

as the automatic, where less-skilled labor is employed, and these employees are even making a greater record on the automatic than in the Morse. We have records taken from the Western Union News showing that women have maintained an average speed of a message every 21 seconds for 8 hours and 15 minutes in a day. In other words, 1,220 messages in 8 hours, or a maximum of 67 messages handled in one hour . . . In recent years the company has been trying its best, apparently, to eliminate the Morse operator and to use in its stead the automatic machine. Three to four girls and boys are usually required to do the work that one operator formerly did, thus eliminating the skilled worker" (*Industrial Relations*, 921-23). Regarding the Western Union schools in the 1910s, T. W. Carroll told the commission, "We graduate a few female employees. We teach them telegraphy, and if they desire to continue on the Morse side of it, that is their privilege; but as a rule, we graduate them into the automatic service" (*Industrial Relations*, 941S).

HOLLYWOOD'S EDUCATORS

MARK MAY AND TEACHING FILM CUSTODIANS

Charles R. Acland

The scholarly and historical status of the Payne Fund Studies on children and the movies of the 1930s has always been uncertain. The existing literature is even inconsistent about how many there actually were, because of a difference between the number of studies and the number of volumes. Let's call it twelve studies, which includes Edgar Dale's film appreciation text and Frederick Thrasher's and Paul Cressey's unpublished work, but excludes W. W. Charters's and Henry Kottman's summaries. Reading them, they are simultaneously impressive and bewildering. Some were ahead of their time methodologically and some were well behind. Despite a clear line to research developments in the sociology of the Chicago school, the studies were too quantitative and normatively driven to find a sure place in what would become the humanities-based field of film studies. And they are without directly continuous institutional influence, unlike the work of Paul Lazarsfeld and his cohort, to be considered anything but a curious anomalous effort for the field of mass communication.¹ In terms of reception, the project was momentarily popularly energizing but

so deathly dull as to virtually guarantee few would read the complete works. It appears that the Payne Fund Studies are interesting more for the fact that they took place than for actual research findings and impact.

And the findings, tentative and contradictory as they are, are themselves part of the reason for this ambiguous status. The historical record has concentrated upon Henry Forman's commissioned summary volume of 1933, *Our Movie Made Children*, and his three McCaff's articles in 1932 as the definitive public face of the studies.² But Forman notoriously revisited the detail of the research into an inaccurately coherent version of the negative influence of motion pictures on children. The summary volume did not reflect the actual studies, and some Payne Fund authors criticized its anti-movie sermonizing tone, saying so in print.³ This has been well documented in the best work on the Payne Fund Studies, *Children and the Movies: Media Influence and the Payne Fund Controversy* by Garth Jowett, Ian Jarvie, and Kathryn Fuller.⁴ But even in the 1930s, commentators noted the discrepancy between the presumed impact of the studies and what they actually documented. The immediate critical appraisals of the Payne Fund, scholarly reviews, Mortimer Adler's *Art and Pseudoscience* (1937), and Raymond Morley's *Are the Movie Makers?* (1938) made it clear that a debate was in process. Far from being uniformly influential or accepted, the Payne Fund Studies were described in 1940 by John Marshall, the eminence of the Rockefeller Foundation Humanities Division, as essentially discredited.⁵

Jowett, Jarvie, and Fuller put the studies and their reception in context, highlighting the discussion among the ranks of scholars involved, the variety of methods, and neglected efforts. They also pick up on an underdeveloped theory of society as the source of the studies' failings, rather than the sermonizing of the Forman volume. They confirm that the Payne Fund Studies' legacy is not easy to assess, noting that major returns like the work of the Legion of Decency and the enforcement of the Production Code were already in the works before the appearance of the volumes. Still, some current research continues to see the studies and their reception as unified and singularly momentous. For instance, Nicholas Sammond, in his generally terrific book *Rites in Toyworld* and claims, "More than any other preceding discursive formation, discussions of the Payne Fund Studies would cement the notion of a generic child engaged in a uniform practice of viewing and deriving affects from that practice applicable to any other child, regardless of race, class, or gender."⁶ In fact, their most basic finding was that there was no generic child, but instead that results depended on a range of factors including

race, education, familiarity with movies, family composition, neighborhood, and economic situation, to name just a few. Sammond claims that Samuel Renshaw, and his infamous studies with beds wired to measure sleep disturbances and tachistoscopic tests of the effect of flicker on young eyes, drew overly broad conclusions despite inconclusive data.⁷ Actually, Renshaw complained to Forman about this misrepresentation, and here is what he and his authors summarize: "We can conclude . . . that seeing some films does induce a disturbance of relaxed recuperative sleep in children On the other hand certain films may have an instructive or cathartic and sedative effect that is good. We do not believe that any sweeping generalization can be made about the 'type' of film, or 'type' of child most likely to be influenced."⁸

(The issue at root here is the way that "behaviorist" psychological and social scientific methods from earlier eras have become easy targets for humanities-informed contemporary scholars. I am especially concerned that the rush toward conclusions of ideological coherence can distort the historical record and result in an undervaluation of the significance of social science and psychology in the history of the study of film, if not "film studies" exactly. It remains essential to see what sets of knowledge, expertise, and understandings about media power were put into action in any given historical moment, even if such thinking does not match the epistemological frameworks favored by scholars of today. Doing so, as I discuss in this chapter, we can see how engaged scholars, reformers, progressives, and liberals willingly courted positions of co-opted managerial influence.

I am not proposing to re-evaluate, let alone rescue, the Payne Fund Studies, but to suggest that they are but one slice of a powerful shift in attention to educational reform, and that to understand them one needs to cut a wider swath to include other activities in media education. Doing this tells us something about the flow of debate and expertise between the academy, philanthropic foundations, industry, and schools on the subject of motion pictures. Through the 1920s, 1940s, and 1950s, the sheer volume of initiatives to deploy film to expand sites of learning, to establish new voluntary educational societies, to advocate new teaching methods and technologies, to test and assess these new directions, and to launch a fully functioning instructional film production and distribution industry remains remarkable, from the prewar American Council on Education (ACE) studies to the postwar film council movement. These reformers advocated a modified Deweyan model of progressive education through technological means, emphasizing experimental learning, group-led discussion, and structured debate. Usually speaking, these efforts were part

of an enactment of a modern mass-mediated public, as well as the production of related hierarchies of cultural authority.

