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### *Pedagogical power Lessons from school spaces*

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**Jessica Pykett (2009) Pedagogical power: Lessons from school spaces**

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## **Pedagogical power: Lessons from school spaces**

### **ABSTRACT**

While accounts of the so-called 'Totally Pedagogised Society' (Bonal and Rambla) or 'Public Pedagogy' (Giroux) have been important to our conceptions of civil society, democracy and education, lessons can be drawn from schooling which complicate this story and undermine any simple division between the state, civil society and non-governmental organizations, in relation to both formal education and the broader narratives of radical or critical pedagogy. This article develops an account of pedagogical power which values the inciting and enabling practices of pedagogy as the art of teaching. It then considers pedagogical forms of power both within formal state schooling in the UK and the pedagogical strategies employed by non-governmental organizations within and outside of the formal educational sphere – arguing that the latter does not automatically promote values of social justice and democracy.

**KEYWORDS** citizenship education, civil society, critical pedagogy, governing, pedagogy

### **Pedagogy, teaching, education**

It could be said that pedagogy is the new orthodoxy in education. Numerous popular and best-selling textbooks bestow the virtue of 'getting the buggers to behave' (Cowley, 2003); 'managing classrooms' or behaviour (Dixie, 2003; Rogers, 2006; Visser, 2000) and knowing 'how to teach' or indeed 'how not to

teach' (Mr Read 2006), 'how to teach with a hangover' (Sedgwick, 2005) and providing '500 Tips for Teachers' (Brown et al., 1998). Increasingly, teacher training courses focus less on subject disciplines and more on the discipline of teaching itself. The education of teachers has undergone major changes in recent years. As has been demonstrated elsewhere (Coffey, 2001; Furlong, 2005), policy reforms in Initial Teacher Training have been dominated by a shift from university- to school-based training, increased control of the knowledge and skills of student teachers, and the monitoring of student-teacher practices by Ofsted and the Training and Development Agency for Schools. This emphasis on pedagogy arguably diminishes the importance of questions of what to teach and why to teach, ignoring critical perspectives on the production of knowledge and on sociologies of education which shape students' experiences and contribute to their educational achievements.

The converse to this pedagogical obsession is the extensive literature on critical pedagogy and from the field of cultural studies which places a primacy on power and politics in the production of knowledge, and the political-economic circumstances of teaching and learning. This literature advances an expansive definition of pedagogy not just in terms of the teaching and learning activities of the formal school, but as a form of address employed publicly in multifarious sites by various state and non-state agencies, constituting what is termed 'public pedagogy' (Giroux, 2004: 74; McLaren, 2008: 476).

Giroux (2004: 74) criticizes the dominant public pedagogy of social institutions beyond schools as a neoliberal scheme which 'uses the educational force of culture to negate the basic conditions of critical agency'. He argues that the dominant media 'misrepresent' reality, commercial interests 'mis-educate' the

public, and that the (US) government employs strategies of 'deception' (2004: 76–7, my emphasis). His picture of public pedagogy is far from hopeful, and could be interpreted as somewhat conspiratorial. While the work of Giroux and others in this critical pedagogy vein (Freire, 1972; Giroux and McLaren, 1994),<sup>1</sup> help us to think of the wider social and political sites, objects and subjects of pedagogical address, they also face some criticism from the view that they remain rather too hopeful about the possibility of a radical change of consciousness. More importantly, this approach has also been condemned for replacing one dominant knowledge with 'the dogmas and illusions of the hegemonic versions of critical pedagogy' itself (Gur Ze'ev, 1998: 463) and for having its own dominating effects (Gore, 1993: xii).

However, a further critique of such authors' analysis of power, and an overemphasis on the efficacy of the pedagogic device (Bernstein, 1996: 39) is necessary in order to elucidate a more discriminating account of pedagogical power. The account developed in the remainder of this article therefore aims to improve our understanding of pedagogical forms of address both within and outside of formal schooling, the role of the state, market and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in education, and the possibility of critique itself. It is argued that conceptually locating power in the hands of 'elite interests', 'neoliberalism', 'the state' or 'the market' involves making three key mistakes.

