

“Making Learning Easy and Enjoyable:”

# Anna Verona Dorris and the Visual Instruction Movement, 1918-1928

By Wendell G. Johnson

**T**he visual instruction movement was a constituent part of the field of visual education, which began in the early 1900s. With the further development of sound films and radio, it became audiovisual education; by the 1950s the field was known as instructional technology and today is often labeled educational technology (Butler, 1995). By 1928, one professional educator noted:

The information in the field of visual instruction has been scattered and indefinite, being confined mainly to magazine articles and pamphlets. There is need for a single volume which not only gives general information regarding this subject, but which also gives teachers and supervisors concrete guidance in their daily works (Dorris, 1928).

That professional educator was Anna Verona Dorris (AVD), who authored the first comprehensive text dealing with visual instruction, *Visual Instruction in the Public Schools*. During the decade 1918-1928, from the end of the Great War to the publication of *Visual Instruction*, AVD was in the vanguard of the field of educational technology. Other well-known figures in the field at that time included F. Dean McClusky, Nelson L. Greene, Joseph J. Weber, William H. Johnson, and Frank N. Freeman. As Butler (1995) points out, AVD was not only a pioneering woman in the field of visual instruction; she was a pioneer in a field dominated by men.

Anna Verona Dorris was born in Oregon on August 28, 1889. AVD's career in education can be traced back to the early 1900s when she was teaching Latin, history and geography in the Oregon public schools. She served as the prin-

cipal of the Thousand Oaks School in Berkeley, CA from 1918 to 1922, when she was brought to San Francisco State Normal College by Frederic Burk, a founder and first president of the college and an early proponent of instructional design (Saettler, 2004). From 1922 to 1924 Anna Verona Dorris served in the dual capacities of Professor of Geography at San Francisco State and Director of Visual Education for the Berkeley Public Schools. Her workweek consisted of three days at San Francisco State and two days in the Berkeley schools. Her duties at the Berkeley Public Schools, according to the Bureau of Education, consisted of “building up a distributing center; training teachers in methods of procedure; writing monographs with a committee of 18” (U.S. Department of the Interior, 1924). The Visual Instruction Department budget was \$5,000, with an additional \$2,700 for the director's salary. The department also employed one clerk. AVD's qualifications included a normal diploma, courses in education at both the University of California and Columbia University, and seventeen years' experience as a high-school teacher. Her credentials were impressive, given that in 1927, half of all teachers in the United States had five years or less teaching experience, and one-third of all teachers had not finished high school (Johnson, 1927).

In 1924, AVD accepted full-time status as Director of Visual Education at San Francisco State Normal School. She was an active participant in helping to expand San Francisco State during its growth at the “old campus” near Market Street, and was involved in planning



Anna Verona Dorris, 1889-1975.

for its present campus.

## The Visual Instruction Movement, 1918-1928

Anna Verona Dorris's contributions to educational technology can best be viewed within the context of the Visual Instruction Movement, or as Nelson Greene, founder and editor of the *Educational Screen*, often referred to it, "the visual movement." This nationwide movement

aimed "to broaden and deepen, by the use of visual aids, our national education in school, church, club and community center" (Greene, 1922). As Paul C. Reed pointed out, the goal of the "movement" was not merely to compel more educators to use visual aids; rather, it sought to improve education overall (a point later echoed by AVD). The leaders of the visual movement were not technicians, but educators who "knew and believed with religious zeal that the use of pictures would broaden and deepen education" (Reed, 1962, p. 17).

The Visual Instruction Movement arose as an antidote to verbalism, or "verbal transfer" in the words of Joseph J. Weber, and sought to lend concreteness to education:

"We can acquire visual experience from situations that are as concrete as reality

and as abstract as the scheme of typical visual aids which follows: (1) actual reality, as we find it on a school journey; (2) pseudo-reality, as exemplified by artificial models and exhibits; (3) pictorial realism, as depicted in drawings and photographs; (4) pictorial symbolism—similes, metaphors, and plain language" (Weber, 1928, p. 126).

Electronic media would come to dominate audiovisual education, particularly during the Second World War (1939-1945) and thereafter. However, during the twenty years before the war, the "visual landscape" was much more varied. In addition to motion pictures, which were

just coming into their own, the most commonly used visual materials included "excursions" (or "field trips" in today's terminology), photographs and prints, exhibits (including dioramas and taxidermic displays), graphic arts, maps and globes, stereographs, and stereopticon slides (Dorris, 1928; Rathman, 1924).