As a way to indicate the limited influence of the Payne Fund, Jowett, Jarvie, and Fuller observe that few of the researchers had further interest in motion pictures once their contributions were complete. But among those few were some impressive long-term efforts, especially by Mark May, Edgar Dale, and Samuel Kershaw—all three innovators in the deployment and assessment of media in changing educational contexts. What follows concentrates upon Mark May's contributions to the institutionalization of the properly instructional deployment of motion pictures and of the role Hollywood was to play in this new technological pedagogical formation.

May trained in psychology at Columbia University, with much of his research concentrating on character—its formation, expression, and measurement. With Hugh Hartshorne and Julius B. Miller, he spent five years studying character, which was part of the Character Education Inquiry, Teachers College, Columbia University, in cooperation with the Institute of Social and Religious Research, under the supervision and with the participation of Dr. E. I. Thorndike. Published as *Studies in the Nature of Character* in 1928 and 1929, the first volume was *Studies in Devirt* and the second *Studies in Service and Self-Control*. The work tried to measure a wide range of social activity, including cooperation, charitable behavior, service, school morale, and the role of out-of-school experience. They measured self-control by observing persistence and inhibition, using party games and assessing contributing factors. In what was an expansive project, May and his colleagues studied more than a thousand children of various ages and various types of schools to do this work.

Though not the focus of this study, they did ask questions about and charted moviegoing among the children they observed. In one of their general conclusions on the relationship between frequency of moviegoing and participation in civic service activities, they found, "It is apparent that other factors than mere attendance at movies need to be taken into consideration, but even after we have noted such concomitants as have been recorded we still find larger differences in service tendencies between the regular and occasional moving picture attendants—between the addicts and the casuals—than it is easy to understand."⁹ And on the relationship between moviegoing and self-control, they wrote, "Those who attend motion pictures less frequently than their schoolmates do are inclined to exert greater effort and greater self-restraint. It is a question whether this results as a direct effect of the pictures themselves



Teaching Film Custodians, Inc., logo.

or from characteristic ways in which habits of attendance on motion pictures develop among different sections of the population of a given community."¹⁰

These observations, showing some differences without conclusive claims of validity, echo in May's later Payne Fund study. Co-authored with his colleague Frank Staitheworth, May contributed *The Social Conduct and Attitudes of Movie Fans* (1933), gathering material from three hundred frequent moviegoing kids (three films per week) and three hundred infrequent moviegoers (less than once per month). They used the same Character Education Inquiry developed in the earlier study. Among the general findings were that teachers look less favorably upon the movie fans, but that peers rank them higher as popular people and as "best friends." On attitudes about crime, prohibition, sex, parents, authority, and the like, they found essentially no difference between the groups, concluding that the community is a greater influence than motion pictures.¹¹

At the time, May wrote studies of theology in practice and of driving safety. His most prominent work was at Yale University's Institute of Human Relations, an appointment he held from 1927 through to 1960, and of which he was director from 1935. At this Rockefeller-funded research center, May oversaw some celebrated research projects, including John Dollard's *Cast and Class in a Southern Town* (1937). The goals of this institute were broad, and it was an effort to take the epistemological stakes of psychology from the closed lab context out into messier social environments. The researchers saw categories like perception and personality as involving social structures. To examine this,

the institute constructed what at the time was a fairly novel interdisciplinary context, in which anthropology, medical research, economics, history, primatology, statistics, and psychology would be in conversation with each other. As *Time* magazine put it, under May's direction, the institute studied an odd array of topics, including prejudice, satire, detective stories, war, crime, speech defects, frustration, and reactions to parking tickets.¹² The intellectual influences of the day were many, but Dollard gave special mention to Edward Sapir and Sigmond Freud.¹³

So, with this sense of new directions in research, contemporary social phenomena, and "real world" application, as well as his own academic prominence, May began to work in an advisory capacity with the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association of America (MPPIA). May's work on character education and ideas for a human relations series interested the MPPIA because of its potential appeal to a general audience of teachers and students.¹⁴ Just as important, here was an accomplished academic, at a prestigious university, who was truly committed to the exploitation of the educational potential of film. Knowledge of how films might be used, what kinds of films benefit teachers, and what pedagogical advantage instructional use held was still scant at this time. In essence, there was a premium placed on those who could construct and interpret information about film in non-entertainment settings. Mark Lynn Anderson has examined the Payne Fund Studies in exactly this way, demonstrating their impact on the formation of a cohort of professional media experts whose primary goal was the exercise of social control.¹⁵ In his efforts to work between academia and Hollywood, May was similarly fashioning himself an exemplar of the kind of influence these new media experts might exert.

In the 1930s, popular reports emphasized the MPPIA's longstanding interest in education, in particular repeating the fact that soon after the group's formation, William Hays, its head, expressed his interest in industry reform for the benefit of education to a meeting of the National Education Association (NEA) in Boston in 1922. Between 1930 and early 1936, the MPPIA collected a thousand school curricula, press clippings, and various published statements by educators in an effort to ascertain the possible educational value of non-current theatrical shorts.¹⁶ This activity notwithstanding, education was hardly the core concern of the organization, to say the least, though it was a powerful public relations tool. Whatever advancement in education the MPPIA may have eventually subsidized, its primary focus never wavered from the well-being of its member Hollywood studios.

