

VIDEO

AS A

SECOND LANGUAGE

HOW TO MAKE A VIDEO DOCUMENTARY

by **Don Harwood**



REVISED EDITION



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BY DON HARWOOD

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To my Parents

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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He has been involved in video production since 1968, and has written video books, which are used in over fourteen countries, as well as all fifty states.

Harwood does guest lectures at educational and industrial institutions. Also, he has completed a number of video documentaries and instructional tapes for prominent organizations.

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INTRODUCTION

The video documentary has become a viable tool for social change, education, and historical preservation, due to the emergence of portable videotape recorders and lightweight cameras.

The words "video documentary", however, are used as a catch-all phrase to describe anything recorded on videotape. The character of a video documentary, is assuredly, fairly complex. It exists like the proverbial iceberg, with ten percent of its surface visible and ninety percent unknown, uncharted, and unseen.

This book will provide a guide to the fundamental concepts involved in the making of a good video documentary. After a series of necessary definitions, the documentalist is taken from the pre-planning stage, through actual production, including interviewing techniques, to post-production; the final edited videotape.

Most of these techniques may, also, be used for Electronic News Gathering (ENG).

The material presented in the ensuing chapters is intended for those of you with a basic knowledge of portable video equipment operation. Others may wish to consult **EVERYTHING YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT PORTABLE VIDEOTAPE RECORDING.**

I am indebted to Emma Cohn, of the New York Public Library, for her insight as to the need for this book.

Don Harwood

OLSEN MIDDLE SCHOOL LIBRARY

Language is not an abstract construction of the learned, or of dictionary-makers, but is something arising out of the work, needs, ties, joys, affections, tastes, of long generations of humanity, and has its bases broad and low, close to the ground.

Walt Whitman

CHAPTER 1

DISSECTION OF A VIDEO DOCUMENTARY

"Let's make a video documentary!"

"O.K."

"Get the camera and recorder."

"O.K."

"I'll meet you here in an hour."

"O.K."

"It will really be great!"

"I have one question."

"Yes?"

"What is a video documentary?"

Good question! The lack of a clearly defined answer has resulted in a handful of videotapes that are good documentaries, a large amount that are documentaries but not good, and a majority of tapes that are not even documentaries, although that was the original intent!

The thrust of this chapter will be devoted to answering the questions, "What is a video documentary?" and "What is its relationship to the viewing audience?" So that there is common ground for discussion, definitions of the most often used terms regarding video documentaries will be given now, rather than in a glossary.

DOCUMENT - Something written, printed, photographed, or taped, that furnishes conclusive information or evidence.

DOCUMENTARY - Pertaining to, consisting of or based upon documents. Presenting

factual material without fictionalizing.

DOCUMENTARY DATA - Facts or figures from which conclusions may be drawn.

Rephrasing the preceding dictionary definitions, one finds that to "document something" is merely to make a factual record of it. A documentary, on the other hand, is made up of more than one document, implying that there must be at least two events, times or places involved.

The dictionary definitions of television, commercial and video are:

TELEVISION - The transmission of continuous visual images as a series of electrical impulses restored to visual form on the cathode-ray screen of a receiver, often with accompanying sound.

COMMERCIAL - as in Commercial TV - Produced in large quantities and/or having financial gain as an object.

VIDEO - The picture portion of a television program.

In discussing media, however, TELEVISION is defined as a viewing medium; COMMERCIAL TV as that programming that is broadcast on standard television stations; and VIDEO as the people controlled alternative to commercial television.

A VIDEO DOCUMENTARY is, therefore, a videotape made by average people, composed of various documents and documentary data, which serves to relate a factual story by comparison of events, times, places, or viewpoints.

The key word in this definition is comparison. Whether the comparison is subtle, obvious, or implied, without it there can be no documentary, only documentation.

Example: A videotape of a wedding ceremony is a document. It may be part of a documentary if the events leading up to it are shown, if it is compared to another wedding ceremony taking place at the same time, or contrasted to another culturally different ceremony.

A baseball game taped from beginning to end is a document. Parts of the game may subsequently be used in a videotape with parts of other games, interviews with ballplayers and interviews with fans - that is a documentary.

POINT OF VIEW

Since a documentary, in essence, tells a factual story, it must have an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. It must also have a story line or "point of view".

A point of view is the attitude one takes about the topic being presented. Points of view fall into two major categories - objective and subjective. The dictionary defines objective as, "Free from personal feelings, opinions, and prejudice; unbiased". Subjective is defined as, "Relating to, proceeding from, or taking place within an individual's mind or emotions".

Therefore, a documentary that is objectively presented would leave the viewers to draw their own conclusions. The videotape would show all sides of the story, good or bad, from an unbiased point of view. Using the baseball documentary as an example again, all positive and negative

comments, by both the ball players and the fans, would be presented.

The same documentary, subjectively slanted, could show the point of view of one player, the manager, or a particular fan.

These types of viewpoints should not be confused with what is termed "the camera's point of view", whereby the camera views a scene either as an actual participant in the event, or as a casual observer.

Example: If a baseball team manager, who is the subject of the documentary, is speaking with the players in the locker room, the camera could be placed at a distance, and it would observe what was happening as a bystander (objective camera), or the camera could be placed among the players, and it would observe the manager from the same perspective as the players do (subjective camera).

The point of view of a documentary may be objective or subjective, and the camera, independently, may be objective or subjective.

There have been some arguments that, on the contrary, there is no such thing as complete objectivity. That due to camera placement and the time of day chosen for shooting each segment, there must be some subjectivity in every documentary.

A case in point: Assume you were asked to make an objective segment of a documentary, consisting of what takes place outside of an office building. You set the camera on a tripod in front of the building, adjust the zoom lens for a medium shot, and record for one half hour. After the tape is completed, you

show it to an audience and find you are being criticized for not making the segment objectively. That the tape was made on Thursday, rather than Sunday, makes it subjective. The particular time of day you chose makes it subjective. The entrance to the building you chose to record makes it subjective. The camera angle and placement makes it subjective. Whether it was raining or not, the month of the year, etc., all make the tape subjective.

The preceding example was used for clarification purposes only. In general practice, documentaries that attempt to show all, or many, sides of a story are referred to as objective. Those that show one side are called subjective.

DOCUMENTARY PHILOSOPHY

The main purpose of any documentary is to show real life situations as they really occur - people doing what they normally do, saying what they normally say, in environments to which they are indigenous...their laughing, crying, work, poverty, sickness, leisure, celebration, and discontent. The documentary presents these everyday occurrences to an audience that is assumed to be totally unaware of their existence, and is seeing them for the first time. In actuality then, a documentary is a reflection of life.