First, it relies on a possessive account of power, in which power is a 'thing' held by people, agencies and located in particular places. This positions critical pedagogues as the only 'free' people able to emancipate repressed others. Second, it conflates education, teaching, pedagogy, culture and power, and erases the distinctive nature of pedagogy as the 'arts of teaching'. Third, it

rather unquestioningly translates the experiences of formal schooling into a general theory of public pedagogy or the pedagogical state, denying the distinctive spatiality of schools as institutions. The next section details the way in which these three mistakes can be troubled by a more specific account of pedagogical power.

## **Pedagogical power**

### **De-faced power**

Perhaps the most convincing and thought-provoking critique of the critical pedagogy literature is that which focuses on its possessive analysis of power. Hayward (2000: 48) for instance, argues against the tendency of critical pedagogy approaches to presume that teachers 'have power' over students and that the educational process serves to reproduce these power relations of those who possess power and those who do not. By contrast, she (2000: 49) suggests that the critical education literature places 'transformative intellectuals' or teachers in a privileged position to emancipate students from their 'repressed' knowledge and allowing them to express their genuine utopian desires.

Hayward's (1998: 1–2) 'de-faced' notion of power examines the particularity of the conditions of schooling which shape people's capacity to act. In charting the way in which power has been predominantly described as a thing, or 'power-with-a-face' (1998: 8) throughout debates in political theory, she (1998: 10) argues that power shapes the conditions of all actions, stating that 'it is difficult to sustain this distinction between free action and action shaped by power', since all actions take place within particular social conditions, and since the capacity of people to act is differentially distributed. In this sense, critique

should not concentrate on who has power, where power is located and who constrains who, but should recognize that all social action is both constrained and enabled (i.e. power shapes actions even when it appears to be in 'enabling' forms, or conversely, power can promote social goods (1998: 20–1). Political critique should therefore focus on the differences or asymmetries in social enablement and constraint which delimit possible social action; specifically on relations of domination (1998: 162). But instead, critical pedagogues pursue an account of public pedagogy which equates it with revolutionary praxis (McLaren, 2008: 480) or resistive political action which aims to 'foist off the tyranny of authoritarianism and oppression and bring about an all embracing and diverse fellowship of global citizens profoundly endowed with a fully claimed humanity' (2008: 476). Such heroic and masculine language has been noted (Lather, 1991; Luke, 1992) and likened to 'fantasies of empowerment' (Buckingham, 1998: 1) which place the critical pedagogue in the position of moral arbiter and controller of conscience (Hunter, 1994: 168).

### **The arts of teaching**

In addition to a possessive account of power, the critical pedagogues also appear to ignore the distinctive nature of pedagogy as a mode of address which is intentionally educative and productive. This is perhaps due to the apparent slippage between notions of pedagogy, teaching, education, culture and power employed by such authors. Gore (1993: 3) unpacks the term pedagogy – not as constitutive of power relations as the critical pedagogy approach presumes – but as the process or 'how' of knowledge production (1993: 5). Hence it can be argued that pedagogy, as it denotes the science, theories or specifically the arts of teaching practice, is more than simply the transmission of knowledge (whether 'official' or 'critical' perspectives) which is intended to serve a unified

agenda. Teaching may be considered a direct relationship between student and teacher whereas pedagogy is a pre-scribed mode of address which places some critical distance (both temporally and spatially) between teacher and taught. Teaching is what happens in schools, but pedagogy involves thinking about teaching, strategizing, discriminating for/against the particular demands of specific students, and consideration of the interplay between a teacher's intentions, the social conditions in which students and teachers interact and the desired outcomes of each actor within the pedagogic event. Hence pedagogy produces novel subjects and is active in constituting actors, but there is some deferral in producing its powerful effects. The teacher is not the same as the pedagogue. Therefore, teacher-training and the autobiographical experiences of teachers are important political sites which need to be taken into consideration in the development of theories of pedagogical power, since according to a defaced notion of power, teachers and students do not hold power, but pedagogy holds them in relation with one another. Thus pedagogy can be distinguished from teaching as instruction in terms of its enabling and productive nature. So for Dewey (1916, cited in Hayward, 2000: 46), pedagogy is 'that reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience, and which increases ability to direct the course of subsequent experience'. In this way, pedagogy is concerned with developing students' capacities and competences, rather than limiting their access to critical consciousness.