May's first contact with the industry lobby appears to have been attendance at the MPPIA conference of educators and civic leaders on film as a learning tool in 1929. At this event, the MPPIA established the Committee on Moral Values in Motion Pictures, with Howard LeSourd (the dean of Boston University Graduate School) as chair, and on which May served. This committee developed the experimental use of shortened features, which began in earnest in 1933, and became the "Secrets of Success" series.¹⁷ The series consisted of eight prints of twenty one-reel works taken from "quality" films and made available to schools, running from 1934 to 1936. The films demonstrated excerpts of "social value" for use in character education, which was understood as a secular version of religious education.¹⁸ School interest in the "Secrets of Success" series was substantial, but it was not easy to regularize usage as, with prints available in 35mm only, it required schools to negotiate cooperation with local theaters to open their doors to classes. The MPPIA estimated that over six hundred thousand students saw these films over two years, a sizable audience given that this program was essentially exploratory by design. Still, general distribution would require the ability to handle much larger numbers.¹⁹ Too expensive to maintain, too complicated to organize, and too fraught with uncertainty about economic impact on theater owners, the program was unsustainable. Moreover, the MPPIA did not wish to continue supporting the "Secrets of Success" series in part due to concerns about releasing member films for distribution by non-member organizations.²⁰

And yet, as a testing ground, the MPPIA appeared to convince many that opening the teaching role of film was not an option. In 1936, May and LeSourd designed a plan to build on the findings, and shift the goals, of the Committee on Social Values in Motion Pictures and of the Payne Fund Studies.²¹ Their proposed program would offer illustrative films, depictions of human relations, coverage of world news, and methods of critical discussion of what students would be seeing, the latter described as "a psychologically sound method of censorship."²² The first year of the plan would involve arranging for the films used by the Committee on Social Values, that is, the "Secrets of Success" films, and preparing some new ones, then testing them experimentally in about thirty schools. During the next year a wider selection of films would be offered. The members of the committee were to be retained in an advisory capacity. Distribution of the films was to return to the industry after that two-year period.²³

The iteration of this proposal was the Commission on Human Relations film project of the Progressive Education Association, under the direction

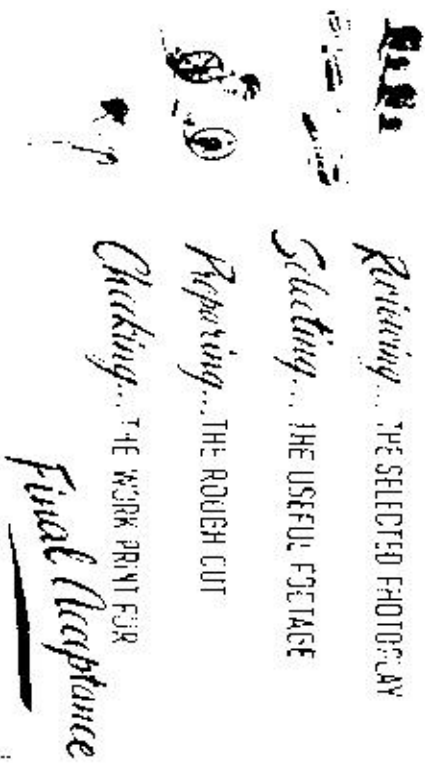
of Alice Kellner, but with significantly more ambitious plans.²⁴ The MRPDA agreed to Kellner's experimental use, provided films were in 16mm format only and were exclusively exhibited in school, which responded to some of the exhibitor and studio concerns about the "Secrets of Success" program. Kellner's more expansive project undertook the editing of other feature films, with special emphasis on questions of social life. Even though in May 1936 Kellner was not optimistic that she would receive support for this,²⁵ the Rockefeller Foundation, through the General Education Board, did back the effort. The project ran for two years, 1936-38, and then received a final year's grant for 1938-39. Topics selected were to "cultivate social democracy, promote a feeling of responsibility for war, and break down racial prejudice . . . [and show] parent-child relationships, effects of divorce on children, family adjustments, the obligations of friendship, the functioning of law in the community."²⁶ The Human Relations project treated the "Secrets of Success" films as an initial offering, soon adding newsreels, travelogues, and other subjects.²⁷ In other words, the character education programs were a starting point for a wider application of film in education, rather than the main focus. Using seventy-five truncated films to chart and study pedagogical uses, Kellner's program recorded the discussions following such films as *Black Legion* (1937), *Henry* (1936), and *Alice Adams* (1935). All these excerpted films were for the program's exclusive use, and did not go into general distribution.²⁸ Kellner made explicit the fact that her commission, and not the industry lobby, would have control over usage of the films, by which she meant critical analysis and discussion of the films in question. She was, reasonably, concerned about undue interference from the mainstream industry in her experiment. This request had the apparent blessing of May and Hays:²⁹

Before the Human Relations series had been planned and launched, May visited Hollywood with Hays and other board members in July 1936 to discuss a possible appointment to an MRPDA educational film committee. May reported to Marshall at the Rockefeller Foundation that he had decided not to accept the position as a salaried member, preferring to act as an independent advisor.³⁰ The need for even more formalized study led to the invitation of Mark May to prepare a report through the summer of 1936 to recommend further action on the part of the MRPDA. His main point, one that was formally launched in September 1936, was the establishment of an Advisory Committee on the Use of Motion Pictures in Education, made up of leading educators and with May appointed its head.³¹ Effectively, this was a transformation of the

MPDA's Committee on Social Values into a non-salaried Advisory Committee so that the expertise and familiarity with the earlier program was not lost.³² Several factors encouraged the MRPDA and participating members of the Board for such an Advisory Committee. These included praise for their work from educators at home and abroad, and the growing number of grants for other experimental instructional projects by the American Council on Education and the University of Minnesota. Other sparks of activity in the area of educational film included the aforementioned Human Relations project, and the formation of the American Film Center and the Association of School Film Libraries in 1938.³³ A perennial problem to the development of motion pictures in education was that schools were not investing substantially in projects because of the lack of films, and few films were being released for instructional usage by the Hollywood majors due to the absence of projectors. With its special relation to the mainstream entertainment industry, the Advisory Committee was in a good position to lobby for the release of films "to break the deadlock in the educational film movement," which it did.³⁴ The members of the MRPDA still worried what effect such distribution would have upon their theatrical releases, so the focus rested upon films that had completed their theatrical run. But, beyond the public relations advantage of Hollywood supporting education, these experiments in educational film were also a way to test the waters for what secondary markets might exist for these old products. What new value might the studio libraries hold for educational markets? The Advisory Committee acknowledged that classroom use was still relatively uncharted territory for film, so it recommended intensified support for research on film and education. And, always mindful of the public perception of Hollywood involvement, all study was to be undertaken by a third party, rather than the industry or the Advisory Committee itself, even if one or the other would direct and make requests for certain kinds of research. This note of impartiality turned the research dimension back to educators, scholars, and philanthropies.³⁵

