media production and identify four main dispositions of media producers across platforms that they posit will be core literacies of the 21st century: design, creativity, spin, multimodality; and three overlapping dispositions: collaboration, trial and error, and production.

Part A: Designing the Research Study

Existing Scholarship

Given that my research involves children as participants, it was also important for me to understand the evolution of childhood studies as well as the legacy of research on children's culture to identify challenges and opportunities. Henry Jenkins played a pivotal role in the development of children's culture studies as editor of the collection *The Children's Culture Reader* in 1998. Similar to media studies, there is a divide between children's culture scholars who view children as needing protection and those who consider children to be competent social agents, the latter also referred to as an emancipatory or empowerment frame. Prout (2008) detailed the longstanding normative view of childhood as the preparation for adult life and Buckingham noted how over the course of the industrial revolution, the state began to increasingly assert its own interest in social communication with children (Buckingham, 1997). Neil Postman (1994) controversially posited that childhood was disappearing as a result of the 'total disclosure medium' of TV which compromised adults' control over children's access to knowledge; television was accessible without having developed traditional – print-based— literacy skills. The protectionist/emancipatory dichotomy also mirrors the resistance and negotiation that characterizes the process of children's identity formation, particularly as they consume media products and are socialized by them. Identity construction can also be linked to neoliberalism and Giddens's (1991) position that young people are, in globalised late modernity, fundamentally absorbed in the never-ending task of 'the project of the self' resulting from modern media's complex, intertextual and reflexive environment. Meanwhile, scholars have reflected upon the role of adult media makers in constructing and negotiating the position of the

child (Rose, 1993; Buckingham, 1997). With the shift towards participatory culture and a networked society (Castells, 1996), scholars have increasingly considered children's identity and citizenship (Jenkins, et al., 2009; Banet-Weiser, 2007; Coulter, 2013; Jenkins, 1998; Buckingham 2000a; Mihailidis, 2014). Thus, more recent children's cultures scholarship reflects a shift towards pluralism and employs a social constructivist approach, presenting children as empowered, skilled audiences, and valued members of society (Buckingham, 2003; Mendes et al., 2012; Sefton-Green, 2006). Similarly, Sheridan-Rabideau and Rowsell draw from Margaret Mead's cultural theory that describes how society responds to large shifts in the following sequence: 'pre-figurative' as adults learning from children; 'post-figurative' as children learning from adults; and 'co-figurative' as adults and children learning from their peers (2010, p. 1). This suggests the value not only in considering children's perspectives but in prioritizing or leading with them.

My research therefore builds on the existing, albeit somewhat limited, research on youth and digital media in practice (Ito, 2009) and media production training for school-aged children (Jenson, Dahya & Fisher, 2014). There have been some studies on youth participatory video (Braden, 1999; Shaw & Robertson, 1997) and documentary making in school settings (Hakkarainen, Saarelainen & Ruokamo, 2007; Reid et al., 2002) with a greater number that have looked at extracurricular or community-based media production programs and have focused on the impact of offering participants the opportunity to produce knowledge relevant to their own lives (Fisher-Keller & Tyner, 2011; Karlsson 2001; Kress 2010; Marquez-Zenkov 2007). This type of research is not without its challenges. While researchers have explored the transformative potential of community media production workshops where children are given a 'voice' (Goodman, 2003; Fleetwood, 2005), measuring empowerment and transformative potential

remains difficult without consensus on measurement criteria (Kearney, 2005). Also, many adult-facilitated youth media productions have overlooked the value of integrating components of media literacy such as watching and discussing media texts (Blum-Ross, 2015). Media scholars have explored the relationship between children-specific news media programming and citizenship (Carter, 2008, 2013; Buckingham, 2000b; Mathews, 2003; Mendes et al., 2012). I have not come across studies that look specifically at children's relationship with children's specific non-fiction media content. In emphasizing the complexity of designing media literacy curriculum, Bazalgette and Buckingham (2013) noted that preschoolers often demonstrate an understanding of complex characteristics of television and video content even before they are fluent readers, disrupting the traditional 'print-based' approach to literacy. They further cautioned that the current preoccupation with games and online media-based learning pulls attention away from the 'old' moving image media (film and television) which still dominate children's consumption activities in their formative years. My interest in building a curriculum with a focus on non-fiction video production stems from two main rationales: a recognition that television programming represents older school-aged children's main source of media content; and my extensive media industry experiences which demonstrate the immense learning potential the video-making process offers. I was further inspired by examples of long-running youth media production endeavors in the US, including Elizabeth Soep's work with the Youth Radio organization and Steve Goodman's work with the Educational Video Centre (2011). Both of these programs focus on the production of short-form non-fiction documentary content, with skills training facilitated by adults, and have continued to demonstrate their community impact.

Research Methodology

The research design for my creative project was informed by a social constructivist paradigm, defined as an “exploration of the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences in the worlds in which they live and how the contexts of events and situations and the placement of these within wider social environments have impacted on constructed understandings” (Grbich, 2012, p.7) and where reality is viewed as socially embedded and multiple (Merrigan et al, 2012). I opted for the creative ‘research through practice’ approach (Cresswell 1998; Irwin & Springgay, 2008) versus a more traditional thesis or MRP to apply my considerable experience as a media content maker. A creative approach also accommodated my experimental and reflective process along with my desire to position myself as a maker/practitioner as well as a scholar/researcher. Because I was piloting a curriculum plan, I wanted to observe a small group of participants’ experiences participating in it, I applied a case study design (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003) with elements of participatory action research where there is potential for both the researcher and the ‘researched’ to be ‘transformed,’ and gain interesting new perspectives and insights through the process (Crotty, 2003). Scholars have cited the need to acknowledge existing and unequal power relations in this type of research (Hoechsmann & Low, 2008; Jenson, Dayha & Fisher, 2014). With regards to data collection, I planned to enlist help from research assistants to record video and provide written summaries about the classroom sessions. This would allow me to focus on delivering the classroom sessions without attempting to simultaneously take detailed observational notes. I also wanted to incorporate elements of participatory action research (PAR) to acknowledge adult-child power dynamics, including the tendency for adults to mediate children’s lives, and with the goal of better engaging and understanding this societal group. Therefore, I built student ‘video diary’ tasks into the project,

with the intention of asking students to record short post-session commentary (referring to a tips document which is available on the website on the Full Session Plan page).

Recruitment of Participants/ Research Site

My desire to conduct research with and about children required me to prepare an extensive ethics protocol. After receiving approval from the university, my supervisor advised me that seeking permission to recruit participants through school boards would be arduous and potentially unrealistic given my limited time frame for completing my research. I proceeded to contact the small number of independent all-girls schools within the Greater Toronto Area to propose my study. I decided to approach girls' schools first as a response to the ongoing lack of gender parity in media production and my desire to support female voices in media. Out of this small group, two schools expressed an interest and ultimately, one school was able to support my project goals as well as my constrained timelines. This school indicated that while it had participated in academic research projects before, it has always requested that its name not be included in research: I applied the pseudonym of the Athena School. I was initially concerned with how to work with an entire class of students as only one researcher. Fortunately, the class sizes at the Athena School were small and, after explaining the project to students and their parents, I was able to work with all eight students in the eighth-grade class. The school was particularly interested in my desire to not only work with students on video production skills development as well as my proposed 'peer production' approach whereby the grade eight students (older tweens) would create video projects to share with the grade six students (younger tweens).

Part B: Designing the Media Education Curriculum

Overall Curriculum Considerations

Designing curriculum, even a brief in-class unit, was far more of a challenging task than I had anticipated; it required me to balance the goals of my research with The Athena School teachers' request to emphasize technical skills training, as well as to reflect on my professional media production practices along with applicable pedagogy. First and foremost, I considered the five characteristics of a participatory culture:

1. With relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement
2. With strong support for creating and sharing one's creations with others
3. With some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices
4. Where members believe that their contributions matter
5. Where members feel some degree of social connection with one another (at the least they care what other people think about what they have created). (Jenkins et al., 2009, p.7)

In my initial conversations with the grade eight Core and English teachers at the Athena School, they indicated that many of their grade eight students had no prior experience working with professional video cameras. My supervisor was able to provide several iPads as well as some tablet-compatible video accessories such as microphones and tripods; designing the sessions to use these tools also allowed me to foster an environment with minimal barriers to creative expression and engagement. Further, building these sessions around 'YouTube style' video discussion and production would encourage creating and sharing content while also

offering a relatable format through which to discuss media representation and explore media literacy skills. The curriculum also emphasized group work, to offer an environment that supports informal mentorship and support for creating together. This was motivated by my recognition that the students would have varying interest in and experience with filming and editing video and could therefore learn from each other. I designed the sessions to culminate in a screening with a grade six student audience to create an opportunity for students to experience a sense of connection and community and the belief that their contributions matter, as characteristics of a participatory culture. This aspect of the curriculum was further justified by studies from the media industry realm, indicating how children prefer to ‘watch up’ as in consuming shows with slightly older characters (Caron et al., 2012); and the educational realm, citing the value of exchange of ideas among knowledge workers, commonly known as ‘peer production’ (Peters & Besley, 2006).