Being truly representational, its real value lies in education; whether it's used to educate future generations, by being historical, or today's world, by instigating social change. This is in contrast to the purely entertainment function of contrivances such as novels and "adventure oriented" television programs.

To accomplish their objectives,

documentalists need not be historians or social workers. Documentaries may be made by concerned citizens seeking change in their own home town, by students for a class project, by creatively inclined individuals as an art form, by people who document as a hobby, and by people who seek to right a social wrong.

The fact that a video format is used is merely incidental. It is more vivid than books and more immediate than film, and therein lies its popularity. The video process, i.e. videotape recorder and television receiver/monitor, also allows playback of the finished product easily, and under more varied conditions than film equipment.

Documentaries may be as diverse as there are subjects to cover. A group of doctors, seeking monetary support for research, made a video documentary about handicapped children under their care. A video group ventured into the hinterlands of Louisiana to make a video documentary about the Cajuns and their unique life style. This product took several months to complete and was subsequently shown on public broadcasting stations nation-wide. A documentary about the preparation of a criminal trial and its ultimate conclusion was used as a teaching device for law students.

Documentaries have been used to gather support to get a traffic light installed, to prevent unscrupulous builders from infringing upon local zoning regulations, to show boundary conflict between adjacent counties, and to show popular opinion regarding undesirable businesses and stores operating in particular neighborhoods. Documentaries have

also been made about the poverty in Appalachia, the high cost of living in Alaska, state mental hospitals, the uses of computers within a large university, and the plight of homeless, elderly ladies in big cities.

Truth ever lovely - since the
world began
The foe of tyrants, and the
friend of man

Campbell

TYPES OF DOCUMENTARIES

HISTORICAL or ARCHIVAL - Documentalist tries to show all aspects of a particular subject. Objectivity is a must and all points of view must be presented.

ADVOCACY - Documentalist takes a stand and the documentary is made from a specific point of view. This is a subjective approach, and is aimed at convincing the audience of the validity of the documentalist's views. An advocacy documentary is a vehicle by which its maker speaks in favor of a cause.

REPRESENTATIVE CATEGORIES

VISUAL ESSAY - A video documentary without verbalization. The message is imparted by the video alone. Music may be used to enhance the presentation.

VISUAL ESSAY WITH COMMENTARY - Same as a visual essay, but narration is used to describe the events. Interviews are not used.

CRISIS - Concentrates on crisis conditions such as floods, earthquakes, workers' strikes, demonstrations, etc.

PUBLIC RELATIONS - Used by resorts, beach-clubs, amusement parks, camps, land developers, etc., to entice customers. Naturally, everything is shown from a positive viewpoint.

PROFILE - The life, times, desires, and attitudes of one person are presented.

INVESTIGATIVE - Documentalist probes certain situations that are not clear, or where information is not sufficient enough to state an opinion.

EXPOSE¹ - Documentalist knows certain facts to be true, and sets out to gather information and evidence.

DRAMATIZED DOCUMENTARY - (Docudrama) - A documentary only in the sense that events portrayed were true and the people were real people. An example would be the life of Abraham Lincoln.

CONTINUING DOCUMENTARY - (Update) - Places or people are re-visited annually, etc.

MINI-DOCUMENTARY - Refers not to the length of the videotape but, rather, the scope of the subject covered.

SOCIAL COMMENTARY - Concerns itself with anything related to people, their relationships with one another, your own society, or the world in general.

It is the opinion of many, this author included, that not only should most video documentaries explain social problems, they should also be used for the general betterment of society by advocating change.

Also, all video documentaries should be about people. Buildings are built and allowed to decay by people, and must be rebuilt by people. Dams and bridges are built by people. Earthquakes and floods cause hardship to people. Poverty is caused by people, and must be overcome by people. People create jobs and people work at them. Education is provided by people and for people. Even when it comes to natural resource conservation and animal protection, people must be educated, not nature.

Regardless of what point of view one chooses to take in the making of a video documentary, one point of view never changes. All documentaries are always made from a human being's point of view. Even those documentaries that purport to show the world as a dog would see it, for example, are only showing a human's interpretation of a dog's viewpoint.

CREDIBILITY

Credibility is that element which makes a video documentary believable. It is not one single factor that achieves this distinction, but a combination of many. Without credibility, the documentary is

worthless, for it was only to express truth that the videotape was made.

As a general rule, a viewing audience is not overly critical of visual images that appear in a documentary. Scenes such as run-down buildings, traffic jams, pickets, etc. are not thought to be contrived. One accepts what one sees until led to believe otherwise. The spoken word, and the person speaking it, however, are examined more closely. A detailed investigation of what gives a documentary credibility reveals the following:

1. The people stating opinions, whether interviewers or interviewees, must be "real" in the eyes of the viewing audience.
2. The vocabulary and word usage must be characteristic of the person speaking. Prepared "high-society" speeches cannot be used in lieu of spontaneous, natural, conversation.
3. In documentaries about controversial subjects, opinions stated should be truly representational.

This criteria leads to many questions. How many interviews does it take to establish a credible point of view? Is an historical documentary believable if it contains only one point of view? If there is a conflict, how many interviews should be presented for each side? Should each side always be represented equally - two for, two against, two neutral, etc.? What if one hundred and fifty-two people were interviewed, and one hundred were "for", fifty "opposed", and two "neutral", regarding a particular issue? Would not equal representation, in this case, affect the tapes's credibility? Shouldn't there

be a verbal or visual indication which tells the total amount of people interviewed, and the percentage of each viewpoint received?

THE VIEWING AUDIENCE

It is the viewing audience for which a video documentary is made. Therefore, the primary questions that should be asked by every documentalist are: "Who will watch my video documentary?" "How will it be viewed?" "How should the audience be affected?" Some initial conclusions may be drawn by comparing documentaries made on film, to documentaries made on videotape.

Filmed documentaries are "bigger-than-life". The images projected on the screen are larger than they are in reality. This has the effect of being overwhelming, dominating and aggressive.

Video documentaries are "smaller-than-life". The images on the television screen are "Lilliputian" and controllable.

The film screen is large enough, so that the average person looking at the center, cannot see the outside edges. The screen fills the eye, and becomes the viewer's whole world.

The television screen is small enough, so that not only can the entire image be seen at once, but also part of the room. The viewer is very aware that the television screen is only part of the environment.

Film theaters allow no distractions or interference. The room is darkened and the viewer's eye cannot rest on a superfluous object. The telephone can't ring, no one can knock at the front door.