At the same time as distinguishing between pedagogy and teaching, we must also distinguish between pedagogy, teaching, education, culture and power. While Giroux's account brings out the cultural, political and social significance of schooling and pedagogical practices, his description of public pedagogy can be criticized on two main counts. First, pedagogy is conflated with education,



culture and power. Giroux contends that 'pedagogy is no longer restricted to what goes on in schools, but becomes a defining principle of a wide ranging set of cultural apparatuses engaged in what Raymond Williams has called "permanent education"' (cited in Giroux, 2004: 79). Hence pedagogy collapses into 'educational force' (2004: 74), 'neoliberal corporate culture' (2004: 73), into 'corporate power' (2004: 74). For example, he (2004: 78, my emphasis) states that:

Culture now plays a central role in producing narratives, metaphors, images and desiring maps that exercise a powerful pedagogical force over how people think about themselves and their relationship to others ... It is also the sphere in which the translating and pedagogical possibilities of culture are under assault, particularly as the forces of neoliberalism dissolve public issues into utterly privatized and individualistic concerns.

Second, his account therefore tends towards a 'faced' interpretation of power through which one can identify forces of power and seek to overthrow their common sense hegemony through counter-hegemonic, resistive and radical practices. So whilst he describes pedagogy as a somewhat dubious means of manufacturing consent to the interests of neoliberalism, individualism and corporate takeover, he also reserves pedagogy as an emancipatory force, identifying 'cultural politics as a pedagogical force for understanding how people buy into neoliberal ideology' (2004: 80). Therefore his work tends towards a Gramscian notion of power as coercive and controlling; as a direct intervention in manufacturing our thoughts (except those of the critical pedagogues themselves). He (2004: 80) states, for instance, that: 'unfortunately, many cultural studies theorists have failed to take seriously Antonio Gramsci's insight that '[e]very relationship of "hegemony" is necessarily an educational relationship'.

Elsewhere Giroux (1980: 352) has claimed that 'the distinction between culture and power is a false one that needs to be abolished'. An alternative distinction between culture and power is offered by Barnett (2001: 20) who explains that:

culture articulates with power through the active (differential and selective) development of capacities, such that power-relations are reproduced by cultivating certain forms of agency. Education is a primary vector for this sort of exercise of power.

This offers an interesting challenge to a critical pedagogy approach which posits culture as hegemony, or 'power over'. Instead we can mobilize Foucault's critique of sovereign power to understand culture as 'a set of practices or technologies for the transformation of individuals into subjects capable of governing themselves' (Barnett, 2001: 14). This again recognizes the distinctive nature of pedagogical power as concerned with developing the capacities of students to act autonomously in the future. In this sense, the school is one specific site in which culture is deployed in the exercise of power in a particular fashion. We therefore need to pay close attention to the nature of school spaces.

### **Lessons from school spaces**

The third possible oversight of the critical pedagogy approach relates to the translation of their analysis of formal schooling to the supposedly informal world of culture, the public sphere, or civil society. This indicates a neglect of the spatialities of power. The idea that power is 'everywhere', as Allen (2003: 2) asserts, has meant that we have 'lost sight of the particularities of power, the diverse and specific modalities of power that make a difference to how we are put in our place, how we experience power'. In this case, such an oversight

can be considered twofold. First there is an inclination to presume that lessons pertaining to the nature, power and effects of pedagogy can be taken from schooling and applied to the wider social realm and multifarious and dispersed sites, such as the media, sports, advertising, churches, and so on (Giroux, 2004: 75). This fails to recognize the particular and peculiar spatial characteristics of schools as enclosed institutions (Barnett, 1999: 379), organized around disciplinary practices and manifestly hierarchical relations.