While participatory culture offered the overall framework for my project, I also considered media education scholarship to more directly assist in my curriculum design. I opted to not build my sessions in out of any existing templates for media arts or literacy education and, instead, considered elements of critical media literacy through planned discussion and analysis of television content. Overall, I endeavoured to blend media literacy education with more collaborative, multimodal, and ‘learning by making’ or constructionist activities; I therefore incorporated written tasks in addition to hands-on tasks involving digital video-making technology. In the spirit of participatory action research and a social constructivist approach, I designed the sessions to be as conversational and interactive as possible, with opportunities for the students to share their own ideas and knowledge. I did this in part to address the power imbalance between me and the students and attempt to level the playing field and relate more

directly to the participants. I was also mindful of how many extracurricular or curriculum-linked media production activities involving youth fail to consider the issues of gender in their design and how projects produced by young female media producers therefore run the risk of reproducing gendered norms and stereotypes (Kearney, 2005). Given that the group of students I worked with were enrolled at an all-girls school that emphasized feminist educational approaches, I did not have to address the gender imbalances that this project might be subject to in a mixed-gender classroom. Applying gender as a critical lens was therefore beyond the scope of this project; although, I did consider gender in designing the individual session plans, which I will discuss in the next section.

I also considered Jenkins et al.'s three concerns applicable to designing pedagogical interventions in a networked culture:

The Participation Gap — the unequal access to the opportunities, experiences, skills, and knowledge that will prepare youth for full participation in the world of tomorrow. The

Transparency Problem — The challenges young people face in learning to see clearly the ways that media shape perceptions of the world.

The Ethics Challenge — The breakdown of traditional forms of professional training and socialization that might prepare young people for their increasingly public roles as media makers and community participants. (Jenkins et al., 2009, p.3)

I then contemplated how my professional media production experience might inform possible solutions or directions. My own media production practices were acquired in a somewhat non-linear manner through considerable trial-and-error and represented a culmination of a vast range of diverse experiences; this closely aligns with Sheridan-Rabideau and Rowsell's

theory of design literacies (2010) and the value of considering professional media-makers' creation processes. While I identified a lack of one-size-fits-all procedures, particularly in creative roles such as directing, there have been some standard conventions such as the phases of production and documents such as call sheets, storyboards, and scripts. I incorporated various samples of these that I have used in my own work into my classroom sessions (these are also available on the website under the heading of Student Support Materials).

I opted to use 'accessible', consumer video-making tools such as iPads to ease students into an exploration of more professional media making practices and storytelling techniques; this included following and discussing the professional media production process— introduction, brainstorming/pre-production, production, and post-production – and discussing a variety of professionally-produced video (with an emphasis on YouTube style) content. Having produced media content across different genres, I decided that focusing on non-fiction and documentary storytelling would offer the most beneficial structure for this type of project. I particularly felt this genre would be valuable given that it was more accessible entry into video production without requiring consideration of additional variables such as props, costumes, sets, scripts, actors, etc. My experiences producing human interest and documentary media stories have demonstrated this genre's potential to develop a variety of skills while also contributing to a sense of connection to the intended audience. Jenkins et al. (2009) discussed the link between participatory culture and children's citizenship, which aligns with both Freire and Dewey's belief in an approach to education that prepares young people to be citizens as active participants and contributors to society and to be encouraged to tell their stories from their points of view. I anticipated that requiring students to present their videos to their younger peers (grade six students at The Athena School) would ideally foster a sense of citizenship. Also, in an attempt to

mitigate the tensions that exist between the for-profit realm of media production and the not-for-profit realm of education, I viewed the non-fiction genre as a more neutral space: the genre, specifically for children-specific audiences, has demonstrated a lack of commercial viability in recent years and prioritizes informing and educating over entertaining. Therefore, my attempt to address the transparency gap, the participation problem, and the ethics challenge, while also considering the needs of this particular sample group of students, resulted in a curriculum plan that: 1) focused on non-fiction content; 2) explored YouTube style video production using iPads; 3) incorporated a screening of final videos with a younger peer audience and; 4) blended media literacy and professional media practices.

Finally, being required to adhere to the school's schedule and request to focus on technical video-making skills was helpful as well as a hindrance. It was useful to be given some predetermined parameters from which to build around, as the task of designing the sessions was quite daunting. Having the sessions take place once a week and be spread out over several months wasn't ideal in that I felt this type of project would be most effective as an intensive program offered outside of traditional school hours and a classroom setting. I somewhat arbitrarily proposed five to six sessions of two hours each, in large part to reign in this project to suit the time and resources I had as part of a master's degree program. I then prepared a master document which included overall learning objectives and a breakdown of what the five sessions would explore.

Individual Session Design Considerations

From the main master document, I created the first session plan with the intention of creating subsequent plans based on how much content was covered in the previous session and in

consideration of students were responding to the sessions. I was also hoping to base session plans on my own in-class observations combined with students' video diaries. I worked with the teachers to design a rubric for the culminating assignment. Even if I was unable to directly observe which students most responded to which elements of the process, I anticipated that different aspects of the curriculum would resonate with different students. Without aiming to be too overtly celebratory about media production, it was my hope that students would feel more enthusiastic about using video as a tool for future expression. It was also important to me to encourage self-directed learning, with regards to their video ideas and the roles they wanted to play in producing the culminating video assignment.

In my planning, I envisioned spending one session getting to know the students and chatting about my research and media career, one session analyzing a selection of non-fiction or informational media segments and brainstorming final video project topics, one session to cover the video pre-production phase, one or two sessions exploring non-fiction storytelling conventions and technical tips along with hands-on practice, and one session covering post-production and editing techniques. The plan was to ask students to share one or two of their ideas for a non-fiction video topic in Session 2 or 3. They would then form groups based on shared interests in topics and then go through the rest of the sessions while considering how to apply what they learned to their larger project. The plan also included an additional session where students would screen their final video projects and discuss them with the grade six students.

I attempted to scaffold technical production and storytelling skills instruction and practice through several mini-tasks. Both the mini-tasks as well as the culminating assignment considered how access to participatory culture operates as a new form of the hidden curriculum which “shifts the focus of literacy from one of individual expression to community involvement” and

requires fostering new media literacies as a “set of cultural competencies and social skills that young people need in the new media landscape” (Jenkins et al., 2009, p. 4). All video tasks were designed to be group efforts in small teams of three to four students and were intended to assist in developing students’ new literacies, particularly collective intelligence, judgment, and simulation, and distributed cognition.

I further considered the grade eight Core and English teachers’ perspective on the students’ experience with video-making. The teachers had communicated to me their students’ preoccupation with performing for the camera at the expense of attention to specific skills and conventions to create a more polished media product. This aligns with Jenkins et al.’s (2009) case for media literacy in the classroom as particularly necessary given the imbalance that often exists between the confidence and ease youth exhibit in using media tools versus their ability to critically examine media messages. I decided that it would be worthwhile to spend some time in earlier sessions looking at a variety of videos and encourage them to be looking at media content more critically as opposed to simply consuming and enjoying it. Finally, I did not initially feel, given the feminist and social justice driven approach to education at this school, that the experience of making videos would be an exceptionally emancipatory experience for these girls. However, I did build into one of the early sessions a discussion about whether or not they see themselves reflected in any existing female television characters or stories about girls their age. I also planned to explain my own journey through a male-dominated industry, supported by a video compilation reel of my media work that emphasized diverse female subjects and their stories.