The Visual Instruction Movement experienced extensive growth during the decade 1918-1928, the same decade that AVD published *Visual Instruction: Course of Study for the Elementary Schools, Including the Kindergarten and First Six Grades* (1923) and *Visual Instruction in the Public Schools* (1928). It was during this time that colleges and universities began offering credit for courses in visual instruction. In order to gauge the extent of teacher education in visual instruction, AVD sent a questionnaire to 171 normal schools (of which 31 replied) and to 114 colleges and universities (37 replied). She found that four of the normal schools conducted summer sessions, and that Michigan Normal School taught one non-credit course. Stanford University provided a two-credit course entitled "Graphic Methods of Presenting Facts" (Williams, 1924). The Dorris survey also discovered that seventeen colleges and universities and four normal schools operated film distribution centers.

Several professional organizations were founded during this period. In 1922 the Visual Instruction Association of America was established, and shortly thereafter (1923), the National Education Association's Department of Visual Instruction (DVI). AVD served as President of DVI in 1927, when the organization held its annual convention in Seattle. Her immediate predecessors included Harry B. Wilson (1923-34), W. M. Gregory (1924-25), Ernest L. Crandall (1925-26), and A. F. Balcom (1926-27). She was succeeded by John A. Hollinger, W. W. Whitinghill, and F. Dean McClusky (AECT, 2004). AVD was the first woman to hold the office of President of the DVI, and the only woman to do so until 1934-1935 when Grace Ramsey held the office.

Dorris's presidential address was entitled "The Pedagogical Possibilities of Mass Instruction with Motion Pictures," the substance of which reappeared two years later as "Visual Instruction in Classroom Teaching" in the *Journal of the National Education Association*. At this time, the motion picture as an educational factor was still in its infancy (Dorris, 1927). AVD emphasized that visual aids were intended to complement education. The key, of course, was to determine "in what stage of the learning process each type of visual aid will render the greatest service to the child" (Dorris, 1929, p. 151). Before employing a visual aid, the teacher must "have a scientific

***"In addition to motion pictures, which were just coming into their own, the most commonly used visual materials included "excursions" (or "field trips" in today's terminology), photographs and prints, exhibits (including dioramas and taxidermic displays), graphic arts, maps and globes, stereographs, and stereopticon slides."***

conception of the nature of the child" (Dorris, 1929, p. 151). Whether a specific visual aid actually enhances learning depends upon how the material is used. Illustrative material is best used, according to AVD, during the preparation of assigned work. The material should supplement research, not serve as a substitute for it. Visual material is particularly helpful in reviewing a lesson because visualization "will permanently fix correct mental concepts in the minds of students" (Dorris, 1927, p. 152). She also warned against the superficial use of an educational device, such as a motion picture, for the device's sake and states that exposure does not provide fundamental and lasting results. Regarding visual material, she concluded, "Let us use it, but use it wisely" (Dorris, 1929, p. 151).

Another development during this period was the founding of journals devoted to the field of visual instruction (Kruse, 1962; Reed, 1962; Saettler, 1962). One significant event in visual instruction reported by *Education Screen* in its inaugural year (1922) was AVD's survey to determine the provisions being made regarding the training of teachers in the field of visual education. In separate studies, J. J. Weber and Frank N. Freeman sought to measure the effectiveness of a motion picture as an aid to traditional verbal instruction (Freeman, 1924; Weber, 1922), and the initial administrative departments of visual instruction were organized in public schools, institutions of higher education, and state departments of education. This final project, undertaken by a committee chaired by AVD, precedes both the Weber and Freeman studies, and it is interesting to note that in many instances, the hypotheses used by the Dorris Committee became the conclusions reached by Weber and Freeman.

## The Visual Instruction Department

In 1919 the public school system in Berkeley, CA appointed a committee to organize visual instruction in the schools. The committee, chaired by Anna Verona Dorris, included Jeanette Barrows, Ethel Batchelor, Ruth E. Clayton, Edward Mayer, Marie Kinell, Margaret E. Lobb, Maud Thompson, Clelia Paroni, Marion C. Smith, Marietta Higgins, Helen Shambaugh, Rhoda McRae, Gerda Bidstrup, Alta Adams, Actea Alexander, Helen Shaw, Ruby Lamb, and Margery Service. The committee met every two weeks for a year and spent the entire first year "discussing the importance of and the methods of procedure in Visual Instruction" (Dorris, 1923). The committee then moved on "by applying the general point of view to each subject with the object of

indicating by concrete illustrations the place and methods of using visual aids in the various subjects discussed" (Dorris, 1923). Soon, the committee was broadened to include supervisors, principals, and classroom teachers. Other areas of specialization included "Americanization," or the acculturation of immigrants (NAVI, 1920), arithmetic, art, geography, history, home economics, language, manual training, nature study, physical training, phonics, reading, and writing.