Television is an incidental medium. It is viewed in a lit room, possibly with other activities taking place, and people are free to pass to and fro. Any number of distractions and interruptions may occur and are not considered out of the ordinary.

People travel to film theaters, pay the price of admission, and demand to be entertained.

Television is always there, costs nothing, and is an "information box". That is, it brings information to the viewer - relevant, nonrelevant, funny, sad, educational, entertainment, etc.

Whatever is being shown at a film theater, is what you set out to see. Rarely will one get up and leave before the film is over, and it's impossible to change the picture for another one.

Television sets have a channel selector, which is a built-in deterrent against boredom. Dull programs may be tuned out without any discussion or analysis. If need be, the entire set may be turned off without any travel time incurred, or any monetary loss to the viewer.

One may surmise then, that although television as a viewing medium is uniquely personal, it also has inherent weaknesses. Therefore, to maintain audience attention, the video documentary must be concise, sure of purpose, and stimulating. It should afford viewers the opportunity to encounter life's situations in a new way. Also, the relatively small size of a TV screen makes it difficult to perceive detail. Close-ups should be used quite often, and especially during interviews to show emotions and facial expressions.

It is difficult to ascertain the maximum length a video documentary may be, and have it still retain the audience's attention. For most subjects, fifteen to eighteen minutes is appropriate. Experienced documentalists may develop certain interesting and informative topics into a twenty-eight or fifty-eight minute program.

ALTERNATE VIEWING METHODS

VIDEO PROJECTOR - This device projects the video image onto a screen approximately thirty inches by forty inches or nine feet by twelve feet, depending on the model. As a larger picture changes the impact of a video documentary, experimentation is in order.

MULTI-SCREEN PRESENTATION - Many events in a documentary take place at the same time. To simulate this effect, five or six video monitors are operated at the same time, each presenting different information. The monitors may be placed on top of one another, or side-by-side in a semi-circle.

CHAPTER 2

PRE-PRODUCTION

The pre-production element in the making of a video documentary contains four steps:

1. Decide on a topic, purpose, and point of view.
2. Form a crew.
3. Production Overview - Preliminary planning.
4. Preliminary research.

TOPIC, PURPOSE, POINT OF VIEW

The first step in the making of any video documentary is, naturally, to think of a topic. The topic can be something in which you are personally interested, such as camping. It could be something you would like to learn about. It could be something about which the making of a documentary could prove beneficial to society. It could be about something someone else has asked you to do. Regardless of the choice, your point of view should be clearly established before the videotaping proceeds.

FORM A CREW

A video crew should consist of people sympathetic to your cause. They should speak another language if necessary, have an awareness of the customs of the people you will be taping, and have varied and

in-depth video experience. Not everyone must be knowledgeable in all these areas, but a multi-faceted crew should be chosen. People who cannot work as a team should be avoided, as they will upset everyone else. (In those cases when video crews may be assigned to work together , steps 1 and 2 may be reversed.)

PRODUCTION OVERVIEWS

Storyboards originated in early television and film studios. They are a written schedule of the production, that give the director, lighting crew, and camera operators an overview of what is taking place during the actual production. Exact camera shots are set up, lines are spoken on cue, and events are planned to take place at a certain time.

Although camera shots and interviews may not always be arranged to take place at a specific time and location, storyboards also have their place in documentary video. They are called "Production Overviews" and are used to give the video crew an idea of what should be included in the documentary. A video documentary Production Overview does not show where each scene appears on the final tape, exactly what it should look like, or even that it will be used. In fact, quite often events are taped that could not have been foreseen and therefore could not have been written down. The function of an overview is to act as a guide to the possible options. Before making a documentary, the crew should have some idea of who will be interviewed, specific environmental shots, items of special interest, important close-ups, and also, the type of video

equipment needed. If locations were visited beforehand (and they should be), peculiarities, placement of electrical outlets, room noise, etc., should also be noted. A Production Overview also contains other information such as names, addresses, and telephone numbers of the crew, arrangements necessary for visiting certain locations, and anything else that is pertinent. (See pages 26 and 27.)

As an example of how to use an overview, assume that a crew has been chosen, and the plan is to do an "historical documentary" about a local hospital. All of the ideas and information should be written down in outline form.

Who should be interviewed:

Doctor - One who has been at the hospital for many years and one who has been there a short time. How many years a doctor, how many years at this particular hospital, specialty, pressure of job, strange working hours.....

Administrator - Type of hospital, publicly or privately funded, does hospital specialize and in what, unique problems of running a hospital, hiring practices.....

Nurse - Job functions, relationship with doctors, type of training necessary to become a nurse, advancement, relationship with patients, pressure of job, duties.....

Intern - What is an intern, length of time position must be maintained, job functions, specialities, responsibilities to patients..

Specialist - Type of speciality, years of

training, innovations.....

Surgeon - Speciality, how many operations per day, complications, tensions, how many years a surgeon, type of training.....

Short term patient - Type of medical problem, is patient comfortable and receiving enough attention, is food good, are there any diversions.....

(Some patients will only be in the hospital for a few days. It would be interesting to contrast their viewpoints to those of long term patients.)

Long term patient - Doctor-patient relationship over a long period, rehabilitation process, recreation, general attitude.....
(Long term patients may stay at hospitals for months or years. For that time period, the hospital is their home.)

Patients' relatives - Their opinions about the attitudes of the hospital staff towards the patient, have they ever been a patient, if need be, would they choose this particular hospital, are the hospital fees reasonable.....

Possible taping:

Emergency room - What happens there, who is treated, types of cases.....

Recreational facilities - Type, available to whom, supervision, extra charges.....

Rehabilitation facilities - Whirlpool baths, swimming, therapy, sauna baths, planned exercises, weight lifting room.....

Now that the "essence" of the documentary has been worked out, the answers to the following questions must also be noted.

Preliminary production planning - Hospital

1. What is the parking availability? This is very important as heavy equipment will be carried.
2. Is a parking pass necessary?
3. What is the procedure for entering the hospital with equipment?
4. Are there electrical outlets in each area where there will be taping. Are AC extension cords or 3 to 2 adapters needed? Will the entire taping have to be done using battery power?
5. Is there enough natural lighting? Must additional lighting be used? Will the hospital allow them to be used?
6. Will room noise or machinery interfere with the interviews?
7. Are the areas where the interviews will take place congested?
8. How large is each room to be visited? Is a wide angle lens necessary?
9. What is the maximum number of crew that will be allowed in the hospital?
10. Were all the people to be interviewed contacted beforehand, to ascertain the best time and place?