Second, there is a tendency to assume that these disciplinary, ritualized and hierarchical power dynamics are themselves without contestation, emanate from a centre (the state), and are efficacious in serving a unified political agenda. Just as Allen (2003: 10) draws distinctions between modalities of power (e.g. authority, coercion, manipulation, seduction, domination) and the particular spatialities of their effects (in relation to proximity, presence, distance, enclosure, exclusion), elucidating the precise form and function of pedagogical power is useful in understanding the importance of schooling in society, and in considering the possibility of empowerment and collective social change (Allen, 2003: 12), without limiting these possibilities to the position of the critical intellectual. In this sense, critical thinking on schooling becomes less about locating the 'whereabouts' of power, and more about interrogating the way in which power is exercised in particular contexts and spaces.

However, in accounts of public pedagogy, the distinctive nature of pedagogy in school spaces is never fully elaborated. Similarly, theories of the 'pedagogical state' by which school systems have 'succeeded in "pedagogizing" our thinking of self, other, and world' (Kaplan, 2007: 227) or the 'totally pedagogised society' which has 'captured' the consciousness of students and teachers (Bernstein 1996, cited in Bonal and Rambla, 2003: 180) seem to overplay the effectiveness

of 'the state' to reproduce official knowledges through schooling, and again underplay the differences between teaching, education, pedagogy, culture and power. The examples of Citizenship Education in schools and edutainment media given below elaborate the specific spatialities of schooling and forms of pedagogical power in more detail.

## **The pedagogical state and civil society**

We need to take seriously the project of critical educational theorists to interrogate the wider social, political and public significance of pedagogy in terms of relations of power and considerations of justice. However, we should remain sceptical about the way in which power, freedom and pedagogy are theorized as conclusions shift from the realm of formal schooling to that of 'civil society'. This section elaborates further on the relationship between 'the state', civil society, democracy and education in order to undermine any simple division between the state, civil society and non-governmental organizations in and beyond the educational sphere, and to outline an alternative research approach which pays attention to the distinctive nature of pedagogical power.

Pedagogical modes of address are particularly useful in understanding contemporary changes in the cultural practices of governing (Isin, 2004), state–citizen relations and governance (Newman, 2005), the formulation of new subject positions associated with current public service reforms (Clarke et al., 2007) and the blurring of the boundaries between state and civil society (Painter, 2006). This is particularly significant in the context of the changing forms, agencies and rationalities of educational governance (Ball, 2007). As

liberal governments are recognized to govern by consent rather than coercion, self-reflexive citizens are incited to self-govern, through policies which seek to enable, empower, transfer responsibility to and activate people (Clarke, 2005), and populations are managed through the shaping and development of their own competencies. Hence we could consider the state-citizen relation as essentially pedagogical – what Foucault might term being ‘directed at positively governing conduct’ (Barnett, 1999: 15) through developing capabilities, rather than directly instructing citizens or interfering in their otherwise free lives.

The introduction of Citizenship Education in schools in England in 2002 is a prime example of a pedagogical form of power that incites citizens to be active and self-governing through instilling participatory democratic forms, involving students in activities of representation and advocacy and providing opportunities for community involvement. This case is developed in detail below. Further examples from outside of schools could include community empowerment policies, parenting education programmes, public health advice (on eating fruit and vegetables, anti-smoking advertising, support groups and help-lines, drink-driving campaigns), personal finance and welfare policies (Job Seeker’s Allowance contracts, government-funded debt advice and consumer advice agencies) which demonstrate this form of pedagogical power as a means to shape citizens’ everyday conduct as well as improve their capacity to self-govern.

Pedagogy outside of schools is therefore of contemporary significance. But pedagogical strategies are not simply employed by ‘the state’. Here it is useful to employ a definition of ‘government’ as:

an array of political rationalities and organizing practices that are concerned with indirectly regulating the conduct of individuals and groups, and in particular, concerned with inculcating those specific ethical competencies and styles which are considered to be basic attributes of modern citizenship. (Barnett, 1999: 15)

In this sense, it may be a mistake to conceive of the state as in opposition to civil society in a simple relation of domination/resistance (Barnett, 1999). State institutions do not always serve state interests, and non-state organizations do not always pursue non-state interests (Painter, 2006). It is therefore simplistic to paint a picture of the state as holding educational power through state schooling, and of resisting state power solely through the actions of civil society and NGOs in the name of social justice. Indeed, the current New Labour Government in the UK and main opposition parties themselves promote social justice, and NGOs can often promote very different values.