Meeting for the first time on February 9, 1937, and then five more times in 1937, the Advisory Committee operated with the unshakable belief that cooperation between the film industry and educators was entirely possible. The members were well aware of the delicate nature of such an idea, and vowed to assure that schools would not sense an encroachment of advertising and that exhibitors would not feel they were losing revenue or facing a new competitor.³⁶ Even so, once operations were up and running, one of Hollywood's

The Committees At Work



THE PREVIEW COMMITTEE WORK PROCESS, FROM THE PREVIEW SHEET, 36

requirements for releasing films for classroom use, and written into licensing contracts with schools, was that the logo of the originating studio would be clearly visible and presented with each screening. A first step was to take stock of existing films and to coordinate existing information on film use. The Advisory Committee spent quite a bit of time at these early meetings watching non-current shorts and discussing how they might be treated and assessed.³⁷ The idea to begin with a comprehensive survey of existing films and their classroom potential appears to have come from Hays himself.³⁸

For this survey, analyzing films was on the basis of four criteria: content, presentation, and probable effects and function in relation to existing materials.³⁹ Accordingly, members of the committee assessed each film to fit one of several proposed film series, including citizenship, parenting, occupation, commuters, leisure, health and safety, and "personality adjustment," which were to fall in line with the Human Relations films.⁴⁰ Surveying trade journals, they constructed a list of about three thousand shorts, divided into travelogues, sciences, historicals, sports, animated cartoons, musicals, popular science, nature studies, melodrama, comedy, and vaudeville. Setting melodrama, comedy, and vaudeville aside, panels of educators reviewed corresponding films.⁴¹ Reviewers recorded a synopsis, assessed possible subjects and grade levels, and proposed teaching uses. They also were to take note of limitations.⁴²

This inventory was taken in the summer of 1937, with viewing panels for art, biological science, elementary education, music, physical education, physical science, and social studies. Participants previewed a total of 1,598 films, of which 903 were theatrical shorts and 692 were instructional films from Eastman, Kery, and Bray, all of which were affiliated with the MRPDA. The panels' concluding assessments found 849 films acceptable as they were and 234 acceptable with minor modifications.⁴³ Panelsists also screened some films of non-member companies on a limited basis, including those of Instructional Films, Inc., Gulton, Gammont-British, and the YMCA.⁴⁴ A final 364 passed all stages and were made available for school use.⁴⁵ Recommendations to the MRPDA from the Advisory Committee were for funds to produce a catalogue of these select films, for immediate arrangements to make the films available in schools, for continued support for a film preview program, and for a grant to study in detail the data compiled during the previews in the summer of 1937.⁴⁶

The previewing work of this committee through that summer received considerable public attention. *Film Daily Times* erroneously described it as a survey of fifteen thousand shorts.⁴⁷ The *New York Times* covered the MRA meeting in Detroit and the presentation of the Advisory Committee's work as a watershed moment for mechanized instruction. Under the banner "Machine Age vs. Education Trend," the article described experimental methods to teach safe driving to groups using simulated automobile controls, lantern slides, and point-of-view films shot through windowscreens. Mark May, promoting the work of the preview panels, commented that the growing interest in "life studies" as a respected area of education would be greatly advanced by the use of film to depict realistic situations.⁴⁸

With a catalogue in process, the details of how best to circulate recommended films, in a way agreeable to the Hollywood majors, still needed to be resolved. The Advisory Committee was not equipped to be a distribution outfit. So the committee was incorporated as a non-profit company, in the state of New York, and renamed Teaching Film Custodians (TFC) on December 8, 1938. The "custodians" part of the name was to make unambiguous the fact that they were but caretakers of the films and that ownership of the films remained with the original studios.⁴⁹ The Advisory Committee became its first board, with May as the head, a position he went on to hold for forty years until 1978. The committee continued to operate, serving the dual function of an MRPDA advisory organ and a separate incorporated entity, with the most obvious advantage of cosmetic appearance of arm's-length operation from Hollywood.⁵⁰

The catalogue itemized the screened, evaluated, and recommended Hollywood shorts and was available in 1939.⁵¹ The first year of TRC's film distribution — the 1939–40 school year — did not include advertising for specific programs for film, as the TRC was hoping instead to gauge market interest from school demand alone.⁵² Films, including MGM's "Crime Doesn't Pay" series, *City of Max* (1934), *Marine Circus* (1939), and *Pagoda's of Peking* (1933), cost a rental rate of \$15 per year or \$30 for three years.⁵³ Users of the TRC — which included schools, school boards, state departments of education, and university systems — entered into licensing agreements for either one-year terms or three-year terms.⁵⁴ The 1939 catalogue included about 450 films, though some were not yet actually available due to technical problems. In particular, the Technicolor films could not be supplied as a result of the challenge and expense of reducing them to 16mm.⁵⁵ Hays did promotional work for the TRC, appearing at an NEA conference and introducing the TRC as an industry response to the growing interest in classroom films. Reportedly, demand was highest for historical works and travelogues that focused on social and economic life.⁵⁶ Updating its offerings, the TRC completed a new catalogue, *Films for Classroom Use*, in 1941, adding 141 new films and dropping about 100 due to low demand or unavailability.⁵⁷ To assist in the deployment of films in specific classroom contexts, the TRC produced study guides to accompany film rental, doing so with assistance from the National University Extension Association.⁵⁸ In what was a notable source of bewilderment for the TRC's directors, demand for films in high school social studies classrooms remained low. As a consequence, they agreed to support a preliminary study on this need, conducted by Howard Wilson of Harvard University.