The committee felt it needed to justify the inclusion of visual instruction in the Berkeley Public Schools. The problem, as they saw it, was widespread illiteracy in society. There was a need for the speedy recognition of the place of visual instruction, and American education had proved lacking in this regard. The committee pointed to five areas of modern life where visual instruction had proven vital. 1) American businesses had incorporated visual instruction through advertising with electric signs and the continuing education of its workforce by means of training films. 2) Visual instruction was useful to promote national unity. Then, as now, immigration was an issue. The committee was concerned with the acculturation of American students ("Americanization"), and considered visual instruction to be vital in teaching immigrants about civics and health. 3) Scientific study benefited from visual instruction, especially in the area of surgery, allowing doctors to view up-to-date techniques. 4) "Low" technology areas, especially natural history and geography, employed visual instruction. Opportunities for foreign travel were limited in the 1920s; this deficit could be overcome by means of moving pictures and stereographs. 5) The committee noted that motion pictures were perhaps the most widely-used medium for amusing and entertaining the general public. The motion picture industry was one of the fastest growing industries in the United States.

The committee concluded that they were on solid ground in recommending the expanded use of visual instruction. In the early 1920s, there was debate about the effectiveness of visual instruction in education. Although studies were underway, the results of these studies were the object of continued speculation. AVD contended that an individual's imagination was stimulated through the use of visual aids. These aids were not meant to make education easier, only more meaningful. Visual instruction did not obviate the need for actual "work" (textbooks and research in the library), but rather provided a stimulus for students to search out further sources of information (Dorris, 1923).

The Berkeley Public School committee also decided that it was incumbent upon them to discuss the various types of visual aids and provide suggestions for their effective use. At that time, 1923, the most commonly used visual aids were excursions, flat pictures, maps, globes, charts, graphs, diagrams, models, stereographs, stereopticon slides, and moving pictures. AVD was adamant that visual aids be properly employed, and she distinguished four general uses for visual aids: 1) introducing new subject matter; 2) reviewing lessons; 3) giving concrete information (here, read visual reference) for assignments; and 4) providing a means of fascinating, wholesome entertainment (when supervised and managed by the school).

At this early date visual instruction was seen as an aid to education, and by no means a substitute for a well-prepared lesson plan. The committee went to great lengths to match the most appropriate visual materials with a particular class. AVD thought that "history, perhaps more than any other subject, can be effectively enriched, and revived by means of visual aids" (Dorris, 1923, p. 48), and in support of this opinion she cited William C. Begley:

We cannot understand an event in History unless we are able to imagine ourselves in the same situation that conditioned the event, in order to do this we must have had experiences which we can recall and reconstruct into a likeness of the situation (Dorris, 1923, p. 48).

One way to accomplish this, Dorris suggested, was to create a miniature museum in the classroom after the class had taken an excursion to a museum. One sixth-grade class did this in Berkeley in the 1920s. The students collected illustrations and articles dealing with Egyptian history and then constructed their own museum exhibits. Artifacts in this school museum included clay and stone tablets with impressions of hieroglyphics, jewelry fashioned out of modeline, soap and clay models of the Sphinx, miniature replicas of the Pyramids, and dolls wrapped up as mummies. Another sixth grade class was so inspired by the exhibits that they decided to expand the museum to include replicas of Greek and Roman objects as well. The male students built a cross section of a Roman house in their manual training class (later called industrial arts or "shop"). The female students dressed dolls to represent Roman and Greek characters and constructed furniture for the Roman house (Dorris, 1928).

The committee did not adopt a one-size fits all approach for visual instruction. They classified material by grade level and subject matter.