My Role and Relationship to the Participants

Communication and support were important considerations in planning the curriculum. I wanted to depart from a place of adult authority and approach more of an ‘informal mentorship’ style inherent to a participatory culture and whereby the most experienced individuals pass knowledge along to the novices (Jenkins et al., 2009). I drew confidence from the fact that over the years, my producing style had evolved towards more of a collaborative approach; in general, this involves my initial creation of a story plan that reflects my vision for the content but allows me to revise it during filming to draw from the collective creativity, ideas, and suggestions of my production team and, in some cases, participants. In my extensive experience filming with young participants, and often without the luxury of time to more organically cultivate these relationships, I have found that encouraging them to collaborate as part of the team has often proven to be a particularly effective approach. My original intention of approaching as a ‘collaborator’ in the classroom was somewhat hindered by The Athena School’s request that I present my industry experience and offer instruction on professional media making skills. This would also further hinder my desire to address the power imbalance between me and the students. I thus opted to foster a conversational type energy in early sessions and indicate my desire to share (versus instruct on) what I’ve learned in my career. I also debated whether or not I wanted to be present to support them during their filming of their final video projects and decided that I would reassess based on how the sessions were going and how the students were relating to me.

Part C: Conducting the Study and Facilitating the Curriculum

In this section, I present my observations through the lens of the informing framework for my research: participatory culture. I focus on how this process supported students' development of the various 'new literacies' Jenkins et al. (2009) proposed in their white paper. I will also refer to my supporting website where applicable to illustrate my experiences conducting the study and facilitating the curriculum; the site also offers more specific reflections that I prepared after each session. Where applicable, I suggest, based on my observations, directions for future research or curriculum design adaptations. As anticipated, the sessions evolved considerably from my initial curriculum planning document; the overall experience offered me a lot to consider with regards to my initial research goal of exploring the opportunities and challenges with media education that acknowledges a participatory culture. The groups for the final projects will be referred to throughout this paper by their chosen video topics: 'Team Bake A Cake' and 'Team Fire Report'.

Video Production as a Frame for Exploring New Literacies Skills Development

When I initially designed this curriculum, I believed that it would specifically tap into or enhance students' collective intelligence, judgment, simulation, and distributed cognition 'new literacies' (Jenkins et al., 2009, p.4). I observed that students explored the new literacy of 'simulation' throughout the majority of their video work. During a brief exercise intended to explore using microphones during filming, one student pair decided to record a spoof audition as a contestant on *The Bachelor* reality TV show. In another mini-task intended to teach students how to integrate A-Roll with B-Roll footage, one group mimicked the filming and editing style of the *Keeping up with the Kardashians* reality TV show (please refer to the second video on the

Mini Task #2 page of the website). It appeared that the students, in their simulation of these programs, were also invested in being playful and acting; my observations align with Jenkins et al., who indicate how closely all three of these new literacies are connected. These mini-tasks were additionally useful in revealing what TV shows the students watch as well as demonstrating their understanding of the visual and storytelling conventions that are particular to these programs.

As a media-maker, I was particularly surprised to discover that for most of these students, ‘video making’ meant ‘starring’ in their own videos. This was incredibly valuable for me to observe and allowed me to recognize that my own media production practices and assumptions about tweens were becoming outdated, in relation to an emerging participatory culture. I had assumed that in the final group projects, students would naturally gravitate to different roles such as camera operator, director, or performer. In explaining to students why it was important that students focus on different roles, I was met with much resistance and disappointment; it was almost as though being on camera was the sole reason for their interest in making videos. Future iterations of this curriculum design might benefit from exercises where students rotate through experiencing some of the key media production roles, or getting a behind-the-scenes look at these jobs, to illustrate their importance. While it is possible that this approach would also prompt more students to take on these roles, it is also possible that the vlogger model made popular by YouTube (performer who also directs and writes and films his or her own content) may have made ‘specializing’ in a media production craft less enticing in a participatory culture. My uncertainty further stems from my final interviews with the students. Several students appeared conflicted, indicating that they would have liked to experience each role (camera

person, director, etc.); others said they would have enjoyed the final video project experience more if they each were able to take turns being on camera and being behind it.

These observations also speak to the importance of how curriculum is initially framed. I suspect that my curriculum design, approaching instruction for a ‘YouTube generation’ –even though my own media-making experiences are firmly rooted in professional broadcast media practices – created a disconnect. For example, in general, this group of students demonstrated great imagination along with confidence in their video making abilities. There were numerous examples of students’ mini-projects which I felt were very creative (for an example, please refer to Session 2, Mini Task #1, first video). Team Bake A Cake’s video also demonstrated some particularly creative use of slow-motion and sped-up shots, including the slow motion ‘flour shot’ that introduced their video. Upon reflection, my goal of addressing these students’ general lack of attention to technical proficiency was likely further hindered by my choice of a curriculum approach around ‘making YouTube videos’. The YouTube landscape has such a wide range of content spanning high production value that mimics broadcast television and content with sloppy audio, lighting, and editing. It would appear that the majority of regular YouTube users are generally forgiving of unpolished or professional segments and as such, curriculum might be structured as ‘learning how to make a TV segment or show’. This would involve me working more directly with students as an expert and a collaborator. While I can propose a variety of ways to frame the curriculum differently in the future, it is unclear whether these directions would encourage students to increase their technical proficiency in video-making.

In many instances, the students took the requirements of each mini-task as loose guidelines, often adapting them. I initially felt disappointed or discouraged by their departure from my instructions, particularly because I had spent considerable time reflecting on the best

ways to teach what I felt were valuable media storytelling techniques. Ultimately, their rebellion revealed the value of video-making as a customizable, self-directed learning opportunity in that students were able to take the assignment parameters and create a more meaningful and engaging experience. Students' reconfiguration of the assignments also demonstrated a form of resistance or renegotiation of power dynamics; this was significant given that the overall goal of these sessions was to prepare them for a participatory culture which approaches an "empowered conception of citizenship" (Jenkins et al., 2009, p.4). While this was valuable for me to observe from a researcher standpoint, it posed a problem from a facilitator standpoint. As part of my preliminary conversations with the Grade 8 Core and English teachers, I had designed the tasks to focus on practicing and enhancing technical skills. In most cases, the students became too focused on being creative and playful, that the technical components became an afterthought. This made it more challenging for me to assess whether these tasks were successful in supporting technical skills development or if they would need to be adapted in the future. Additionally, in several instances, the students demonstrated a level of critical media literacy through these tasks. The group who created the Kardashian spoof video challenged my instruction regarding covering edit points by using A-Roll and B-Roll: they indicated that jump cuts were entirely commonplace now because of reality TV and YouTubers. This provided valuable insight into my need to revisit topics around editing and structuring segments in the future.

This group of students reflected a wide range of existing skill as well as greatly varying levels of interest in video-making. I tried to assess their skill levels by screening some of their previous video projects during our first session together, but it was only later, through the mini-video tasks, that I began to see the variety of individual skill levels. This suggests the need to approach classroom video-making curriculum as a lengthier experience of far greater than five or

six sessions and the need for each student to have ample hands-on time with equipment to practice and experiment. Without intending to downplay the great opportunity for peer-based learning that group video-making assignments offer, an extended curriculum would better support all students in exploring various technology and developing the full range of new literacy skills. In the limited time that students had to complete their video tasks, I observed that the students who were the most experienced at editing naturally assumed those roles. Curiously, In the final interviews, students almost unanimously mentioned an interest in video editing and indicated that they would have liked more time and opportunities to learn and practice their editing skills. Considerable effort is required to implement media production curriculum, which I believe is more than justified by video-making's ability to reflect many modern workplace environments as well as the teamwork skills needed to thrive in them. Jenkins (2009) noted contemporary education's emphasis on training autonomous problem solvers; video production represents an engaging means of shifting curriculum to support collaborative, peer-based learning. Even the members of Team Bake A Cake, who appeared to have the most difficulties working together and who were generally dissatisfied with their final video project, indicated a range of different takeaways from their experience (please refer to the summary video on the website's main page). Based on the final interviews, it was evident that all of the students had experienced an overall positive and engaging learning experience that allowed them to explore topics of interest while harnessing a variety of new literacies.