Preliminary production planning - Inside and outside environment

Possible shots could include:

1. The area immediately local to the hospital.
2. An outside view of the hospital itself.

3. View of the front door.
4. Admitting room and desk.
5. Hospital grounds, including lawns and outdoor recreation areas.
6. Hallways leading to each area to be visited, and rooms where interviews are to be conducted.
7. Patients moving about.

Preliminary planning - Crew and equipment

1. What days and times will the taping take place? Where will everyone meet? Does everyone have transportation?
2. Who will do what job on the day of the taping. If one person is absent, can someone else take over the position? Who calls for interview appointments?
3. Who is responsible for picking up, checking out, and returning the equipment, one person, two people, the whole group?
4. How many tapes are necessary?
5. How many battery hours, if any?
6. What accessories are needed? Tripod, monopod, extension cables, lights, etc.?
7. Will still photographs be taken?
8. Will an audio recorder be needed?

SUMMATION

1. Production Overviews force you to think things out before you record.
2. Ideas discussed before the taping will not be forgotten during the excitement of the production.
3. The "writing-down" process clears your mind and may open up other avenues of thought.
4. The entire group will know all the aspects of the production.

TAPING SCHEDULE

Dr. S. Micheals - meet at front desk at 8:30. Tape area around front desk

Q. How many years a doctor, how many years at this particular hospital, speciality, pressure of job, strange working hours?

Mrs. Meyerson, Administrator - meet at her office, room 117, 9 A.M.

Q. Type of hospital, public or private, does hospital specialize and in what, unique problems of running a hospital, types of funding, hiring practices?

' Tape emergency room from 11 to 12. Use battery power to eliminate interference.

Interview two patients on the second floor, rear. Check with Mrs. Meyerson first. Use lights.

Tape outside of buildings, wheelchairs on ramps, recreation areas.

If possible, interview some patients' relatives.

2-1 Production Overview (Front)

EQUIPMENT

- 1 - Portapak
- 1 - microphone
- 3 - lights
- 2 - three hour batteries

CREW

Ed Jonas 2616 W. Blake 247-0647		interviewer
Cindy Meyer 296 Helms Place 474-1125	will P.U. equip.	audio
Lee Lincoln 42 Myra Lane 577-9432	will P.U. equip. has car	VTR
Carlos Mendes 1220 Sheridan St. 474-9653	speaks spanish	camera
Joni Podell 201 Marcy Place No Phone	has car	director

2-2 Production Overview (Back)

PRELIMINARY RESEARCH

In the making of a video documentary, one of the major problems is the lack of knowledge, regarding the subject matter, on the part of the video crew. No one knows all the relevant points that must be covered and the interviewer does not know what questions to ask. The resulting interviews are dull and so is the documentary.

The basis for an informative documentary is preliminary research, which, technically, refers to the reading, investigation and information gathered, from books, magazines, films and other media, before one foot of tape is recorded. Information must be assembled as to the history of a particular topic, who did what and when, past results, problems, location of facilities relevant to the documentary, and if special words or vocabulary are used for description. Also, if the topic was previously presented, how effective were the questions asked of the interviewees.

In common practice, the amount of preliminary research necessary for making a video documentary is in inverse proportion to the amount of raw footage to be recorded. Simply stated, a documentary that involves one or two hours of videotaping usually requires more preliminary research than one where the raw footage may involve fifty to one hundred hours of tape. This is so, in the latter case, as some of the research is not done before the taping, but it is actually recorded.

These are examples of the amount of preliminary research necessary for various objectives and time perimeters. As

circumstances may vary from topic-to-topic, they should only be used as a guide.

CONDENSED INFORMATION

The finished product is about fifteen minutes in length and may be part of a weekly program. A great deal of information must be compressed into a short time, and certain points must be covered. Due to the tight production schedule, which means less time to review the information of the tapes, the documentalist must know, in advance, what information is to be recorded. A great deal of preliminary research is required.

CONDENSED TIME

An example of Condensed Time would be a documentary about a particular life style. In this case, the documentalist lives with a select group of people and records what they are doing from day to day. Then relevant information must be chosen from fifty to one hundred hours of raw footage, which would take five hundred hours of viewing. Audio and video are combined, to reduce a few months of living to one or two hours, and the final tape contains many edits. A medium amount of preliminary research is required.

REAL TIME

A documentary that reflects Real Time may run three to five hours, or more, and contains very few edits. It presents information to the viewer that has been gathered without being selective. A small amount of preliminary research is required.

CHAPTER 3

INTERVIEWS, EVENTS, AND ENVIRONMENT

As most video documentaries concern people, and their ideas, it is only natural that interviews make up a large portion of the total information. Although just about any type of interview is usable, there are styles of interviewing that, when used, enhance particular productions. Good interviewing involves not only the asking of the proper questions, but also the correct physical positioning of the people interviewed, their position relative to the interviewer, and the camera's position relative to everybody, including the viewing audience.

STANDARD POSITIONING

To insure ease of camera shooting and full face shots of the interviewees, there are two standard operating procedures which should be utilized. Figure 3-1 shows an incorrect physical placement of interviewees. If possible, all people being interviewed should be to one side of the interviewer. Figure 3-2 shows the correct placement of the interviewees, but the interviewer is holding the microphone in the wrong hand. Holding the mike in the hand that is farthest from the camera causes the interviewees to look away from the audience. In figure 3-3 the microphone is held in the interviewer's hand which is nearest the camera. This is correct, and allows for full-face interviewee shots.

3-1

Incorrect.
Interviewees
are on both
sides of the
interviewer.



3-2

Incorrect.
Microphone
is being
held in the
wrong hand.



3-3

Correct.
Microphone
is held in
the hand
nearest the
camera.



OVER-THE-SHOULDER INTERVIEW (TWO-SHOT TO ONE-SHOT)

This is the most common visual technique used for interviews. The camera is positioned, so that the interviewer's back is towards the camera and the interviewee appears to be looking at the viewing audience. This is a subjective camera technique and creates a feeling of intimacy.

Although the interviewer invariably wants to be seen by the viewing audience, it is not necessary that he or she be seen for the entire interview. What the audience really wants to see is a close-up of the interviewee showing facial expressions and emotion.

The interview opens with a two-shot as in Figure 3-4. After an initial question or two, the camera operator eliminates the interviewer from the picture entirely. This is achieved by slowly zooming in and, simultaneously, panning the camera towards the interviewee, as in figure 3-5. Figure 3-6 illustrates the completion of the sequence. The camera operator is presenting a close-up of the interviewee.