The Visual Instruction Center of the Berkeley Public Schools possessed a wide variety of visual materials for the third grade which comprised a unit entitled "Children of Other Lands." Included was an exhibit of educational dolls dressed in "nature" (indigenous) costumes. However, as of 1923, "the committee of Visual Instruction has not been able to find educational films which they can recommend whole-heartedly for classroom instruction in the lower grades" (Dorris, 1923, p. 31). For the fifth and sixth grades, on the other hand, several suitable films were available, including "Paper Making," which illustrated the various ways of manufacturing paper both from pulp and from rags. This film dovetailed nicely with the exhibit on papermaking on display in the sixth-grade classroom.

Dorris's book, *Visual Instruction in the Public Schools*, which grew out of the recommendations of the Berkeley Committee, gives us a glimpse of visual instruction departments in their infancy. She described their organization, the services they provided, and the types of equipment they owned. *Visual Instruction in the Public Schools* showed how the Berkeley school district adopted the initiatives proposed by its study committee. At that time, the position of director of a visual instruction department was comparatively new, and AVD estimated that there were fewer than two dozen such directors scattered throughout the United States. She was appalled at the relative lack of credentials possessed by some of these individuals. In one instance, the director was a mechanic who, "while thoroughly understanding how to operate a motion-picture projector, knew nothing regarding public school education" (Dorris, 1928, p. 391).

Based on her experience in the field and knowledge of modern educational procedure, AVD calls for six qualifications necessary for a director. The "sage director," she said

- Must be a scholar with a broad knowledge of the fundamental principles of modern education; i.e., in modern terms, the director needs both subject specialties and knowledge of the philosophy of education.
- Will purchase material for every subject and every grade, and hence, she or he must have a clear conception of both elementary and secondary education.
- Will need supervisory experience, since teachers must be trained to use visual materials. If the director lacks supervisory experience, it may suffice to substitute adequate college training courses. However, AVD warned, the job will prove to be "just that much harder" (Dorris, 1928, p. 389) if the director has not worked previously with teachers.

- Will need a modicum of business acuity. One of the first requisite tasks for any administrative department is economical, efficient organization and maintenance. It goes without saying that visual instruction departments have large sums of money to spend, and must do so judiciously.
- Needs a thorough knowledge of visual instruction. Unfortunately, at that time (1928), very few colleges and universities offered training in the field. Hence, directors were compelled to gain their knowledge of visual instruction through personal experience and the process of trial and error.
- Will be able to work with both teachers and supervisors. Networking skills are vital because the director will be out in the public, meeting with community leaders and the business community (Dorris, 1928, pp. 388-391).

At this point, it is interesting to ask if these requirements reflect AVD's biography. She commented, "Students of visual instruction now have the opportunity to profit by the years of experience of pioneer workers" (1928, p. 390). AVD herself was one such pioneer and literally wrote the first book on visual instruction.

No single administrator, even one as accomplished and experienced as Dorris, could perform all of the duties required of a well-functioning department. The department also needed a mechanical expert to assume full responsibility for the maintenance of equipment and deal with electrical problems. Another vital employee was a stenographer (AVD assumed this job would be filled by a woman) who would act as a general assistant to the director and ideally had some teaching experience, since she would constantly interact with teachers. The stenographer's tasks included filing and cataloging materials and filling orders for materials. A third employee was the office helper (and again, AVD assumed this position would be staffed by a woman), who would mend slides, bind books, and check the materials that were returned to the visual instruction department. Finally, the department needed a delivery person. Based on her experience, AVD knew that prompt delivery of materials was of vital importance. While teachers were urged to plan ahead, unanticipated events often arose, and the delivery schedule needed flexibility. Dorris recommended that each school arrange to have materials delivered at least twice a week. She noted that it was usually possible to find a student with a car who could make deliveries, but it was preferable to hire a delivery man with a truck (and, of course, in several large cities the visual instruction department already owned a truck). A professional delivery person could be held responsible for the safe delivery of

visual materials.

AVD's description of the genesis of the Visual Instruction Department of the Berkeley Public Schools shows that the founding committee had a detailed and well-conceived "business plan." The committee set aside a room in the administrative offices for the visual instruction center and furnished this room with shelves, cabinets, and other office equipment. The school system owned some visual material and the department collected other items from the individual schools. Of particular import was the acquisition of 2000 colored slides. The committee purchased a portable motion picture projector and two projection lanterns (several of the schools also owned their own opaque or slide lanterns and movie projectors).