Initially, the TRC drew up contracts for the films it handled with each individual studio, emphasizing that only non-current films that had completed their theatrical run were of interest, with Paramount the last holdout until 1941.⁵⁹ The agreements allowed for the use of short subjects for exclusive, non-profit use in schools in the continental United States, though this eventually expanded to Canada and beyond. The TRC renewed the three-year contracts for the use of these films for another three years in 1942.⁶⁰ The goals of the TRC, as explained to member-company ERPI, only began with the laudatory expansion of educational service. Another goal was the stimulation of a market for projectors, and hence an eventually profitable educational film production and distribution industry. The TRC was "positive that this added encouragement has in many instances proved the determining factor in enabling school systems to equip their school buildings for the projection of classroom

films."⁶¹ A further objective saw the public relations benefits of putting an educational gloss on Hollywood enterprise. This "goodwill for the motion picture industry" among teachers and administrators would assist in "the softening of the change of monopoly against the industry in educational circles," which arose when they found that desired films were unavailable for educational uses.⁶² And all indications were that interest in the films the TRC offered was growing. By the end of 1945, more than 10,300 TRC 16mm reels were circulating at 423 film libraries.⁶³

But these reels were all still short subjects. Other scholarly work has suggested that the TRC circulated excerpted features in the 1930s, which it did not.⁶⁴ Such truncated films were available in a limited and experimental basis first through the "Secrets of Success" program and then through Keltner's Commission on Human Relations; but they were not in general distribution in the 1930s. The release of features, however excerpted, remained a significant stumbling block. The market impact was uncertain, and it was not completely clear how permanent the turn to film education would be. Alvie Keltner had plans to begin renting the Human Relations films openly. John Marshall commented on the unlikelihood of the Rockefeller Foundation supporting such a turn, as Keltner moved the commission away from its experimental and research stage.⁶⁵ Marshall addressed Carl Milliken, the MRPDA's executive secretary, on this subject, and Milliken reiterated the fact that the films remain the property of the original Hollywood producers. With the TRC gaining momentum, Milliken, as one of its trustees, recommended that that organization might be in a position to divert some of its rental revenue to Keltner's commission.⁶⁶ Keltner became vice-president of the American Film Center (AFC) in 1939 and announced that distribution of the Human Relations films was then available from the AFC, though officially the Human Relations project had been completed and there were no contracts for such distribution.⁶⁷ She handed these films over to the TRC by April 6, 1943,⁶⁸ though the TRC did not yet have the green light for their distribution either.

Its negotiate excerpted feature distribution, to work on an ongoing basis with the TRC, and to get the studios on its side, the MRPDA formed another committee in 1943 composed not of educators but of industry representatives: N. Peter Kallivon, president of RKO; J. Robert Rubin, vice-president of Loew's Inc.; and Joseph Haze, vice-president of Warner Bros.⁶⁹ The luminaries lent support and credibility in the eyes of the studios to the release of excerpted feature films. As a result, the next round of TRC contracts with the studios, in 1945, included both features and shorts. Unlike the previous two,

this contract extended for an unlimited time period.⁷⁰ The revised contracts of 1946 allowed for excerpting of features, distribution to any educational organization, and opened up the possibility for selective international distribution. Shortly thereafter, *The Oxbow Incident* (1943) became *The Process of the Law Denied* and parts of *Song of Love* (1950) became *The Schumann Story*. Later in the 1950s, the TFC offered a reel on racial prejudice clipped from *Something of Value* (1957).⁷¹ Selected and reconstructed films were only leased, shown without an admission fee, and required no royalty payment. And, important to the members of the newly renamed MRPDA—now Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA)—prints, as always, identified the originating studio.⁷²

The postwar activities of the TFC were more aggressive and confident. In many respects, the prewar and war periods were times of information gathering, stock taking, and exploratory market testing; condensation and consolidation characterized Hollywood's relation to educational film during the postwar years. It was taken for granted that film did not simply inject ideas into the brains of audiences, but that the film viewing and film discussion situation was an indispensable vehicle for the promotion and maintenance of democratic life. With this view, the postwar MRPDA made educational activities an even more solid aspect of its activities. In 1945, when Eric Johnston took the helm of the MRPDA—incidentally only after Edmund E. Dwy, the president of Cornell University and a longstanding TFC board member, turned down the position—he continued strong support of the TFC and expanded its activities. The TFC, for instance, helped the development of specific audiovisual education programs, such as one elaborate distance education experiment run by the State of Nebraska. Johnston also established the Division of Educational Services at the MRPDA in September 1946, with the TFC board member Roger Albright in charge. To keep things cozy, Albright took up the position of director of Educational Services of the TFC.⁷³ One primary activity of this division was to coordinate the increasingly varied efforts of the MRPDA in educational matters. The TFC subsidized this division of the MRPDA in 1958.

The MRPDA set up the Commission on Motion Pictures under the American Council on Education with a grant of \$25,000 a year for five years, beginning in 1944.⁷⁴ Betraying cross-membership of three individuals on the commission and on the board of the TFC, being housed at Yale, and Mark May again in the position of chairman, this body was supposed to operate independently to identify the classroom film needs and develop film series for "training for

democratic citizenship."⁷⁵ With this project, May addressed producers directly, itemizing the kinds of films needed, including those that motivate, inform, demonstrate, and build art appreciation and values.⁷⁶ This is extensively itemized in the final report of the Commission on Motion Pictures, appearing in 1949.⁷⁷ The commission's objectives were to help film producers meet the perceived educational needs of postwar America and, reflecting the period's interest in consensus building, "to organize film content along a middle course between the extreme educational philosophies."⁷⁸ The report identified five target topics and audiences: global geography for junior high schools, issues of democracy for senior high schools, math for secondary schools, and art and music appreciation for multiple levels. The commission prepared 141 film treatments, sending 107 directly to producers, hoping to directly influence the cooperation between the users and makers of educational films.⁷⁹ The recommendations were then to be acted upon by educational film producers, with the first a series of geography films produced by Louis de Rochemont for United World Films.

