

Hickey-Moody, Anna, University of Sydney, Australia

Youth Arts Practice: A Media of Subjectification

This paper explores localized forms of youth arts practice as a media of subjectification and kind of popular and public pedagogy. Framing this exploration is Giroux's (1999) contention that "central to any viable notion of cultural studies is the assumption that culture and power must be organized through an understanding of how the political becomes pedagogical". Pedagogy in this instance is not only central to cultural politics and studies, but it is also situated in sites other than schools. However, to date, discussions of public pedagogy (Giroux 2000, 2004, Lusted 1986) have largely focused upon the politics of the content of mass produced popular cultural texts. Such texts include movies, computer games, popular, commercial youth websites, and television programs. The agency of youth and the cultural contexts in which they read and take up mass produced popular texts has not been given enough attention. Additionally, vernacular forms of creativity, such as mobile phone movies, songs made on 'Garage Band', and youth community arts practices such as school dance productions and community arts events, all need to be considered as forms of popular and/or public pedagogy. Such a shift in thinking is evident in Ellsworth's 2005 monograph *Places of Learning*, in which artwork, architecture and modes of engagement with different forms of media are analysed as effecting pedagogical processes and events. In this paper I develop a notion of public pedagogy that deviates from the work of Giroux and his focus on postmodernism and popular culture. My theoretical framework is based on young people's involvements with youth arts projects and includes attention to the everyday creative practices that inform such involvements. I am also interested in the ways in which community members read youth arts projects and the artefacts they produce. The localised theory of popular and public pedagogy developed here is employed to examine the ways in which one small Australian youth arts event creates and promotes particular forms of subjectivities and social relations.