Note: If the interviewer has not set up the interview so that the camera operator is shooting over his or her shoulder, the camera operator should change position to allow for the correct shooting procedure.

3-4

Interview opens with a two-shot, over-the-shoulder of the interviewer.



3-5

Camera pans towards the interviewee and zooms in.



3-6

Interview is conducted showing a close-up of the interviewee.



ONE-SHOT INTERVIEW

The person(s) being interviewed is the only one that is framed in the camera viewfinder. The interviewer is not seen and the viewer's attention is concentrated on the interviewee's reactions and facial expressions.

This type of interview may be used, if the final edited tape will contain a segment comprised of a series of short answers to one stated question. In this case, the interviewer is seen asking one interviewee the question and receiving an answer. The subsequent interviewees, however, are just seen giving the answer.

A one-shot interview may also be necessary, if one person is conducting the interview and also operating the camera.
(See page 38)



3-7 Close-up is used for a one-shot interview.

TWO-SHOT INTERVIEW

The camera opens on a two-shot of the interviewer and interviewee. Figure 3-8. The interview is conducted, keeping a two-shot throughout the entire segment. Occasionally, the camera operator may favor either of the two participants for stronger emphasis, but always returns to the basic two-shot.

This type of video interview may be used if both interviewer and interviewee are of equal status, such as two famous comedians or politicians. The viewing audience would want to observe the continuous interaction between the two of them.

A static two-shot would also be used, under certain conditions, if there is no camera operator. (See page 38)



3-8 Typical two-shot interview.

PROPER PHRASING

To elicit an interesting answer, questions should include the words Who, What, Where, How, When and Why.

"Who will be affected by?"
"What will happen if?" "Why are they?" Also, the question should be phrased so that it requires a specific answer. A question like, "What do you think of the low-cost housing the city plans to build?" is so broad, that it is difficult to answer. The question might be asked, "What effect do you think the low-cost housing the city plans to build will have on parking in the area?" or "..... on the prices of food in the supermarkets in the area?"

Questions may also be started by using a prepositional phrase. "If low-cost housing is built, who do you think will be affected?" or "....., what will happen to food prices in the area?"

ALLOW THE INTERVIEWEE TIME TO ANSWER

Many times a question is asked of the interviewee, that only receives a hasty, superficial answer.

Under certain conditions, such as when the interviewer is aware that the interviewee knows more about a particular topic, the interviewer should be silent for a few seconds after the answer has been given. If another question is not asked immediately, the interviewee will sense that more of an answer is required. A few second pause allows the formulation of another answer, which may contain more of the information that the interviewer wishes to extract.

PRE-INTERVIEW

This technique is effective when used with people who are well versed in a particular subject and are used to making public appearances. The interview does not take place during the taping, but before it. The director and interviewee pre-plan what points should be covered during the taping. This will depend on the point of view to be established or the interests of the viewing audience. During the recording, the interviewee stands alone before the camera.

This type of interview may be used, for example, when an artist is describing his or her work and is moving from object to object or around a gallery. Having an interviewer would detract from the normal flow, due to the repetitious questions that would be asked about each piece of art. The microphone may be hidden, worn around the neck, or hand-held.

AUTHORITY FIGURE

An authority figure may be the person in charge of a particular project or facility, or someone who is in possession of some special knowledge. Examples of authority figures are a college or company president, administrator, instructor, head of a department, manager of a store, a scientist, inventor, etc.

It is not enough to assume that an "expert" will also know what points to cover during an interview. In order to properly interview an authority figure, the interviewer must have a reasonable knowledge of the topic, so the questions may be properly phrased and to the point.

ONE PERSON CREW

If one person is doing the taping (a not recommended but sometimes unavoidable situation), it is necessary for the camera operator to also conduct the interview. This may be accomplished in two ways.

The preferred method is to conduct the interview from behind the camera, as in figure 3-9 . The camera operator "hand-holds" the camera while interviewing the subject. The built-in microphone in the camera may be used, as it is roughly between the two parties.

This one person crew is not as ineffective as it may seem. One plus is that if objects are being described, the camera operator/interviewer has the freedom to focus on them and discuss them at the same time. This method obviously allows for the ultimate in a creative interview, as one person controls everything.

If the interview is to be short, and a static, non-moving, shot is acceptable, the camera may be placed on a tripod and aimed towards the subject to be taped. By looking through the camera viewfinder, allow space for both the interviewee and yourself, and then start the recorder. You can now pickup the external microphone, approach the subject, and conduct the interview. When the interview is completed, the camera and recorder are turned off. This type of interview can only be used as a segment of an edited tape. The sections where the interviewer enters and leaves the screen are edited out, resulting in a standard two-shot interview.

WALKING INTERVIEW

This is the most difficult interview to accomplish, but it does have a remarkable sense of realism. As the interviewer and interviewee walk along, the video crew walks with them. The camera operator maintains a medium shot and also tries to keep the camera level. The slight shakiness of the camera creates a feeling of movement and excitement.

The recorder may be carried by the camera operator, or it may be less cumbersome if carried by another member of the crew. An external microphone is used for the interview. This entire operation must be tightly coordinated, so that cables do not become tangled or broken. Figure 3-10 illustrates a walking interview.

DISTANT INTERVIEW

An interview of this type is used when a particular mood is to be set, or the person being interviewed does not want to be seen close-up (hidden identity). The camera operator shoots the interview from a distance, walking with the participants as they walk. Care must be taken not to get close-ups. See figure 3-11.

The built-in microphone in the camera is used to pick up natural sound. The audio of the interview is recorded by using a miniature audiotape recorder, which is carried by the interviewer. A clasp microphone will pick up the audio of both people.

During the editing process, the interview on the audiotape is combined with the visual image on the videotape.

3-9

One person crew. The interview is being conducted from behind the camera.



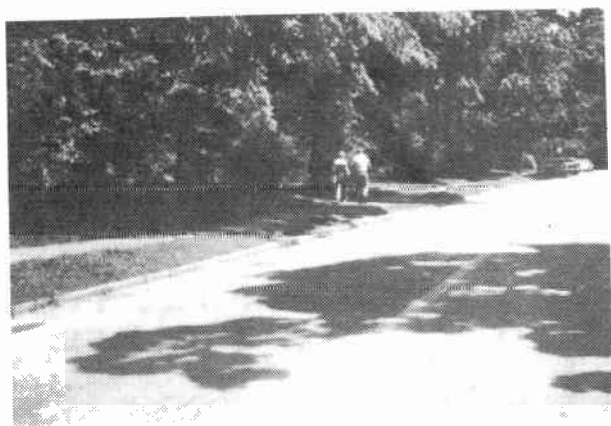
3-10

Walking interview. Crew walks along with participants.