Another initiative, the Motion Picture Research Project, used controlled experimental situations to determine the best types of teaching films. Alternate versions of films would be tested with school children. Funds for this came from both the MRPDA and the TFC, and the Institute of Human Relations ran these studies with May as one of the researchers. The results were published as *Learning from Films* in 1958.⁸⁰ Yet another effort was to produce experimental educational films whose construction and topics would be approved by the commission, would be tested by the Motion Picture Research Project, and whose final project would be distributed by the TFC.⁸¹ Through Kathryn's committee, the MRPDA put forward \$100,000 for seven educational films, which Eric Johnston said would "serve as a standard for producers of classroom films." Arthur Mayer, the secretary of war's consultant on film matters, oversaw production with approval from a scrutinizing body of educators, and with the TFC distributing the films nationwide upon completion.⁸²

In the expansiveness of this postwar activity, the efforts to coordinate all aspects of the educational field are apparent. Interrelated programs included a pilot film production wing, a film testing wing (Motion Picture Research Project), a market research wing (Commission on Motion Pictures for the AEB) and a distribution wing (TFC). The key terms used during this period were coordination and integration, and here a miniature version of a vertically integrated industry was being developed. The involvement of central figures in multiple initiatives, notably May himself, points to this integration. Impur-



TFC moving films from the Hollywood studios to classrooms. from *The TFC Story*, 4.

tantly, whatever educational or scholarly merits there were, the actions taken were monitored unambiguously and closely through the connections of the sponsoring industry, benefiting their own understanding of this rising market of motion instructional film. Where the Payne Fund Studies wondered about the nature of influence of moviegoing upon children, the Payne Fund author Mark May and the TFC developed instructional programs as the proper and "useful" function of film, never leaving industrial interests outside their activities. For its part, Hollywood, noted for its self-congratulatory nature, touted the public relations, legacy, and nascent market value of these projects. For instance, a dinner celebrating the industry's contributions to education took place at the Beverly Hills Hotel on the occasion of the TFC's fifteenth anniversary,⁸⁵ which included the release of a promotional film *The TFC Story*. At a parallel event on the East Coast, they patriced themselves on the back at the Hilton Hotel in New York City, where Mark May bestowed honorary scrolls to Eric Johnston and the eight MPPAA studio heads for their commitment to education.⁸⁶

Activity continued for several decades more, with increased attention to audiovisual technologies and television. From 1950 to 1954, the TFC ran several workshops and conferences, and supported the Lake Arrowhead Leadership Conferences on audiovisual education of the MPPAA's Department of Audio-

Visual Instruction (DAVI).⁸⁷ The TFC provided financial support for DAVI's Field Service, which helped schools and universities get audiovisual programs off the ground.⁸⁸ The TFC acquired the rights to distribute "Cavalcade of America" television programs in the early 1950s, and developed films for language acquisition with the Modern Language Association, beginning in 1959.⁸⁹ All of the TFC's materials were handed over to Indiana University in 1973 as it ceased operations.

The TFC was just one organization advancing the place of film in educational institutions during this period. Comparable records of activity could chronicle the contributions of other initiatives. Mediating the interests of the mainstream commercial film industry, however, the TFC was in a uniquely influential position that kept Hollywood majors involved in this growing market and that assisted in promoting the very notion of screen education, further integrating moving images with other aspects of contemporary life. Let me reiterate that the activity documented here involved more than simply licensing films. It involved assessing film usage, compiling catalogues, writing study guides, testing usage and effectiveness in closed settings, monitoring discussions in classrooms, surveying teachers, proposing films, and editing lectures. In other words, this was a massive effort to study and advance particular kinds of film usage. This enterprise fell immediately on the heels of the Payne Fund Studies. That famous project offered a varied assessment of the effects of motion pictures upon children and helped galvanize a sense of concern about film entertainment but to fully appreciate the period, we must also recognize the lasting contribution of the film educationalists to the development of ideas about how films are made to be "useful" and to the expansion of an institutional structure to serve those notions.

On the place of character education in this history, Eric Sneedlin precisely describes it as a shift in American education to erase boundaries between classroom subjects and social life.⁹⁰ Most surely, the commitment to the idea of character education was a reason why the character education expert Mark May was swept into work with the MPPAA and the Payne Fund to begin with. And yet, reviewing the activity, it is important to understand that character education goals connected with other pedagogical, industrial, and organizational goals. The language of making education keep step with a changing world—modernizing the classroom and making it relevant—was evident in many initiatives, not all of which reflect the specific approach of character education as a subject. Character education was a way to generalize interests and values, and an ideologically riddled enterprise, to be certain. As a first

step, to test and break the perceived logjam to the development of modern technological education, and with it launch a new industry, character education was a way to produce material with the widest possible appeal to schools, without stepping on the toes of state and school board curricula. It was the first wave, to be followed by programs that responded to specific topics and subject needs, tied ever more closely to classroom lessons. The common element, as the subjects changed, was the situation, namely the promotion of screen-mediated teaching: the film occasion, with civil discourse, guided by a leader, prompted by some form of screen engagement.

This illuminates some of the work May published as an educational polemicist. In 1941 his tract titled *Education in a World of Fear* began by proclaiming, "The dominating emotion of the world today is fear. Never in history has the behavior of as great a proportion of the inhabitants of this earth been so extremely motivated by a common anxiety."⁸⁸ His concern was that the fear of totalitarianism would lead people to apathy and to reject the prospects of liberal democracy. Modern education figured as the best defense. He recommended an active management of fear: "In critical times we must steer a middle course between the alarmists whose anxieties are unduly high, on the one hand, and those who would lull us to sleep in a sense of false security, on the other. The task of education is to teach people how to manage their anxieties and hold them proportional to the realities of the danger."⁸⁹ The voice of a future "cold warrior" is already making itself heard. Postwar, he devoted more effort directly to the advancement of psychological warfare while continuing as the director of the WFC; he also acted as the chairman of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Information, from 1953 to 1960, where he centralized all propagandic and psychological warfare operations, and drew stronger ties between government operations in this area and academics.⁹⁰ This was a liberal humanism that could slide up nicely next to a cold war policy of information management.