Furthermore the proliferation of agencies, actors, institutions and bodies which make up the field of educational governance problematizes the boundaries between state and non-state agendas in education, and cannot easily be said to endorse a weak, miseducational, mis-representative or deceptive ideology, as the critical pedagogy theorists may have us believe. Ball (2007: 126) has illustrated how the 'Education Services Industry' now exhibits 'a new "architecture of regulation"' which shows 'an increasing interdependence of state, private sector and voluntary sector, and the complex interactions between them, and again the exporting of "state work"' (Ball, 2007: 124).

While taking heed from calls to consider the wider significance of public pedagogies which occupy sites such as the media, sports, advertising, churches,

it is also therefore important to interrogate the difference between teaching and pedagogy as a practice employed by both state and non-state agencies, and to investigate some of the flows occurring between these sectors. Therefore whilst some regard the media as a key actor in public pedagogy, this helps us little in understanding the relationship between the distinct form of pedagogical address pursued by institutions, organizations and agencies, and the learning of citizens or publics to whom their pedagogy is addressed. For example, schools can emulate entertainment industries through their employing of motivational strategies, culturally relevant content and attempts to make learning 'fun'.

News media in turn can follow educational strategies through their attempts to deliver 'bite-size' news, and critical documentary-makers can employ devices to increase the pedagogical, informative, revelatory and consciousness-changing remit of their programmes. It is difficult to see why, therefore, we should think of public pedagogy as necessarily either a form of domination or resistance.

The following examples try to draw out the inciting nature of pedagogical power whilst problematizing the idea that power can be located or held by particular actors over others. Given the interest of critical pedagogues in media and advertising as sites of pedagogy, examples are given which examine both school and media spaces, and which indicate the complex flows between them. Lessons are drawn which recognize the particular spatiality of schooling as a distinctive set of social practices, institutions and relations.

## **Citizenship education: pedagogical power and 'state' schooling**

Citizenship Education is criticized for enhancing the power of the state to exert

social control over citizens, or as a cover for more insidious intrusions into the behaviour of citizens and their very identities as globalized, neoliberalized, entrepreneurial subjects. However, it could also be argued that the introduction of formal Citizenship Education in England in 2002 marks a departure from earlier attempts by schools to prepare young people for adult life, in that it makes manifest the reflexive nature of contemporary practices of citizenship formation. Key actors who engage with Citizenship Education, including pupils, teachers, teacher-trainers and policymakers are encouraged to think critically about citizenship and to maintain a healthy scepticism of the political formulation of formal Citizenship Education itself. This sense of reflexivity derives from the apparent paradox of direct Government intervention in the 'governability' of citizens. People may regard attempts to make citizens governable and democracy 'healthier' as somewhat disingenuous. But this recognition exposes the seeming contradiction inherent in both democracy and education; they are at once concerned with freedom and government. Citizenship Education provokes people to actively negotiate these tensions, and indicates that schooling may indeed be an integral and necessary facet of 'social governance' and the maintenance of social security, rather than a form of 'moral coercion' (Hunter and Meredyth, 2001: 6).

In this sense, Citizenship Education as a form of pedagogical power is both an incitement to scepticism, and is concerned explicitly with developing the capacity and competency of citizens to govern themselves. Both facets were endorsed by the state through the decision to introduce Citizenship Education and through the detailing of its content by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). While these bodies set