Focusing on the Non-Fiction Genre

The original parameters for the final project required the production of a non-fiction video. Several students were initially resistant to the idea of creating this genre of content and a couple

of students were very verbal about how it wasn't their favourite genre. I made a considerable effort in explaining how I had experienced the value of non-fiction storytelling – for participants as well as for audiences – during my career. I also indicated how non-fiction offered a valuable method of sharing knowledge with peers as well as to offer alternative viewpoints to the content created for their age group on mainstream media, borne out of a discussion in Session 1 where students indicated that they did not see much content on television that accurately reflected their lives as well as my desire to explore the new literacy of 'networking'. Finally, I explained to students that given our short timelines and resources, this format was the best way for me to support their video storytelling abilities and had the most potential to produce a solid final video product. In the second session, several of the students were still frustrated with not being able to create a fictional video which led me to emphasize that 'non-fiction', 'documentary' and 'informational' were broad terms and that they could feel free to use their imaginations to select a topic or message that resonated with them. This segued into an interesting screening of sample 'non-fiction' video content and discussion about what constitutes 'non-fiction' content; while we didn't have time for extended exploration of how to test credibility of content, this discussion made it apparent that the new literacy of 'judgment' continues to be an important skill at a time when the lines between fiction and non-fiction content are blurring.

The groups' journeys to complete their final video project were entirely different from one another. Team Fire Report initially went through an extended brainstorming process in trying to find a topic that all would agree upon, beginning with a desire to review and test affordable makeup and shifting towards cool science experiments like how to make a death ray. This brainstorming took place over several weeks and I was not privy to how they ultimately decided

on a current affairs-broadcast television-style segment, mimicking late-night scripted satire programming, about a major recent fire at a building in their community. Indeed, this demonstrates how the new literacy of ‘simulation’ – as “the ability to interpret and construct dynamic models of real world processes” (Jenkins et al., 2009, p.4/56) was seamlessly woven into students’ video production tasks. Team Fire Report’s experience most closely reflected the original vision I had for their learning journey.

Meanwhile, Team Bake A Cake solidified their concept for a comedic baking segment quicker but encountered lots of difficulty in its execution. In their brainstorming stage, they were undecided between a ‘day in our life’ video and a cooking video. Without any prompting from me, this group decided to ask their intended audience (grade 6s at The Athena School) to vote on their favourite topic. This ultimately demonstrated how video production group work is an excellent exercise in harnessing the new literacy of ‘negotiation’. While Team Bake A Cake was unhappy with the overall result of their efforts, their experience was perhaps the most fascinating of the two groups, particularly given their initial overconfidence in making their video. Several members of this group indicated they watched cooking TV shows and were highly enthusiastic at the planning stage; had I required them to create a documentary or news report in the spirit of traditional non-fiction content, they would have missed out on this invaluable learning experience about the complications of filming cooking segments. I was inspired to create a short video which demonstrates this group’s journey (included on the main page of the website) as it illustrates the robust learning potential for group video-making projects in the classroom.

It is not possible to ascertain from this particular study whether the non-fiction genre offers a better frame for video-making projects in the classroom than the fiction genre. In the case of this study, I believe that the professionally produced non-fiction segments I reviewed

with the students presented concepts and techniques that they would be able to practice or mimic with minimal resources, unlike the more labor and resource intensive process of filming fictional scenes. This supports a more seamless way of preparing children for ethical participation in more public roles in the future (Jenkins et al., 2009). For example, during the fourth session, I screened two segments with the students to discuss how the media industry uses A-Roll (key interview footage/content) and B-Roll (supporting) video footage to assemble a story as well as the benefits and disadvantages of filming with two cameras. Both groups seemed drawn, perhaps for novel reasons, to the idea of filming with multiple video cameras; it was clear that they already felt confident filming video and wanted to experiment. Team Fire Report's final video project demonstrated that they had considered my suggestion about B-Roll to cover edit points; they also opted to film their hosted introduction from multiple angles to give visual interest (their video is available on the Session 6 page of the website). Team Bake A Cake appeared to have set out to film with two cameras but had issues with team members not wanting to commit solely to the task of camerawork; as I understand it, at some points only one person was attempting to operate both cameras. Given that I knew producing a cake-making video was a complicated endeavour, I debated during the sessions whether I should have better supported this group by analyzing a professional cooking show segment with them. From a facilitator's standpoint, it was admittedly more gratifying to hear several members of this group acknowledge in their final interviews that they had overestimated their abilities and that they would have benefitted from studying examples of the cooking show genre.

The non-fiction or informational genre also appeared to present both groups with a more accessible opportunity through which to explore the new literacy skills of simulation as well as performance. Moving towards the form of participatory culture Jenkins et al refer to as

expressions: “producing new creative forms, such as digital sampling, skinning and modding, fan videomaking, fan fiction writing, zines, mash-ups” (2009, p. 3). Team Fire Report reported on a real fire in their community and simulated the common conventions of news reports: studio introduction and wrap up with a field report including interviews in the middle. They explored their own expression of this genre through the use of comedic elements such as calling the report “News but 2 months late”. The two students featured in the video also performed as ‘co-anchors’ and reports, adding playfulness to their studio ‘intros’ and ‘outros’, while maintaining a level of seriousness when interviewing experts in the ‘field’. Similarly, Team Bake A Cake simulated the setting that is customary to cooking videos but also explored their own expression by attempting to include humour; the two students appearing on camera also performed as more serious baker and more playful assistant respectively.

Group Work, Community, and Peer Learning

A large part of this curriculum involved group work, emphasizing Jenkins et al.’s (2009) notion that, in a digital age shaped by knowledge cultures, problem-solving is shifting towards a team effort and literacy is becoming a social skill. Students formed their own groups for the mini-tasks whereas, for the final projects, they were assigned one of two groups of four. This was the sole instance where their teachers stepped in to facilitate, based on existing student dynamics to which I was not made privy. While preparing my curriculum, I had planned that students would form their own groups for the major video assignments based on shared interests; I wanted their groups to approach what Jenkins et al. described as ‘affiliations’: a form of participatory culture where communities assemble around a shared type of media platform or genre of content. Students being required to work with classmates who had different ideas

ultimately resulted in a greater opportunity to gain experience with several important new literacies: ‘collective intelligence’ – the ability to work together toward a common goal— and ‘negotiation’ – particularly in regards to the ability to “discern and respect multiple perspectives” (Jenkins et al, 2009, p.4/56); I believe this scenario also saw the groups approach more of a ‘collaborative problem solving’ form. I also indicated to students, as they struggled to agree on video topics, that in my media production experience it was rare that I had been able to fully decide the teams that I worked with. In their final interviews, all of the students mentioned the struggle to achieve consensus throughout the process of video-making and how challenging working in larger groups was, foreshadowing the team environments that may lie ahead for many of them in their future careers. Given the time restraints students were working with, we were not able to facilitate the perhaps idealized scenario that Jenkins et al. describe where students are “constantly motivated to acquire new knowledge or refine their existing skills, and because they allow each participant to feel like an expert while tapping the expertise of others” (2009, p.9). It would nevertheless be worthwhile for future application of video production in the classroom to aspire to this level of peer learning.

Additionally, I believe incorporating a screening of the final videos with the grade 6 students heightened the grade eight students’ overall curriculum experience. All members of Team Fire Report were collectively proud of their final product and found the screening experience particularly affirming. Meanwhile, several members of Team Bake A Cake introduced their video to the grade 6 class by explaining that it wasn’t good and that they should have done it differently. Only one member of this group felt that they accomplished something that wasn’t great but also wasn’t as terrible as her teammates thought. This student also saw the value of sharing their journey along with the mistakes they made with the grade 6s. In my initial

session planning, I had a rather idealized notion of how screenings as the end goal of the curriculum would foster a peer learning and community scenario between these two groups of students. During the screenings, I observed how each of these student groups, despite being ‘middle schoolers’, were at very different developmental stages. In many ways, it seemed as though the grade 6s were overly polite and supportive of their older peers. I would be curious whether screening the videos with students from another school would have offered a more useful experience and whether it would have enhanced the grade eight’s efforts in their video-making.