In closing, what we confront in the figure of Mark May is one career-long illustration of the lasting impact of psychology and social science upon the emergence of a coordinated field of educationally useful film and of the involvement of major media corporations in the supply of educational materials to U.S. teachers and community leaders. Accordingly, this did not produce a generic national spectator or unified ideological formation at the level of subject matter. In fact, if anything, we see the methodological implements and categorizing schemas, from the surveys, evaluations, interviews, group discussion, and empirical experiments, putting forward ways to organize

and segment a public as a fledgling educational market. This often addressed grade-level in addition to age, in so doing fortifying an idea about development and maturation. This is not the first moment of an interest in educational media, but it did represent the consolidation of ideas that put technology in the classroom, redefined the space of where learning takes place, made media appear to be indispensable to modern education and skill acquisition, offered evidence of the perceived advantages in quantifiable results, and saw a new balancing act between industry, government, and the engaged, albeit technocratic, scholar. In short, May and the organizations he led helped establish the procedures for participation in screen-mediated publics. This was a hegemonic moment in which industry and education contributed equally to postwar ideals of liberal citizenship while solidifying a stratum of media experts who spoke on behalf of that screen public and a business sector, eventually converting what began as good public relations into the lucrative world of educational technology.

NOTES

1. The lasting institutional influence of the Payne Fund Studies can be found in education, especially in what will come to be called "media literacy," but even here this influence has been only occasionally acknowledged.
2. Kernan, *Our Movie-Made Children*; "To the Movies — But Not to Sleep"; "Movie Madness"; and "Molded by Movies."
3. See for instance Mark A. May, op. ed., *Christian Science Monitor*, January 3, 1933, 18.
4. Jowett, Jervie, and Fuller, *Children and the Movies*, 101, 3.
5. John Marshall Davies, interview with Leo Rosen, September 17, 1940, Rockefeller Foundation, Rockefeller Archive Center (hereafter RAC).
6. Sumner, *Risks in Transmittal*, 92.
7. *Ibid.*, 66.
8. Roushew, Miller, and Marguis, *Children's Sleep*, 155.
9. Hershovine, May, and Maffei, *Studies in the Nature of Character: II. Studies in Service and Self-Control*, 232.
10. *Ibid.*, 427.
11. Shuttleworth and May, *The Social Conduct and Attitudes of Movie Fans*.
12. "For Trend, for Society, for Sale," *Time*, March 6, 1946, 11–12.
13. Holland, *Class and Class in Southern Town*, vii–ix.
14. John Marshall Davies, interview with Mark May, August 1, 1933, RAC, 2.
15. Anderson, "Taking Liberties."
16. "Review," January 28, 1939, Teaching Film Foundation file, Margaret Herrick Library, Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (hereafter AMPAS).
17. Teaching Film Foundation, "The Era Story," 28. Concerning his involvement on the

- Committee on Social Values in Motion Pictures; some went further to give Mark May credit for the cooperation received from Jays for the "Secrets of Success" test program. John Marshall Diaries, interview with Mark May, August 2, 1936, PAC, 2.
- 18 "Secrets of Success Manual for Discussion Leaders," General Education Board, Rockefeller Archive Center (hereafter GRB), 11 series 632.7 box 28.4 folder 2966; "The Development of a New Technique for Teaching Character Education by the Discussion Method with the Use of Excerpts from Photoplays," January 1939, AMPA, 4, and M. May, "What Is Character Education?" 21, 58, 60. This series has been discussed by Morey, *Hollywood Censored*, and Jacobs, "Reformers and Spectators."
- 19 "The Development of a New Technique for Teaching Character Education," 1.
- 20 David Stevens Interviews, with Alice Kellner, May 5, 1936, GRB, 12 series 632.7 box 283 folder 2960.
- 21 David Stevens Interviews, with Mark May and Howard LeSourd, March 25, 1936, GRB, 12 series 632.7 box 283 folder 2960.
- 22 Letter from Progressive Education Association (hereafter PEAA) to GRB, stamped received June 19, 1936, GRB, 12 series 632.7 box 283 folder 2960, 4-6. It is interesting that the development of critical and discerning spectators, ones that "would not so readily be carried away by inferior products," went by the name of censorship ("Request to Board of Directors for action on extension of Commission on Human Relations budget," stamped received May 7, 1936, GRB, 12 series 632.7 box 283 folder 2960, 8).
- 23 Letter from PEAA to GRB, stamped received June 29, 1936, GRB, 12 series 632.7 box 283 folder 2960, 6-8.
- 24 David Stevens Interviews, with Alice Kellner, May 5, 1936, GRB, 12 series 632.7 box 283 folder 2960; Joseph Losey was one of the key production personnel involved with this for more detail on this important project see Kintell, "Educational Film Projects of the 1930s."
- 25 David Stevens Interviews, with Alice Kellner, May 5, 1936.
- 26 "Request to Board of Directors," 1.
- 27 *Ibid.*
- 28 Teaching Film Custodians, "The TRC Story," 28-29.
- 29 "Request to Board of Directors," 6.
- 30 John Marshall Diaries, interview with Mark May, August 2, 1936, PAC, 2.
- 31 "Review," 3, and Teaching Film Custodians, "The TRC Story," 29.
- 32 "Request to Board of Directors," 3.
- 33 "Report of Advisory Committee on the Use of Motion Pictures in Education," ca. December 1935, AMPA, 5.
- 34 Wile, "How Hollywood Serves Education through TRC," 645.
- 35 "Report of the Advisory Committee on Motion Pictures in Education," October 1, 1937, AMPA, 5.
- 36 *Ibid.*, 1.
- 37 "Review," 4.
- 38 John Marshall Diaries, interview with Mark May, August 2, 1936, PAC, 2.
- 39 "Report of the Advisory Committee on Motion Pictures in Education," 1.