A portion of the budget was set aside for the rental of educational films, and members of the committee went to great lengths to identify suitable films. Teachers were able to request specific films, which were delivered by a college student who used his own car and was paid one dollar per hour. He originally worked an hour a day, but soon his work doubled and he was working two hours a day. To facilitate the increased demand for delivery the department purchased a truck. The committee requested relevant visual materials from commercial and industrial firms in the area, and as a result acquired a large number of industrial exhibits. The department also received several hundred copies of the *National Geographic* (a fact sure to be appreciated by librarians). Colored pictures were cut from this magazine and mounted and the remaining pages were bound and shelved separately. The committee engaged in painstaking collection of slides, pictures, and stereographs that were then correlated with specific subject matter and classified in small sets. After the first month of operation, the department held a seminar "to enlighten and instruct the teachers regarding the use of materials" (Dorris, 1928, p. 395). The committee also conducted separate training sessions for the teachers of each grade. School principals were encouraged

***“AVD was the first woman to hold the office of President of the DVI, and the only woman to do so until 1934-1935 when Grace Ramsey held the office. Dorris’s presidential address was entitled ‘The Pedagogical Possibilities of Mass Instruction with Motion Pictures’.”***

to appoint a teacher to act as visual instruction adviser for their schools, and the advisors, in turn, acted as liaisons with the Berkeley visual instruction department.

According to the first bulletin issued by the Berkeley department (*Bulletin No. 1*), the Berkeley Visual Instruction Center was open every afternoon between 1:00 and 5:00, Tuesday mornings from 8:00 to noon, and Saturday mornings 9:00 to noon. Principals and teachers

were invited to the center to inspect the material on hand and to preview slides. In addition to instructional materials, the center had a portable motion-picture projector, projection booth, and stereopticon lantern. Training sessions were offered by appointment for any teacher who wanted to learn how to operate a projector. By 1928, the Berkeley Visual Instruction De-

partment was still borrowing or renting films rather than purchasing them. Arrangements had to be made with the Visual Instruction Department at the University of California to have films shipped across town to the Berkeley school system. AVD warned, however, that films should not be shown in class before they had been previewed by the principal or teacher. In her dual role, AVD could guarantee that the University of California Visual Instruction Department would deliver the films to the schools early enough to permit them to be previewed before they were used in classes. The Berkeley Visual Instruction Department made daily deliveries to schools between 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

To promote efficient service, Dorris asked classroom teachers to observe the following guidelines:

- Requests for visual materials were to be made in person or over the phone between 1:00 and 5:00 p.m.
- Materials could be kept three days, but renewals were possible upon request.
- Motion pictures were rented on a daily basis and were to be returned promptly. Since the films were inspected after each showing, AVD requested that they **not** be rewound.
- Materials were to be returned in good condition before 9:00 a.m. “so that no time will be wasted” (Dorris, 1928, p. 398).
- Slides were loaned in sets and accompanied by text. Slides were to be returned in numerical order.
- Schools were to assume responsibility for loss

due to carelessness. The slides were to be handled with care and thumb tacks were not to be stuck in the pictures.

- Visual aids were to be used in the same manner as other reference materials—to enrich the subject matter. Teachers were advised to study the Visual Instruction Monograph and to use only one visual aid at a time.

## Visual Instruction: Materials and Equipment

Anna Verona Dorris’s *Visual Instruction in the Public Schools* distinguished between two types of visual aids: those which required additional equipment (technology) to be used (stereographs, slides, and motion pictures), and those which did not (excursions; photographs and prints; exhibits, specimens and models; graphic and pictorial charts; and maps and files). She also made a distinction between education excursions and recreational outings, or those which are “indulged in after school or during a weekend” (Dorris, 1928, p. 60).

AVD considered stereographs, highly regarded as visual aids in the 1920s, as the most valuable means of conveying “vivid experiences and accurate mental concepts to the minds of young children” (1928, p. 135). These sentiments were echoed by Weber, who enunciated five reasons for using stereographs in the classroom: “the pupils are *more interested* in the topic, they learn the facts in *less time*, they do it with *less effort*, the learning is *more vivid*, and the results *endure longer*” (Weber, 1923).

Stereographs consisted of two photographs of an object photographed by a stereoscopic camera. The photographs were mounted side by side and viewed through a stereoscope (lenses separated by a partition which prevented the left eye from viewing the right-hand picture and vice versa), which in turn provided a three dimensional image. Stereographs were one of the most widely-used visual aids in the 1920s, particularly the Keystone 600 set. School districts throughout the country continued to purchase stereographs into the 1930s; by 1936, the Berkeley Public Schools possessed over 12,000 of them.