out attainment targets, curriculum aims, coverage and guidance, the outcomes of Citizenship Education are not laid out in a unified state agenda (even the Crick Committee responsible for its introduction involved multiple and conflicting voices [Kiwan, 2006; Pykett, 2007]). Instead they are overdetermined – by the teachers and teacher trainers who mediate the curriculum, textbook producers, NGOs involved in producing materials, exam boards (which are private companies) and in the real schools and neighbourhoods within which students learn to be citizens both formally and informally. The policy outcomes, therefore, are particularly affected by the geographies of education which shape children’s experiences of schooling: the housing market; the diversity of educational provision across cities and in rural areas; teachers’ and students’ perceptions of their own capabilities; the reputation of schools; local authority admissions policies and procedures; the influence of an already marketized education system in which private schools impact on educational achievements throughout the educational sphere (Pykett, 2009). The school does not therefore exist in a spatial vacuum – policymaking, curriculum making, teacher-training, teaching and learning all take place in multiple sites which come together in the school but are not restricted to it. In this sense, it is difficult to maintain that the state ‘holds power’ unproblematically over citizens through Citizenship Education within schools. Furthermore, if this account of education indicates that schools do not simply ‘control’ pupils through pedagogy without also giving them the tools for personal self-reflection, social action and political scepticism, then claims that the pedagogy of schooling can be translated into a form of dominating and ideological ‘public pedagogy’ in widely dispersed spaces appear at the very least exaggerated.

### **Edutainment: pedagogical power, ‘state’ media and corporations**

The following examples are taken respectively from Barnett's (2004) account of Yizo Yizo, a popular drama series produced by the South-African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), and Buckingham and Scanlon's (2001) research into 'edutainment' magazines aimed at pre-school children in the UK. What both examples share is an endeavour to understand democracy and public media in terms of the active participation of knowledgeable audiences, publics, or citizens, rather than to presume that media citizenship should be necessarily typified by a didactic or "paedocratic" mode of address' (Barnett, 2004: 252).

The examples therefore challenge the idea that broadcasters or media corporations hold power over passive audiences (Buckingham and Scanlon, 2001: 287) in a straightforward and disciplinary manner. They also demonstrate how civil society organizations such as public service broadcasters and media organizations may pursue both commercial and public interests, thus expanding our notion of what counts as a NGO and revealing further ambivalences in NGOs' pursuit of ideals of social justice and democracy.

Yizo Yizo, meaning 'This is it; The way it is' (Barnett, 2004: 259) is a soap opera which was aimed at a prime-time, commercially viable audience with the aim of encouraging debate about educational issues, a perceived crisis in township schools and encouraging a form of active learning among viewers and wider publics. Audiences were reached both through the programme, through educational resources produced by the SABC, and through radio talk shows and a soundtrack CD successfully marketed to a youth audience. What Barnett (2004: 258) concludes about Yizo Yizo is that this form of public pedagogy is one not based on the domination/resistance dialectic of critical pedagogy but one which recognizes the 'irreducible degree of uncertainty [in] the process of

educational communication' – that broadcasters cannot be sure how their messages will be 'received'. This, he (2004: 258) states, 'has been informed by an academically grounded critique of understandings of media education and critical pedagogy that privilege a model of demystifying the consciousness of subjects by providing correct information and interpretations'. So rather than seek to uncover the rhetoric behind the reality of media messages, this model pursues a pedagogical modality of empowerment and citizen activation in which (particularly youth) audiences are ascribed agency as both citizens and consumers. And this is done by a public service broadcaster with both global commercial goals and a national educational remit in mind.

Edutainment magazines are the subject of Buckingham and Scanlon's (2001) research into educational media and the pre-school domestic market. Magazines such as the BBC's Playdays, Teletubbies, Toybox, Tell me Why and commercial publishers' Play and Learn: Thomas and Friends, CiTV Tellytots and 3Rs Budgie. The Teletubbies magazines, along with 'books, audio and video tapes, computer games, posters, toys, clothing, watches, food and confectionery, mugs and crockery, stationery and games' (Buckingham and Scanlon, 2001: 285), they say, generated £330 million for the BBC in its first two years. Their argument is that edutainment products such as these magazines exemplify an important expansion of the remit of education into the sphere of the home, stating (Buckingham and Scanlon, 2001: 282) that: '[e]ducation, it would seem, is the work of childhood, and it cannot be allowed to stop once children walk out of the classroom door'. The commercial arm of the BBC and other media and publishing corporations address parents as pedagogues, capitalizing on their anxiety about educational achievement as a private good, and with reference to government attainment targets and educational competitiveness encouraged

by the state, while also pursuing the market potential of children and parents as consumers (Buckingham and Scanlon, 2001: 298). For instance, one such magazine states that:

If you buy BBC Tell Me Why magazine for a year it will help your child work their way through the early learning goals for the nursery and reception curriculum. Reward your child with a smiley face sticker when they finish each activity. (BBC Tell Me Why, n.d.: No. 4, p. 2, cited in Buckingham and Scanlon, 2001: 291)

However, they are keen to point out that there is much variation in the characteristics of the 'popular pedagogies' (Buckingham and Scanlon, 2001: 292) pursued in these magazines, and that parents and children's readings and responses to such media can never be straightforwardly assumed (2001: 297). The magazines promote a form of 'active' consumerism that is both educational and entertaining. In contrast to the critical pedagogy approach which may assert that edutainment is an adulteration of education or a distraction from true learning, Buckingham and Scanlon suggest that a clear distinction cannot be easily drawn between the two. What these examples have shown is that pedagogical power exercised over widely dispersed and mediated spaces does not share the supposed instructional or didactic certainty of the hierarchical space of the school. Furthermore, as the example of Citizenship Education in schools in England suggests, nor is this transmission model of education certain within schools – both because the space of school does not remain closed to constitutive external factors, and because the pedagogic relationship itself is concerned with the inculcation of abilities and competencies, as opposed to their foreclosure.

## Conclusion

Narratives of 'public pedagogy' and the work of critical pedagogues have been prominent in critical studies of the relationship between civil society, democracy and education. They have helped bring to the fore the importance schools, processes of teaching and learning, and the educational sphere for understanding what they deemed to be larger and more influential processes operating outside of formal schooling. But in the quest to open up scholarship on schooling to the 'wider social order' (Giroux, 1992: 2), cultural politics and 'representational pedagogy' associated with the media (Giroux, 1994: 47), the critical pedagogues have neglected the school as a site for constituting positive capabilities at the level of classroom practices. In paying little, if any, attention to the particular spatiality of the school, the particular modality of pedagogical power and the changing relations between schooling, NGOs, and public and private agencies, such authors have relied on a notion of power as either domination or resistance, preserving for themselves the ability to employ:

pedagogy [as] a discourse that should extend the principles and practices of human dignity, liberty, and social justice ... (Giroux, 1992: 4, my emphasis)

In unpacking the differences between teaching, education, pedagogy, culture and power, this article has sought to interrogate the space of the school in civil society and has given credence to students' and teachers' ability to think for themselves, rather than 'buy into' neoliberal hegemony (Giroux, 2004: 80). That is not to argue against the principles of human dignity, liberty, social justice and democracy, as implied, but to consider pedagogy as a practice rather than simply discursive. The examples provided illustrate how the arts of teaching practiced

both in school and in wider publics can have productive, enabling and inciting consequences, promoting self-reflection, public scepticism and capability, and cannot be understood as exclusively repressive. Recognizing the particular modalities of pedagogical power and the spatialities of the school generates new and perhaps more modest research agendas: it points to the importance of considering the contexts or uneven geographies of schooling in which people learn; it suggests a need to examine the practices and technologies of particular education policies rather than to try to identify some overarching political rationality; it provokes us to better understand the ways in which students and teachers themselves rationalize their own teaching and learning in the face of a variety of discourses from numerous sources about what constitutes the ideal citizen. This requires us to further interrogate the complex and sometimes ambivalent relationships between civil society, the state, NGOs and citizens, and to avoid facile assumptions about whose interests such actors serve.

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### **note**

1.

It has been noted that the field of critical pedagogy is difficult to define, with political, intellectual and practical differences between the work of key contributors, who have developed their ideas and practices in very different contexts. The field has also been distinguished from both ‘radical pedagogy’,

feminist pedagogy, and a more general 'critical education studies' (Apple, 1996: x), though others have suggested that there is much convergence within this wider field, particularly in terms of accounts of hegemony and resistance (Hayward, 2000: 46).

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