Applying Media Production Practices and Design Literacies

A consideration of design literacies did prove to be useful in building my media education curriculum. Media production industry conventions were particularly useful in preparing and supporting students through their group video project. My classroom experience also revealed the importance of allowing time for students to just ‘mess with’ the tools. In my limited time with the grade eight students, I tried to mix this play time with instruction on professional techniques while simultaneously asking them to plan their larger group projects. In the future, I would consider building in separate time just for play and experimentation perhaps as a separate unit whereas a larger group video project would represent a later unit. My plan of adhering to the three stages of ‘professional’ media production (pitching/pre-production, production, and post-production) did prove to be an effective process in several regards. In the final interviews, when I asked students to reflect back on the planning documents, several of them, particularly from Team Bake A Cake, indicated that better organization and consideration of details and variables would have assisted them in production. This team also indicated that they would have been better served to discuss and analyze more cooking videos, to strategize their approach more

effectively. A member of Team Fire Report felt that the experience of interviewing ‘real people’ about a ‘real story’ made the experience more serious and exciting. The students were also required to informally ‘pitch’ and their final video ideas to me for discussion; I explained to them that this was common practice in the industry. They appeared to enjoy this aspect, perhaps because I had screened several of my own video projects with the students to discuss how they came into being. While I cannot be certain what led Team Bake A Cake to take their two initial ideas (a baking video or a ‘day in the life’ video) to the grade six class for consideration, it did demonstrate that they understood how the media industry approaches storytelling for specific audiences and wanted to test out this process for themselves.

Approaching Media Education as an Evolving Curriculum

Jenkins et al. (2006) proposed key pedagogical interventions for educators designing curriculum in a participatory culture. While my experience working with The Athena School grade eight students supported the value of the interventions they identified, it also emphasized the need for media education curriculum to be an evolving process. Particularly in this current moment, amidst larger conversations about digital convergence, curriculum around media literacy and video production should be continuously undergoing revision, testing, and adaptation. While observing this particular group of students working with the iPads, I noticed that they would all immediately shift to the front-facing camera mode when the time came to test out microphones and tripods or complete the mini-tasks. I wondered if students would have focused more on the technical skills involved with filmmaking if they were looking through the viewfinder of a professional camera that offers an eye that looks out on the world without a ‘selfie’ option. This might not be as important a consideration or perhaps not even a factor in working with a different group of students: tablets, for example, could be ideal for introducing

grades 3-5 students to video production. The assumption here would be that tablets' ease of use would allow curriculum to focus more on multimodal expression and experimentation rather than technical skill at this grade level. In describing the participation gap, Jenkins et al. (2009) noted how middle-class children often seem 'naturally' superior in their use of technology as a result of access to it at home as well as support from family members or peers in using it. Permitting The Athena School grade eight students to complete their filming outside of class time did not allow me to be privy to the level of access or support they received. Regardless, my experiences with this group of students mirror Jenkins and his team's observation: there were numerous moments during my sessions where there was mention of chatting about ideas or troubleshooting with their parents or accessing an older siblings' iPad. I also observed that while this particular group of students cited a wide range of television content as their favourite programs, they also appeared to be heavily interested in making and watching blooper videos. My media production experience tells me that comedy is a favourite genre of many teens but I noticed that these students would laugh simply at seeing themselves on camera and not necessarily because the content was comedic in the mainstream sense of the genre. Their laughter might not have been intended to demonstrate humour but rather to indicate their joy at seeing their own images or at seeing themselves act in unpredictable, uncensored, and silly ways (contrary to the way girls their age are portrayed in mass media programming). Perhaps, aligning with the participation gap, their interest in bloopers might have represented a way of demonstrating their considerable access to and confidence with technology: many of these students indicated to me that they often film themselves on their smartphones or tablets for fun or to participate in video apps and games. While I do not have a strong theory to explain their fascination with bloopers, it alerted me to the value of considering the idiosyncracies of a given group of students when designing video-making assignments or media education curriculum. In this specific case, I might have

reconfigured my curriculum to specifically tap into the students' interest in comedy or I might have opted to steer this group towards a different experience to challenge them with dramatic storytelling tasks. During the final video screenings and discussion, it was apparent that many of the grade 6 students were already creating or contributing content to YouTube channels. In the specific case of The Athena School, and the socioeconomic status of its students, it occurred to me at the end of the project that the grade sixes would have been an ideal group with whom to conduct this research: many showed great enthusiasm in the craft of video making without the sense of overconfidence often mixed with indifference exhibited by their older peers.

These observations also reveal some of the current challenges educators face in teaching media production and suggest the impracticality of a 'one-size-fits-all' curriculum design for each grade level. They additionally suggest that curriculum design based on grade levels will not account for students from various socioeconomic backgrounds having different relationships to media as well as access to the tools and support of their use. Finally, they suggest the value of teachers having ongoing support or customization by a media professional in their implementation of media education in the classroom.

A Media Producer Facilitating Curriculum

In overall consideration of participatory culture, I also endeavoured to approach a 'pedagogy of collegiality' that describes the successful collaboration between adults and youth in youth media production (Chavez & Soep, 2005). While I was mindful of trying not to romanticize the notion of voice and celebrating media production as an emancipatory experience, I struggled with reigning in my passion for the art of media storytelling throughout the sessions. It also did seem like some students were caught up in trying to label me, to understand the work I

had done, and understand what my various jobs entailed; I underestimated how important this would be to the group. I have no problem talking about my past work but I also came to realize that I had not thought through how to best summarize or explain themes in my jobs, particularly as they all have been quite varied in terms of roles, teams, and content. I might have considered spending some time walking through that on the first day but I prioritized getting to know the students better in our limited time together. My decision to screen a sampling of my media work early on appeared to be useful: students indicated to me that I was a strong supporter of women because my footage featured a variety of interesting female characters.

As the sessions were taking place during class time, it often felt as though I was assuming the role of a substitute teacher. I also collaborated on an assessment rubric with the teachers for the final video project, further placing myself in a position of authority to the students. While I did encourage the students to ask questions or ask for help, I got the sense that they became more interested in showing me that they were self-sufficient. I also found myself struggling with when to intervene and when to let them learn on their own. The school's imposed scheduling restrictions, including working within classroom hours and in the students' regular classroom, further limited my ability to work with the students in an intensive-type format which I believe would have allowed us to develop a better rapport. As a result of the sessions being spread out, I often had to communicate through their teachers which also took away from the collaborative space I had initially hoped to create. It is also worth noting that the students were reminded several times of their ability to 'opt out' of the research but they may have felt inclined to participate as this project was built into their media studies and English curriculum. I suspect this age group in particular would have afforded me more insight had we been able to work without being observed by their teachers. Based on my general success gaining child participants' trust

during filming, I may have overestimated my ability to foster an open and comfortable environment with this group of students.

Further, I feel as though I was unsuccessful in supporting both groups equally with their final video projects, in large part because both groups were never at the same stage during the latter half of the classroom sessions. The plan for session five was to go through the basics of video editing. Team Bake A Cake had completed their filming but Team Fire Report had managed to secure permission to film at the fire hall during our classroom time. I was therefore unable to deliver my curriculum as planned and instead, discussed Team Bake A Cake's filming experience and offered some advice. In hindsight, I should have found a way to carve out a similar amount of time to discuss Team Fire's post-filming thoughts. In the final interviews, several students indicated that, in retrospect, they would have liked to have me present during filming and editing to support them. This suggests that students recognized their overconfidence in their abilities and also that had we had a longer frame of time together, they may have welcomed my more direct support and participation in their work.

Finally, in producing an ambitious curriculum plan, I did not factor in my own lack of experience instructing in such a capacity. As such, I found that there was never enough time in each session to cover updates on the status of the major projects, as well as to learn some new concepts or have a discussion, complete a mini-task, and take up the mini-tasks. Being a sole facilitator even with a small group of only eight students was not ideal; it made it challenging for me to support and observe groups in a balanced manner. Working with iPads and some iPad-specific video equipment created an additional obstacle for me, as I was accustomed to working with professional grade equipment. Somewhat ironically, I spent a substantial amount of time prior to beginning the sessions familiarizing myself with new accessories and accessing tutorials

about smartphone and tablet video production workflows and techniques; I also wanted to better understand the capabilities and limitations of the tablets I'd be working with in order to demonstrate both a level of confidence and competence going into the sessions and to foster a collaborative environment. Overall, my learning curve was high and, while I felt as though I struggled more than I thrived in the classroom, the experience has inspired me to explore future research as a classroom media education facilitator.