3-11

Distant interview. Used if no close-ups of faces are to be seen.



STREET INTERVIEWS

Street interviews allow on-the-spot, spontaneous, exchange of ideas about virtually any subject. They are ideal for obtaining information and attitudes from an unsifted, cross section of the public, especially regarding community related affairs. Interviews of this nature may be achieved by a video crew moving about, or operating from a fixed location. Figure 3-12 shows a video documentary crew conducting a street interview.

From left to right, director/video recorder operator, camera operator, audio person (seated), interviewer, and two interviewees. All the equipment was placed on the table, and is completely battery operated. In this particular case, a separate recorder and battery operated television set were used to playback the interviews after they were completed.



3-12 Video crew conducting a street interview.

Precautions should be taken not to block entrances to stores, buildings, or public passageways. It is also advisable to hand-hold the camera for mobility's sake, and to eliminate passers-by from tripping over the extended legs of a tripod.

Another interesting way to conduct street interviews, is to use an automobile as "home base". The vehicle is parked on the same street where the interviews are to be held, allowing the video equipment to be operated using the car's battery. The video recorder may be kept within the car or rested on its fender.

If the documentary is about an important social issue, placards may be taped to the car, so stating.

Although street interviews are a viable method of gathering information, the video equipment is at the mercy of the environment. Problems which may arise include:

Wind Noise - A slight breeze blowing past the open holes of the microphone will partially block the audio of an interview. If this problem exists, a microphone wind screen should be utilized.

Dark Areas, Light Areas, and Light Reflection - On any bright day, large buildings will cause shade to appear, side by side, with sunlight. This plays havoc with the camera video level, which prefers constant illumination. Also, the chrome bumpers of passing autos reflect sunlight, which may damage the camera's vidicon tube. Cameraperson awareness will eliminate both problems.

Battery Failure - As outdoor temperatures rise, batteries lose their charge more

quickly. If possible, provisions should be made to use the electric power of a nearby store if battery power becomes exhausted.

STREET DYNAMICS

An interesting phenomenon takes place when interviews are being conducted on the streets. An apt name might be "The Pied Piper Effect". Attracted by the video camera and other paraphernalia, crowds of spectators tend to form. Figures 3-13 to 3-15. Many will approach the interviewer, indicating they would like to be interviewed. Usually, they are not even aware of what topic is being discussed, but that does not seem to matter. Everyone has an opinion about everything! The video crew should be aware that this situation will almost certainly occur. The interviewer may use this opportunity to include more people in the conversation. This is easily accomplished by addressing the group instead of one individual, and keeping eye contact with everyone. The camera operator should be prepared to zoom out to include a bystander who suddenly voices an opinion.

Expressing oneself, like laughter, is contagious. Individuals who would never speak, if the attempt was made to interview them alone, feel more comfortable in a crowd. Occasionally, interviewees may "play off each other". That is, not include the interviewer in the conversation. This might be a favorable time for some good "gut reactions" and the interviewer should let the exchange continue. Only when the conversation drifts markedly from the issue, should the interviewer intervene and bring it back on course.

The camera operator should not be too

3-13

As crew tapes environmental sequences, a group of teenagers follow.



3-14

The group is subsequently interviewed.



3-15

Passers-by gather to watch a street interview.



hasty in turning off the camera and recorder at the completion of an interview. Quite often, a person in the crowd voices an opinion only after the camera has been lowered. It is a good idea, therefore, to lower the camera but keep it and the recorder running for a minute or so. In this way, beginnings of spontaneous conversations may be recorded.

THE HIDDEN CAMERA IN FULL VIEW

Many potential interviewees are camera and microphone shy. They will talk to a member of the video crew, but only when the camera is pointing in another direction and is being used to record environmental footage. During this type of shooting, the interviewer should hold the microphone at his or her side. If someone strikes up a conversation, the mike may then be brought up towards the facial area. At the same time, the cameraperson (it helps if the camera operator is wearing headphones) can slowly pan the camera towards the interview. If the camera operator is not aware of the interview, a member of the crew may apprise him or her of it. A common method for this type of camera direction is for someone to apply slight pressure to one of the camera operator's shoulders.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT INTERVIEWS

It is good practice to interview people in their natural environment, especially when that environment is relative to the documentary. Artists should be interviewed at their studio or at a gallery, office workers in their office,

3-16

Storekeeper
being
interviewed
in his
grocery.



3-17

People
fishing are
interviewed
on the pier.



3-18

Mechanic
being asked
controversial
questions
while he is
repairing an
automobile.



storekeepers in their store, city officials at their office or at an area under their control, etc. Only interviewing people in pre-planned, "photographically ideal" locations may be appealing to the eye, but it does not lend credibility to the documentary. Figures 3-16 to 3-18 illustrate natural environment interviews.

AUDIO

The importance of strong, crisp audio can not be over emphasized. Many a documentary has failed due to low or distorted sound. Although television is a visual medium, for the most part it relies heavily on audio for substance. If, during a given TV program, the picture disappeared, the story line could still be followed. The same would not usually hold true if the audio stopped. Consider the following:

1. You are taping a subject ten feet away and the microphone is on a table. The subject then moves five additional feet away. You zoom in to get a closer image. How does the microphone get closer to make up for the lowered audio?

2. Video can be precisely monitored through the camera or TV monitor. What you see is what you get. Audio may be checked, but not precisely. Earphones can be deceptive regarding relative strength of the audio, and if an echo exists. The studio method of monitoring audio through a speaker and measuring it on a VU meter is exact, but it is not conducive to portable video operation.

These often-encountered problems point out weaknesses in the audio process of on-location videotaping. They can be overcome by proper planning and experimentation. Will a lavalier mike be better than one hand-held? Does the room have an echo? Should a wind screen be used? Will loud noises, such as music, in the vicinity of the taping cause the Automatic Gain Control in the audio circuit to lower all audio, thus making the interview indistinguishable? If the microphone is placed in the center of a group, will it pick up enough audio?

SUMMATION

Be particularly aware of your audio quality. Good audio will carry a weak picture, but a perfect picture will never make up for poor sound.

THE LEAD QUESTION

A lead question is the first question asked by the interviewer. It should be phrased in such a way as to evoke a great deal of interest. It is crucial that this question be thought out beforehand, as in many cases it sets the tone for the rest of the interview. For example, a lead question that antagonizes the interviewee, may cause him or her to be belligerent for the entire length of the conversation. Street interviewing requires that the lead question be interesting enough to keep prospective interviewees from walking away.