Here we see, in part, the genesis of the electronic transmission of information for educational purposes. For example, AVD and the Berkeley Public Schools purchased the Spencer Delineascope, which, according to the Spencer Lens Company’s promotional material, was designed to project natural color slides in a wide variety of sizes “where the element of heat is of great importance.” The Delineascope provided a technological advance in the treatment of fragile

*“Opportunities for foreign travel were limited in the 1920s; this deficit could be overcome by means of moving pictures and stereographs.”*

color slides.

Dorris considered motion pictures to be “one of the greatest achievements of modern times, and is, perhaps, the most powerful influence upon society today” (Dorris, 1928). She had four suggestions regarding the role of motion pictures as an educational tool in the public schools. 1) Movies could be used to introduce new subject matter. AVD was aware of studies that demonstrated that movies provided general impressions rather than genuine knowledge. Yet, movies could be used to arouse curiosity and furnish incentive for further study. Should the teacher show the film “Rio de Janeiro” by Burton Holmes, the students would be able to visit that city vicariously. The impression made on young minds would be deep and lasting, and as a result, “more intelligent and purposeful study of South America may be the outcome” (Dorris, 1928, p. 191). 2) Motion pictures were helpful in answering questions which would arise during the course of assigned work. For example, when studying the geography of Norway, the question naturally arises, “Why are there so many glaciers in Norway?” At this stage, AVD suggests showing the film “A Study of a Mountain Glacier” by Dr. Wallace Atwood. In order to achieve maximum benefit from the film, the students must be ready for the lesson. Dorris thought that a film should be shown twice, leaving ample time for discussion between screenings. 3) Motion pictures could be used to review lessons, a vital role in pedagogy. Movies provide “one of the most effective means by which information previously gained may be brought to mind and reemphasized” (Dorris, 1928, p. 193). AVD recommended “Brer Rabbit and his Pals.” This film not only gave close-ups of the natural habitat of rodents, it could also correct erroneous impressions that may have arisen during the lesson. 4) Movies can be shown during the weekly assembly. Movies are excellent means for providing information to large groups (in contrast to the stereograph, which is used by individuals or in small groups of two or three students). Films used in assemblies needed to appeal to students of all grades and should be simple in content and entertaining. In this regard, Dorris especially commended the Yale University films.

*Visual Instruction in the Public Schools* was reviewed favorably at the time of its publication. Helen V. Brown wrote, “For the classroom teacher or school official who is planning to establish a visual-education department in his school system this book should prove a valuable and practical aid” (Brown, 1929). F. Dean McClusky thought that contemporary educational literature was in need of a book on visual instruction.

His main criticism of Dorris’s book was that it did not refer to the experiments in Freeman, et al. On the whole, “the book is a timely, pioneering work and is to be commended for its solid, professional point of view. It deserves a good reception among teachers” (McClusky, 1929).

Dorris was certainly aware of the Eastman Kodak experiments, and cited the final report prepared by Thomas E. Finegan. She wrote:

In the development of the Eastman Program, the central thought will be that the film is to be used in the classroom and for instructional purposes. The films developed for this experiment will not be for auditorium and general assembly purposes, nor will they be made with the ideal of entertaining children. No special entertainment features are to be incorporated in the films; they are to be used as the text and apparatus are used—for regular classroom purposes (1928, p. 404).

***“Visual instruction did not obviate the need for actual ‘work’ (textbooks and research in the library), but rather provided a stimulus for students to search out further sources of information.”***

As a professor in the Geography Department at San Francisco State, it is not surprising that AVD knew about this project and saw its benefit to education.

As late as 1928, Dorris had to justify the use of technology in the classroom. Her extensive list of visual aids and peripheral equipment may have reflected her desire to provide a comprehensive treatment of visual instruction. It may also have been a reaction against what she saw as outmoded educational philosophies and classroom practices. Educational professionals in the 1920s often failed to distinguish between the use of technology for entertainment or educational purposes. AVD shared the vision that technology could be used for educational ends and should not be dismissed because it also had value as an entertainment medium. As AVD herself put it

Some conservative teachers have been prejudiced against the motion picture as a classroom aid, probably because it came from the entertainment world; other formalists frown on any teaching method that tends to make learning easy and enjoyable. To them the getting of knowledge means hard work unaccompanied by the stimulating factors of interest and joy. Still others unfortunately, are self-satisfied and unwill-

ing to make the extra effort that the use of any new equipment involves (Dorris, 1928, p. 182).