- 40 *Ibid.*, 3-4.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 5.
- 42 *Ibid.*, 6.
- 43 *Ibid.*, 8.
- 44 *Ibid.*, 8-9.
- 45 Wile, "How Hollywood Serves Education through TRC," 645. Five subcommittees reviewed the films: art education, chaired by Dr. Royal B. Farnum, vice-president of the Rhode Island School of Design elementary education, chaired by Mrs. Bess R. Lane of the New York Ethical Culture School; science and nature study, chaired by Dr. Paul Mann of the New York City Public Schools; physical education, chaired by Dr. Jay B. Nash, an education professor at New York University; and social studies, chaired by Professor Karl W. Bigelow of Teachers College, Columbia University ("Old Films Studied for Use in Schools," *New York Times*, July 15, 1937, 14).
- 46 "Report of the Advisory Committee on Motion Pictures in Education," 14.
- 47 "Educational Group Discusses Short Subjects," *Film Daily*, July 2, 1937, 1-2.
- 48 Finnie Barnard, "Mature Age Sets Education Trend," *New York Times*, July 4, 1937, 51.
- 49 Teaching Film Custodians, "The TRC Story," 29.
- 50 The first board of directors consisted of Dr. Frederick H. Barr, the superintendent of schools in Brossville, N.Y.; Dr. Isaiah Bowman, the president of Johns Hopkins University; Dr. Karl T. Compton, the president of MIT; Dr. Edmund E. Day, the president of Cornell University; Dr. E. Givens, the secretary of the National Education Association; Dr. Royal B. Farnum, the vice-president of the Rhode Island School of Design; Dr. Mark A. May, the director of the Institute of Human Relations at Yale University; and Dr. Jay B. Nash, an education professor at NYU. In 1940 Dr. James R. Angell, the president of Yale University, and Dr. Francis Spaulding, the dean of Harvard University's Graduate School of Education, joined the board ("Teaching Film Custodians," "The TRC Story," 29-30). The three trustees were Milliken, Angell, and Givens ("Review," 6). Carl Milliken, a former Republican governor of Maine, served twenty years as the executive secretary of the NEPA, resigning in 1947, but staying on as a managing trustee of TRC, a post he had held since 1939 ("Ex-Gov. Milliken of Maine Was 83," *New York Times*, May 2, 1969, 37).
- 51 Teaching Film Custodians, "The TRC Story," 30.
- 52 "Report of the Work of Teaching Film Custodians, Inc.," May 24, 1940, AMPA, 1.
- 53 Thomas M. Pryor, "Fulfilling a Promise: Film Producers Open Their Vault to Promote Education by Pictures," *New York Times*, July 9, 1943, 113.
- 54 "Report of the Work of Teaching Film Custodians, Inc.," 1.
- 55 *Ibid.*, 2.
- 56 *Ibid.*, 3.
- 57 "Teaching Film Custodians, Inc.: Report of the President for the Year 1941," June 26, 1942, AMPA, 1.
- 58 *Ibid.*, 2.
- 59 *Ibid.*, 3.
- 60 Teaching Film Custodians, "The TRC Story," 30.

- 61 Letter, Secretary, TRC, to J. K. Stevenson, RRPJ, April 13, 1949, AMEAS, 3.
- 62 *Ibid.*, 1.
- 63 Teaching Film Custodians, "The TRC Story," 30.
- 64 Jacobs, "Reflexions and Spectators," makes this mistake, which many who refer to her ground-breaking article then repeat.
- 65 John Marshall Diaries, talk with Alice Kaliber, March 13, 1939, RAC.
- 66 John Marshall Diaries, interview with Carl Milikien, May 17, 1939, RAC.
- 67 The address for the Human Relations film distribution is the same as that of the AACC, 48 Rockefeller Plaza, in October 1939 (Association of School Film Libraries, Newsletter, October 1939, 4, 5, 8, GUB series 12, box 125, folder 1158, RAC). Kaliber resigned from the associate director position to return to her teaching post in education at NYU in the spring of 1940 (John Marshall Diaries, interview with Donald Sheisinger, March 13, 1949, RAC, 21).
- 68 John Marshall Diaries, Conference on Motion Pictures, April 6, 1943, RAC, 1.
- 69 Teaching Film Custodians, "The TRC Story," 30.
- 70 *Ibid.*
- 71 "An Anniversary for TRC," *Philatelist's Service and AV Guide*, December 1958, 622.
- 72 Teaching Film Custodians, "The TRC Story," 15.
- 73 *Ibid.*, 30.
- 74 *Ibid.*
- 75 M. May, "Films and Teaching Functions," 339, 349, 345.
- 76 M. May, *Planning Films for Schools*.
- 77 Rees, "The Literature in Audio-Visual Instruction," 368.
- 78 *Ibid.*, 358-59.
- 79 May and Jansdine, *Learning from Films*.
- 80 M. May, "Educational Projects," 200-201, 232.
- 81 "Fund Set to Test Classroom Films," *New York Times*, April 2, 1946, 22.
- 82 Thomas M. Pryor, "Gangster Refuses Role in U-I. Film," *New York Times*, November 6, 1932, 37.
- 83 "Of Local Origin," *New York Times*, April 19, 1932, 18.
- 84 With, "How Hollywood Serves Education through TRC," 646.
- 85 *Ibid.*, 647.
- 86 *Ibid.*, 645.
- 87 Siroodkin, *Arguing Frank Capra*, 28.
- 88 M. May, *Education in a World of Fear*, 1.
- 89 *Ibid.*, 74.
- 90 M. May, "What Should the New Administration Do about Psychological Warfare?" 4, 6, and "Psychological Warfare," 191.

UNESCO, FILM, AND EDUCATION

MEDIATING POSTWAR PARADIGMS OF COMMUNICATION

Zoe Drwick

How much of the world's fear and hate stem from Liberty and ignorance? It is impossible to say. But there can be no doubt that a great deal of its misery and suffering do, and UNESCO is therefore attacking these major ills at their roots to develop improved methods of education and instruction for us, all training projects on all the continents.

ROSS, THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE WORLD OF 1945

Can visual education be a panacea for misery and suffering? Although this link may seem naive and hopelessly dated, it is not so far removed from the idea of social improvement through the enlightened application of technology that continues to characterize our own day. In the years immediately following World War II, the mass media took on a new significance and the study of communication emerged to analyze the effects of these social technologies and to direct their implementation, legacies of which are with us still. The wartime experience of propaganda as well as the polarization of the globe into the uneasy entente of the cold war – a war of ideologies – gave ample reason for attending to the importance of the mass dissemination of ideas. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was intimately involved with the new landscape of mediated international communication. Although the interest in mass media took many forms in this period, no activities in the field took place with as much moral authority as those endorsed by an organization with the mandate of global peace. Designed to foster peace