QUESTIONS WITH "YES" OR "NO" ANSWERS

Asking many questions that can be

answered "yes" or "no" usually results in a short, useless, interview. Questions like, "Do you think health care for the aged should be continued?", although almost provocative, fall short of the mark. It can be answered with just one word. Rephrasing the question, "If health care for the aged is not continued, what do you think the results will be?", causes the interviewee to state opinions and reasons.

On the other hand, a question like, "Are you a baseball fan?", is meant to be answered "Yes" or "No". As it is for identification purposes only, this type of question is allowable.

"PARROTING"

"Parroting" is what takes place when the interviewer repeats the interviewee's answer, or part of it. Example:

Interviewee: "I may not look it, but I'm eighty years old."

Interviewer: "So you're eighty years old."

Parroting tends to slow the interview considerably and also lessens its credibility, as the interviewer seems to be unprepared and stalling for time in order to think of another question.

LEADING THE INTERVIEWEE

Leading the interviewee, in its extreme form, would be to rephrase an answer to suit your needs. This is commonly called "putting words in someone's mouth". An example would be:

Interviewer: "Who should clean up the slums?"

Interviewee: "It's the city's responsibility."

Interviewer: "Then you say it's the fault

of the politicians', right?"

Obviously, this question was so phrased as to lead the interviewee to say something derogatory about politicians or one politician in particular. This type of questioning ultimately lowers the credibility of the documentary.

WHO HOLDS THE MICROPHONE?

When the interviewer and interviewee will both be seen on-camera, the interviewer should hold the microphone, as in figure 3-19. It is then possible for the interviewer to include more people in the conversation or to easily move about the area.

If the person being interviewed attempts to take the microphone, let it go! Nothing looks more ridiculous than two people holding a microphone, or struggling for its possession. Figure 3-20.

In certain cases, the person being interviewed is either used to speaking into a microphone and wants to be sure it's properly placed, or he or she is nervous and needs something to grasp. (This is one reason why so many nightclub performers prefer to hand-hold the microphone while they are on stage.) The most important consideration is that the interviewee is made to feel at ease. Figure 3-21.

MICROPHONE FANNING

This distracting movement occurs when the interviewer attempts to hold the microphone too near the mouth of the person talking. The mike is moved back and forth, back and forth between the parties involved in the conversation. The microphone will

3-19

Interviewer normally holds the microphone.



3-20

Incorrect. Interviewer and interviewee are both holding the microphone.



3-21

Interviewee is now holding the microphone and is more relaxed.



pick up well enough if held at one intermediate position.

HAND-HELD OR TRIPOD MOUNTED CAMERA?

One aspect of portable video production that has evoked strong opinions, is the answer to the above question. One point of view is that portable video is a personal medium, and that the camera operator should have complete and immediate control of the camera's height, angle, and direction. The other point of view asks the question, "Who wants to see a bouncy, shaky, picture?" Bearing these two opinions in mind, regard the following suggestions:

1. A hand-held camera does give the viewing audience a sense of realism and vitality. If the camera is too heavy for you to hold steady, practice different positions such as kneeling, sitting and resting your arm on your knee, leaning against a wall or table.
2. Use a body-mounted camera brace. It is somewhat confining, but lets you move around and at the same time, maintain camera steadiness.
3. Use a monopod. Its one leg, resting upon the floor, allows both mobility and steadiness.
4. For long interviews, use a tripod. As the main consideration should be a viewable picture, camera steadiness takes priority over mobility.

WHEN TO CHANGE SHOTS DURING AN INTERVIEW

Inexperienced camera operators feel the need to do something with the camera during an interview. Most interviews take

place with the subject standing or sitting in one place, and the camera operator tries to relieve the supposed boredom of the viewing audience. The camera is zoomed, panned, tilted and arced, to present the audience with "all kinds of interesting shots". On the contrary, extraneous camera movement tends to confuse, annoy or alienate the audience rather than win them over.

The foregoing suggestions are not meant to stifle creative camerawork, but to set up criteria from which to experiment. Theoretically, the camera operator may change shots or angles during an interview to:

1. Get a close-up of an interviewee.
2. Exclude the interviewer.
3. Include some new people.
4. Include something that is happening near the interview area. (Called, "a cutaway".)
5. Show crowd reaction or participation.
6. Re-show the interviewer, during long interviews, and then return to a shot of the interviewee alone.

Everytime the camera operator changes position, pans the camera, or zooms in and out, the audience is, in essence, told, "Look here, something important is happening." or "Look at that from this angle". For example, zooming in on a person's face signifies speech or emotion of high intensity is taking place. By closely watching the interviewees' movements, especially the hands, it is possible to anticipate when an important point is to be made. If the camera operator is wearing headsets, of course, the conversation may be heard.

When in doubt, it is acceptable to use one or two shots for the entire length of an interview.

UTILIZING THE CUTAWAY

This is a useful camera technique, especially when conducting street interviews, or interviews involving description of the immediate environment. During the interview, the camera acts as the viewer's eye. It, literally, "cuts away" from the participants to relevant areas, while the audio of the interview is still being recorded.

Example: An interview about traffic congestion is taking place near a busy intersection. During the interview, there is a traffic tie-up in the middle of the intersection, and the camera operator pans the camera to pick up the action. After an appropriate time, the camera's focus is then returned to the interview.

THE UNOBTRUSIVE CAMERA

Although portable video cameras are not as obtrusive as large studio cameras, they are, none-the-less, obtrusive. Any piece of recording equipment, by its mere presence, will bring attention to itself. The object then, would be to make the camera as inconspicuous as possible.

This cannot be accomplished by an over zealous cameraperson who makes attention getting movements. One such movement would be to stand on a chair and tape for awhile, and then immediately shoot from a prone position on the floor. These type of actions change the reality of the situation, as people are made aware of the camera and act for it.

To be effectively unobtrusive, the camera should be operated inconspicuously.

GROUP INTERPLAY

Excellent material for a video documentary can often be extracted from group discussions. Whether they be comprised of professionals, knowledgeable people, or amateurs, the group interplay brings pertinent facts and opinions to the surface.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Panel discussions usually consist of individuals who were specifically invited to speak about a particular subject. They are seated on a dais, as in figure 3-22, which is parallel to the audience. Due to this type of format, a one-camera shoot may be ineffective, as the panel members not only talk to the audience, but to each other as well. If available, a Special Effects Generator (SEG) and a three-camera hookup should be utilized. Special effects, however, such as dissolves and corner inserts, should be kept to a minimum. The video crew should supply a separate microphone for each participant, or tap off the audio system already in use.