## Conclusion

Anna Verona Dorris was in the vanguard of the visual instruction movement in the United States. She became head of the Geography Department at San Francisco State and retired as Professor Emerita in 1948. After retiring, Dorris moved to Los Angeles (she resided on Wilshire Boulevard), remained active, and traveled widely. One of her projects was a book of poetry, *When My Heart Sings* (1959). Some of her poems were autobiographical (*The Oregon Desert*) and reflected her travels and love of geography (*Christmas in a Land Down Under*, *The Call of the Tropics*, and *Lebanon Must Survive*). AVD lived her credo, which was making learning easy and enjoyable. She passed away in Los Angeles, CA on October 25, 1975.

Wendell Johnson, MLS (Northern Illinois University), Ph.D. (Rice University) is Social Sciences Librarian at NIU. He is a graduate student in the Ed.D. program at NIU in Educational Technology, Research, and Assessment, where his research seeks to apply educational technology to the field of librarianship. He is the editor of *Community and Junior College Libraries*.

## References

Association for Educational Communications and Technology, (2004). Past presidents of AECT. Retrieved December 4, 2006, from

<http://www.aect.org>

Brown, H. V. (1929). Review (untitled) of visual instruction in the public schools. *Educational Research Bulletin*, 8, 352-3.

Butler, R. (1995). *Women in audiovisual education: A discourse analysis* (doctoral dissertation, The University of Wisconsin-Madison).

Crandall, E. L. (1922). How will the problem of the distribution of educational motion pictures ultimately be solved? *Proceedings of the first annual meeting of National Academy of Visual Instruction*, 16.

Dorris, A. V. (1959). *When my heart sings*. New York, NY: Exposition Press.

Dorris, A. V. (1929). Visual instruction in classroom teaching. *The Journal of the National Education Association*, 18, 151-152.

Dorris, A. V. (1928). *Visual instruction in the public schools*. Boston, MA: Ginn & Company

Dorris, A. V. (1927). The pedagogical possibilities of mass instruction with motion pictures. *Proceedings of the annual meeting of the National Education Association of the United States*, 65, 960-963.

Dorris, A. V. (1923). Visual instruction. Course of study for the elementary schools, including the kindergarten and first six grades. *Course of study monograph elementary schools, number 7*. Berkeley, CA: The Public Schools.

Freeman, F. N. (1924). *Visual instruction*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press

Greene, N. (1922). Let's try. *The educational screen*, 1, 98.

Johnson, W. H. (1927). *Fundamentals in visual instruction*. Chicago, IL: The Educational Screen.

Koon, Cline M., & Noble, Allen W. (1936). *National visual education directory; a list by states of 8,806 school systems, including an*

*inventory of audio-visual equipment*. Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

Kruse, W. F. (1962). When Ed-Screen was born. *Educational screen and audiovisual guide*, 41, 21-23.

McClusky, F. D. (1929). Review (untitled) of visual instruction in the public schools. *The Elementary School Journal*, 29, 467-468.

National Academy of Visual Instruction, (1922). *Proceedings of the first annual meeting of National Academy of Visual Instruction*. Madison, WI: The Academy.

Rathmann, C. G. (1915). *Educational Museum of St. Louis Public Schools*. United States Bureau of Education, Bulletin 48. Washington: Government Printing Office.

Reed, P. C. (1962). The visual movement. *The educational screen and audiovisual guide*, 41, 17.

Saettler, P. (1962). A year of "firsts", "better" and "more" in visual education. *Educational Screen and Audiovisual Guide*, 41.

Saettler, P. (2004). *The evolution of American educational technology*. Greenwich, CT: Information Age Publishing.

U.S. Department of the Interior. Bureau of Education. (1924). *Visual education departments in educational institutions* (Bulletin, 1924). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Weber, J. J. (1928). Picture values in education. *The educational screen*, 7, 126.

Weber, J. J. (1922). *Comparative effectiveness of some visual aids in seventh grade instruction*. Chicago, IL: Educational Screen.

Williams, J. H. (1924). *Graphic methods in education*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company



Advertise in  
Tech Trends

Tech Trends is a valuable tool in reaching the nation's top teachers and educational researchers. Let our readers know about your company's book titles, products or services by advertising in this popular journal

Contact AECT for rates and publication schedules at 812-335-7675

 **Linking Research and Practice to Improve Learning.**