A Case Study Meets PAR Approach to Classroom Research

I had initially anticipated being able to straddle the roles of facilitator and researcher in the classroom and quickly realized how unrealistic this was, particularly given the number of students and my need to support them with equipment use. After each class session, I did take time to reflect on the experience through short write ups; these are included in the website under the 'My Project Journal' headings on each of the Session Plan pages. Having the fieldwork support of two Master's students in my cohort and one undergraduate media production student turned out to be invaluable. I had underestimated how consuming the role of instructor would be, particularly given it was the first time I was instructing in this way. The video footage was particularly valuable as it allowed me to review it after the sessions were complete and to adopt more of a researcher role to reflect on the overall experience.

My attempts to apply elements of participatory action research through the video diaries weren't altogether successful. They reflected the idealized notion I had of giving students a voice in my study. I noticed early on that many of the students were not completing the video diaries in relation to my instructions. Several students were very brief in reciting what they had done in the session and a general comment about their level of enjoyment. One student was incredibly detailed at describing what happened in the sessions but didn't seem comfortable offering further

personal insight. Only one student took the time to reflect and share some insight into her own interest or disinterest in the material. Interestingly, although I asked that the students record these in private, only one of them did as instructed; this was the student whose diaries demonstrated some introspection (a sample is available on the Session 3 page of the website). This was a particularly troubling development for me as I could not understand if it reflected their distrust of me or some other reason, considering their comfort in performing on camera and turning the lens on themselves in other contexts. In the final interviews, I asked several students about this and they indicated that they would have preferred to have me interview them in order to provide me with “what I wanted.” Future iterations of this type of study would have to reconsider the use of video diaries and whether there is a better way to demonstrate their value and ensure students will produce them. I also asked students to complete a preliminary written questionnaire. It was my intention to factor their replies into how I approached my curriculum. Unfortunately, I waited too long to distribute the questionnaires and we were well into our third session before I was able to obtain all of the completed documents. From a participatory action research standpoint, these questionnaires were useful to include in the supporting website in that they offered more insight into the lives and perspectives of this group of students (a sample of a student’s completed questionnaire is available in the Student Content section of Session 1 on the website). At the end of the curriculum unit, I conducted one-on-one semi-structured interviews with the students to discuss their experiences with the project. Their responses were useful in my creation of a short video that chronicled one group’s experience producing their final video project (accessible through the home/main page of the website).

My original intention was to have the students complete their final video projects during class time, in part so that I would be present to observe and assist. I quickly discovered that it

was impossible to build this into the existing sessions with the amount of content I felt was important to cover. Additionally, the students' final video project ideas did not take place in a school setting. Therefore, I requested that the students record some 'behind-the-scenes' footage while they were working on their final projects. While the majority of footage they recorded was not as useful to me from an observational research standpoint, it ultimately motivated me to create a short summary video that blended researcher footage with participant footage and perspectives, perhaps more closely approaching PAR than other portions of the creative project. Mary Celeste Kearney, who has researched girl-centric media production projects, noted the challenges of trying to speak on behalf of research subjects; she suggested one way to mitigate this was to not speak 'for' but 'near by' youth participants, inspired by the work of filmmaker and scholar Trinh T. Minh (2005). The video I produced reflected my attempt to speak near by the participants. I ultimately found that unless research is entirely driven by children, levelling the playing field is not entirely possible.

Finally, my decision to design a supporting website was borne out of beginning to draft this paper. The site is a chronicle of my 'media education curriculum piloting' journey that also complements my desire to bring students' voices into the research: it presents planning materials and samples of collected data such as students' video diaries, my reflections, and students' mini video assignments, as well as their final video projects. In reflecting on how to qualify the ability of video-making group projects to support new literacies development, I decided to produce a short video. This video summarizes Team Bake A Cake's experience creating their final project and is comprised of a mix of content: researcher-recorded video footage, student-recorded 'behind-the-scenes' footage, students' video diaries and my final interviews with the students. It is my hope that this video highlights the considerable— and customizable— potential of non-

fiction video production in the classroom. Further, while beyond the scope of this project, the site could be further developed as an advocacy tool to promote the value of non-fiction video production in the classroom and to support teachers in their curriculum planning.

Conclusion: The Future of Media Content and Media Education in a Participatory Culture

This research represented a unique and valuable opportunity for me through which to consider how students are thinking about media and using video content and technology in a participatory culture. Inspired by Jenkins et al.'s white paper, this research aimed to contribute to the limited but growing scholarship on children's media-making both inside and outside of the classroom. While the student sample represented a very specific demographic that does not represent the socioeconomic diversity of Toronto, it is my hope that this research offers points for comparison with other studies involving different youth communities.

This project focused more specifically on exploring the complexities of media education design in a digital age. I maintain my position that incorporating media 'practice' or creation into media literacy curriculum presents valuable learning experiences for students, particularly in preparing them for participation in a networked culture. From this limited study, I would like to provide points for future consideration in media education research as well as curriculum design:

- 1) while mainstream mass media production processes and practices can be scaled down and translated into classroom exercises, this approach may not fully consider nor most effectively support current and future generation of youth;
- 2) media production curriculum design should be an organic and evolving process to account for different groups' experiences, access to technology, and skill levels;
- and 3) curriculum should extend beyond the brief unit model to offer the full value of media production activities, including ample time for students to play and experiment with equipment.

I also believe there is value in engaging media producers or fostering ongoing collaboration between educators and media professionals in curriculum design. This is particularly relevant as educators explore more seamless integration of media content and technology across curriculum versus solely as media arts or literacy specific curriculum. This

aligns with Jenkins et al.'s case for updating media education as well as the New London Group's position that pedagogy should approach an epistemology of pluralism "that provides access without people having to erase or leave behind different subjectivities" (1996, p.72). It further supports approaching literacy education as being able to "sift through a range of different possible modes of expression and determine which is most effective in reaching their audience and communicating their message, and to grasp which techniques work best in conveying information through this channel" (Kress as cited in Jenkins, 2010, p. 47).

While this research specifically explored video production as a pedagogical tool in a networked era, I believe that this type of scholarship is useful beyond an educational context; it emphasizes the need for interdisciplinary scholarship and practice to support youth participation in a digital age that "cuts across educational practices, creative processes, community life, and democratic citizenship" (Jenkins et al., 2009, p. 8). It also suggests the need to experiment in the media industry or from a media studies approach. Within the field of media studies, scholars refer to a concept of 'participatory media' (Rheingold as cited in Delwiche & Henderson, 2012) or a 'co-creative media' whereby professional facilitate media production around specific desired outcomes (Spurgeon et al., 2009). Co-creative media in particular offers a format for critiquing mass media representation, supporting critical pedagogy, encouraging the development of strong media storytelling techniques in self-representational media practices, and promoting personal storytelling for social change, knowledge, and humanistic endeavour (Spurgeon, 2015). Similarly, Delwiche and Henderson describe participatory culture as a coexistence and negotiation between the knowledge space and the commodity space, creating hybrid media creator-consumers working alongside traditional media producers (Delwiche & Henderson, 2012, p.7). Acknowledging the increasingly complex relationship between "top-town corporate

media and bottom-up participatory culture” (Jenkins, 2006, p. 243), the non-fiction or informational media genre represents an ideal frame through which to explore learning about and making media. It is my ongoing desire to promote interdisciplinary research-as-practice involving child participants and fostering increased collaboration between media producers and educators both inside and outside of the classroom and in hybrid spaces in between. I anticipate that these types of projects have great potential to shape future directions in participatory, alternative, or co-creative media that supports children’s diverse voices and perspectives in a digital age.

Appendix A

Website Information

Address: <https://betweenproductions.wixsite.com/cult>

Password: tterz

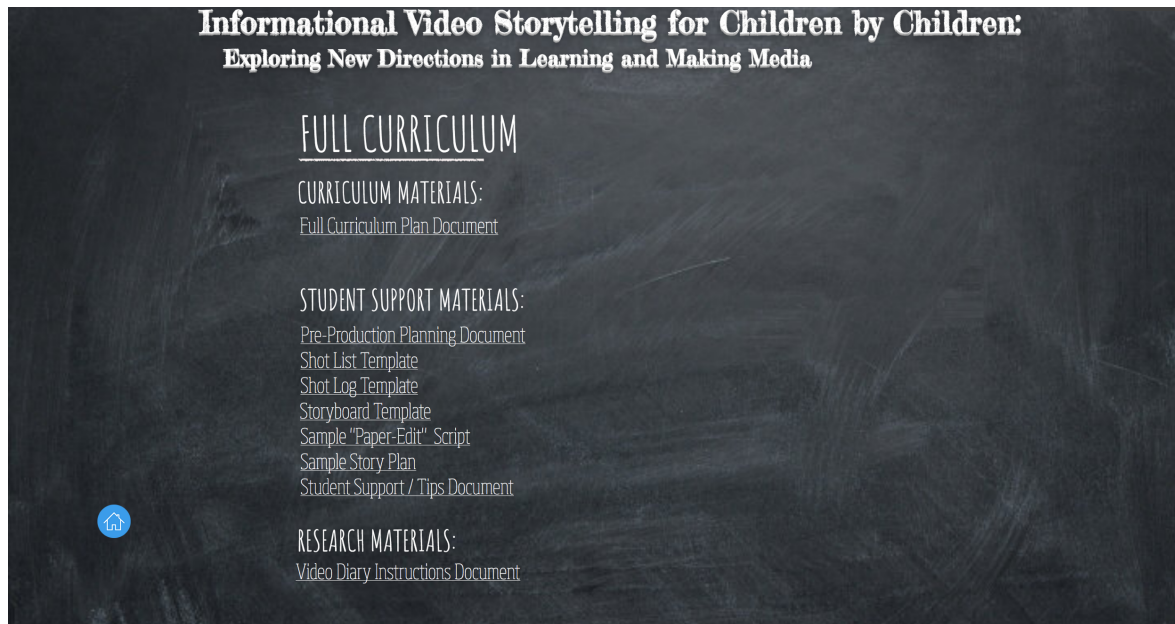
Appendix B

Website Screenshots:

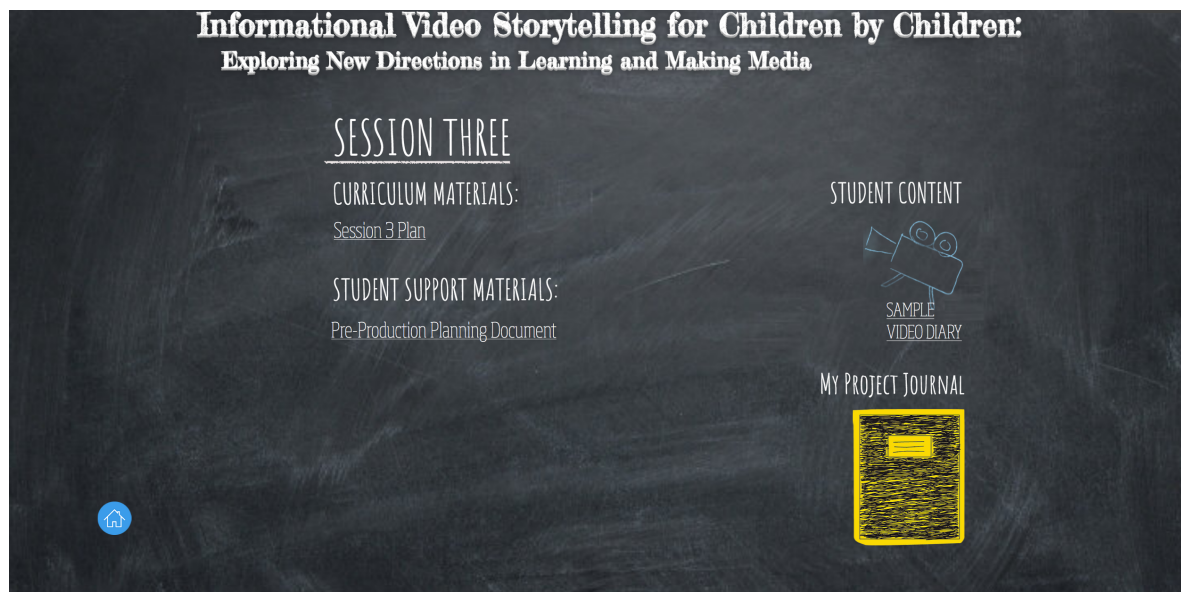
Home Page



Full Curriculum Page and Documents List



Individual Session Page



References

- Asquith, K., & Hearn, A. (2012). Promotional prime time: "Advertainment," Internal Network Promotion and the Future of Canadian Television. *Canadian Journal of Communication*, 37(2), 241-257. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.lib.ryerson.ca/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1114671108?accountid=13631>
- Banet-Weiser, S. (2007). *Kids Rule!: Nickelodeon and Consumer Citizenship*. Duke University Press.
- Banet-Weiser, S. (2011). Branding the Post-Feminist Self: Girls' Video Production and Youtube. In. M.C. Kearney (Ed.), *Mediated girlhoods: New explorations of girls' media culture* (277-294). New York: Peter Lang.
- Bazalgette, C., & Buckingham, D. (2013). Literacy, media and multimodality: A critical response. *Literacy*, 47(2), 95-102. doi:10.1111/j.1741-4369.2012.00666.x
- Besley, T., & Peters, M. (2006). *Building Knowledge Cultures: Education and Development in the Age of Knowledge Capitalism*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Blum-Ross, A. (2015). Filmmakers/Educators/Facilitators? understanding the role of adult intermediaries in youth media production in the UK and the USA. *Journal of Children and Media*, 9(3), 308-324. doi:10.1080/17482798.2015.1058280
- Braden, S. (1999). Using video for research and representation: Basic human needs and critical pedagogy. *Journal of Educational Media*, 24(2), 117-129. doi:10.1080/1358165990240204
- Brushwood Rose, C. (2009). The (im)possibilities of self representation: Exploring the limits of storytelling in the digital stories of women and girls. *Changing English*, 16(2), 211-220. doi:10.1080/13586840902863194
- Buckingham, D. (1997). The making of citizens: Pedagogy and address in children's television news. *Journal of Educational Media*, 23(2-3), 119-139. doi:10.1080/1358165970230203
- Buckingham, D. (2000). *The making of citizens: Young people, news, and politics* Routledge.
- Buckingham, D. (2003). *Media Education: Literacy, Learning and Contemporary culture*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Buckingham, D. (2007). *Beyond technology: Children's learning in the age of digital culture* Polity Press.

- Buckingham, D. (2007). Media education goes digital: An introduction. *Learning, Media and Technology*, 32(2), 111-119. doi:10.1080/17439880701343006
- Buckingham, D. (2008). Children and Media: A Cultural studies approach. In K. Drotner & S. Livingstone (Eds.), *International Handbook of Children, Media and Culture* (219-235). California: Sage Publications.
- Buckingham, D. (2011). *The material child: Growing up in consumer culture* Polity.
- Buckingham, D. (2013). Teaching the creative class? Media education and the media industries in the age of 'participatory culture'. *Journal Of Media Practice*, 14(1), 25-41. doi:10.1386/jmpr.14.1.25_1
- Buckingham, D., & Sefton-Green, J. (1994). *Cultural studies goes to school: Reading and teaching popular media*. Taylor & Francis.
- Buckingham, D., & Sefton-Green, J. (2006). Chapter 8 Youth, Technology, and Media Cultures. *Review of Research in Education* 279-306.
- Buckingham, D., & Strandgaard J. H. (2012). Beyond “Media panics”: Reconceptualising public debates about children and media. *Journal of Children and Media*, 6(4), 413-429. doi:10.1080/17482798.2012.740415
- Caron, A., Caronia, L., Hwang, J. & Brummans, B. (2010). *A National Study on Children's Television Programming in Canada*. Retrieved from: <http://www.ymamj.org/medias/fichier/a-national-study-on-childrens-television-2010.pdf>
- Caron, A., Hwang, J., McPhedran, E. (2012). *Are the Kids Alright? Canadian Families and Television in a Digital Age*. Retrieved from: http://www.cmf-fmc.ca/documents/files/about/publications/Are_the_Kids_all_right.pdf
- Carter, Cynthia 2013. *Children and news: Rethinking citizenship in the twenty-first century*. In: Lemish, D. ed. *The Routledge Handbook of Children, Adolescents and Media*, Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 255-262.
- Chávez, V., & Soep, S. (2005). Youth Radio and the Pedagogy of Collegiality. *Harvard Educational Review*, 75(4), 409-434. Retrieved from: <http://culturemediaed.pressible.org/files/2011/09/soepchavez.pdf>
- Coulter, N. (2013). *From the Top Drawer to the Bottom Line: The Commodification of Children's Culture*. Mediascapes. 4th edition, 28.
- Cope, B., & Kalantzis, M. (2009). Multiliteracies: New Literacies, New Learning. *Pedagogies: An International Journal* 4 (3), 164–195.

- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among 5 traditions* Sage Publications.
- Crotty, M. (2003). *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspectives in the Research Process*. London: Sage Publications.
- Delwiche, A. A., & Henderson, J. J. (2013). *The participatory cultures handbook* Routledge.
- Dewey, J. (2012). Education and democracy in the world of today (1938). *Schools: Studies in Education*, 9(1), 96-100. doi:10.1086/665026
- FisherKeller, J., & Tyner, K. R. (2011). *International perspectives on youth media: Cultures of production and education*. Peter Lang.
- Fleetwood, N. R. (2005). Authenticating practices: Producing realness, performing youth. In S. Maira & E. Soep (Eds.), *Youthscapes: The popular, the national, the global* (pp. 155-172). Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Freire, P. (1990). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Continuum.
- Garcia, A., & Morrell, E. (2013). Special Issue: City Youth and the Pedagogy of Participatory Media. *Learning, Media and Technology*, 38(2), 123-127.
- Gee, J. P. (2010). *New digital media and learning as an emerging area and "worked examples" as one way forward* The MIT Press.
- Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age* Stanford University Press.
- Goodman, S. (2003). *Teaching Youth Media: A Critical Guide to Literacy, Video Production & Social Change*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Grbich, C. (2012). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Introduction*. Second edition. London: Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Hakkarainen, P., Saarelainen, T., & Ruokamo, H. (2007). Towards meaningful learning through digital video-supported case-based teaching. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 23(1), 87-109.
- Hoechsmann, M. & Low, E. (2008). *Reading Youth Writing: "New" Literacies, Cultural Studies & Education*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Hoechsmann, M. & Poyntz, R. (2012). *Media Literacies: A Critical Introduction*. West Sussex: Blackwell Publishing.

- Irwin, R., Springgay, S. (2008). A/r/tography as Practice Based Research. In M. Cahnmann & R. Siegesmund (Eds.). *Arts-based research in education: Foundations for practice*. pp. 103-124. New York: Routledge.
- Ito, M. (2009). *Hanging out, messing around, and geeking out: Kids living and learning with new media*. MIT Press. Retrieved: https://mitpress.mit.edu/sites/default/files/titles/free_download/9780262013369_Hanging_Out.pdf
- Jenkins, H. (Ed.). (1998). *The children's culture reader*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Jenkins, H. (2006). *Convergent Culture*. New York: NYU Press.
- Jenkins, H. (2009). Confronting the challenges of Participatory Culture. *The MacArthur Family Reports on Digital Media and Learning*.
- Jenson, J., Dahya, N. & Fisher, S. (2014). Valuing production values: a 'do it yourself' media production club. *Learning, Media and Technology*, 39, 2, 215-228.
- Karlsson, J. (2001). Doing Visual Research with School Learners in South Africa. *Visual Studies*. 16 (2): 23-37
- Kearney, M. C. (2005). *Girls make media* Routledge.
- Kellner, D. & Share, J. (2007). Critical media literacy is not an option. *Springer Science+Business Media*. doi: 10.1007/s11519-007-0004-2
- Kincheloe, J. L., & Steinberg, S. R. (2004). *Kinderculture: The corporate construction of childhood* (2nd ed.) Westview Press.
- Kress, G. (1997). *Before writing: Rethinking the paths to literacy*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Kress, G. (2010). *Multimodality: A Social Semiotic Approach to Contemporary Communication*. London: Routledge.
- Lankshear, C. & Knobel, M. (eds.) *Digital Literacies: Concepts, Policies and Practices*. Peter Lang Publishing, 2008.
- Lenhart, A., Madden, M., Macgill, A. R., & Smith, A. (2007). Teens and social media. Retrieved: http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_Teens_Social_Media_Final.pdtime

- Masterman, L. (1985). *Teaching the Media*. London: Comedia.
- Marquez-Zenkov, K. (2007). Through city students' eyes: urban students' beliefs about school's purposes, supports and impediments. *Visual Studies*, 22(2). 138-154. Retrieved from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/233313602_Through_city_students'_eyes_Urban_students'_beliefs_about_school's_purposes_supports_and_impediments
- Matthews, J. (2003). Cultures of Production: Making Children's News, in S. Cottle (Ed.). *Media Organisation and Production* (pp.131-146). London: Sage.
- Merrigan, G., Huston, C. L. & Johnston, R. (2012). *Communications research methods*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press
- Mendes, K., Carter, C., Messenger Davies, M., Allan, S. (2012). Young Citizens and the News. In. S. Allan (Ed.) *The routledge companion to news and journalism* (pp.450-459). Routledge.
- Mihailidis, P. (2014). *Media literacy and the emerging citizen: Youth, engagement and participation in digital culture*. Peter Lang.
- Papert, S. & Harel, I. (1991) Situating Constructionism. *Constructionism*. Ablex Publishing Corporation. Retrieved: <http://www.papert.org/articles/SituatingConstructionism.html>
- Postman, N. (1979). The First Curriculum: Comparing School and Television. *The Phi Delta Kappan* 61(3), pp. 163-168 Retrieved: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20385381>
- Postman, N. (1994). *The disappearance of childhood* (1st Vintage Books ed.) Vintage Books.
- Prout, A. (2008). Nature and the construction of Childhood. In K. Drotner & S. Livingstone (Eds.), *International Handbook of Children, Media and Culture* (21-35). Sage Publications.
- Pungente, John J. (1989). The Second Spring: Media Education in Canada's Secondary Schools. *Educational Media International*, 26(4).
- Rose, J. (1993). *The case of peter pan, or, the impossibility of children's fiction*. University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Rowse, J. (2013). *Working with multimodality: rethinking literacy in a digital age*. New York: Routledge.
- Share, J. (2009). *Media Literacy is Elementary: Teaching Youth to Critically Read and Create Media*. Peter Lang Publishing.

- Shaw Rocket Fund. (2010). Media and Technology Landscape Study Among Young Canadians. Retrieved: <http://www.rocketfund.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/pub-2010MediaandTechnologyLandscapeStudyofYoungCanadians-ExecutiveSummary.pdf>
- Shaw, J & C Robertson (1997). Participatory Video: A Practical Approach to Using Video Creatively in Group Development Work. London and New York: Routledge.
- Sheridan-Rabideau, M. P., & Rowsell, J. (2010). *Design literacies: Learning and innovation in the digital age* (1st ed.) Routledge.
- Spurgeon, C., Burgess, J., Klaebe, H., McWilliam, K., Tacchi, J., and Tsai, M. (2009). Co-creative Media: Theorising Digital Storytelling as a platform for researching and developing participatory culture. In T. Flew (Ed.) *Communication, Creativity and Global Citizenship: Refereed Proceedings of the Australian and New Zealand Communications Association Annual Conference, Brisbane, July 8-10*. Retrieved from: <http://web.archive.org/web/20110409115646/http://www.anzca09.org/>
- Spurgeon, C. (2015). Participatory media and 'co-creative' storytelling. *Media International Australia, Incorporating Culture & Policy*, (154), 132-138.
- Stack, M., & Kelly, D. (2006). Popular media, education, and resistance. *Canadian Journal of Education*, 29(1), 5 -26. Retrieved: <http://www.csse-scee.ca/CJE/Articles/FullText/CJE29-1/CJE29-1-stackkelly.pdf>
- Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Sage Publications.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.) Sage Publications.
- Jenkins, H. (2013, May 6). What Do We Now Know About Participatory Cultures: An Interview with Aaron Delwiche and Jennifer Jacobs Henderson (Part One) [Blog post]. Retrieved from: <http://henryjenkins.org/2013/05/what-do-we-now-know-about-participatory-cultures-an-interview-with-aaron-delwiche-and-jennifer-jacobs-henderson-part-one.html>