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

The microphone is placed in the center of a table and the participants are seated two-thirds around it. Figure 3-23. The discussion may be moderated by one of the group, or by a designee of the video crew.

It is imperative that the audio is checked carefully, as the microphone may not be strategically placed on the table and may have to be moved.

3-22

Panel discussion. Three cameras and a SEG are being utilized.



3-23

Round table discussion. Microphone is located on the table.



3-24

Small group discussion is taking place on a couch.



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

This type of discussion may be taped in an informal manner. A few people can sit on a couch, lawn chairs, etc. There is no interviewer or moderator, and the group is told what points to cover beforehand. Figure 3-24.

RELAXING THE INTERVIEWEE

If the people to be interviewed are particularly nervous, they may be relaxed by using one of the following methods:

1. Shoot a test sequence, and let them see and hear themselves on TV. Playback may be through the camera and headset or a TV set.
2. Engage in light conversation about neutral topics. Keep in mind, that any discussion about the topic to be taped will decrease the spontaneity of the interview, as the interviewees will try to repeat, word for word, what they have just said. This does not hold true for Pre-Interviews, which must, by their very nature, concentrate on the topic to be taped.
3. Prior to the interview, someone other than the interviewer may speak with the interviewees about various topics.

BODY LANGUAGE AND POSITIONING

The relative physical positions of the interviewer and interviewee affect both the interview and the viewing audience. The interviewer should not attempt to get so close as to invade the "personal space" of the interviewee, but should be close enough to allow for a well composed camera shot. When the interviewee backs up a step

or moves to the side, it is usually a signal that the interviewer is too close.

EYE LEVEL RULE

Interviews should be conducted with the interviewer and interviewee at the same eye level. If the interviewee is standing, the interviewer should stand. If the interviewee is sitting, the interviewer should sit. If small children are being interviewed, the interviewer should speak with them at their level. Figure 3-25.

Exceptions to this rule may occur during a street interview, if the interviewee is wheelchair bound; if the interviewee is working on a ladder, the microphone may be held up for a short interview; or if the interviewee is in a swimming pool after a race, the microphone may be held down to get a few comments.



3-25 Interviewing a child.

ATTIRE

Like it or not, people are creatures of habit and will react to subtle stimuli. The clothing of the interviewer, while not of major importance, tends to inhibit or sway the answers of those being interviewed. This is especially true of people who do not know the interviewer or anyone on the crew. There is no set rule for what to wear, but neutral clothing might be a good idea.

The viewing audience will also judge the interviewer by his or her clothing. Consider this: what do you think would be the reactions of the person being interviewed, and the viewing audience, to a street interview about drug addiction, under the following conditions.

1. Interviewer is wearing a pinstripe suit and tie.
2. Interviewer is wearing a gown.
3. Interviewer is wearing a sweatshirt and bluejeans.
4. Interviewer is wearing nondescript clothing.

THE NARRATOR OR MODERATOR

Many video documentaries contain short segments featuring one of the crew, usually called a narrator or moderator. It is this person's function to describe what has just occurred, what is about to happen, or to effect a transition (tie together two separate ideas). As a general rule, the narrator stands in an area relevant to the documentary, and is taped using a waist-shot.

A number of these segments should be taped for inclusion in the final edited tape.

LIGHTING

When at all possible, natural lighting should be utilized. Natural lighting does not necessarily refer to sunlight or daylight, but to the particular lighting that would be in use under normal conditions. If natural lighting is insufficient, additional lights may be used.

A standard lighting kit consists of three 500 watt lights and stands. The appropriate number of lights (usually one or two) should be used to properly illuminate the subject or environment. They should not be aimed directly at the subject, but rather reflected off the ceiling or walls. This type of illumination is called "bounce lighting" and eliminates shadows, especially on faces.

EVENTS

An event is any situation which involves interaction, movement, or participation. Examples are: a picnic, amusement park, rally, circus, disco, flea market, baseball, football, tennis, and a factory, office, retail store, or classroom.

Although some segments of a video documentary must be planned step-by-step, including specific interviews, others involve events that are taking place anyway, from which you may extract vital information. Events should be recorded from many angles and distances, so that a choice may be made during the editing process.

Figure 3-26 is a wide-shot of a flea market. It is used to give the audience an overall perspective of the event.

Due to the relatively small size of a television screen, the viewing audience cannot perceive detail unless close-ups are also utilized. Figure 3-27.



3-26 Overview wide-shot of a flea market.



3-27 A close-up allows detailed examination.

ENVIRONMENTAL SHOOTING

Environmental sequences should be recorded liberally, as they may be used in conjunction with related interviews. The video crew may either walk through an area on foot, as in figure 3-28, or shoot from a moving automobile.



3-28 Crew recording environmental sequences.

There are occasions when interviews take place within a building whose structure, markings and location may be relevant. Figure 3-29, shows a crew conducting an interview within an office. Upon completion of the interview, the crew shoots some footage of the building's exterior, the parking lot, and nearby stores. Figure 3-30.



3-29 Interview in an office, within a building.



3-30 The outside of the building is also taped.

CHAPTER 4

IDEAS FOR VIDEO DOCUMENTARIES

The documentary used as an example in Chapter 2, "The Operation of a Local Hospital", was handled as an Historical Documentary. Various types of people were interviewed, and the many points of view that were stated will presumably be used in the final tape. It should be noted, however, that each of the people interviewed, and all of the events taped, could also be the subject of its own documentary.

A video documentary could be made about the life of one particular doctor, nurse, or patient; the lives of a number of doctors, nurses, or patients who work or reside at different hospitals; or about hospitals that specialize in rare diseases. The point of view could be historical, advocacy, public relations, investigative, etc. The documentary could cover the period of a year, a month, or even just one day!

The following video documentaries may be accomplished by average people, using readily available portable video equipment. Each topic is found locally, which eliminates extensive traveling. A number will be discussed in depth, and the rest will be presented in outline form.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF

One of the most challenging documentaries concerns itself with a single day. Often the question has been asked, "I wonder what does every day?"

The question could have been posed about a local politician, a police captain, a film star, a social worker, etc.

The first sequence could start at 8 AM showing the personality leaving home. Next, the ride to the office shot from within the car, including an interview while the car is moving. The following scenes could include the first few minutes in the office, telephone calls, meetings, trips around town, luncheon and dinner appointments, and so on. The conclusion could be the personality entering his or her home at night.

To do this kind of documentary, you must, of course, have some idea of what this personality's life is like. You would also have to spend a good deal of time getting to know your subject, alerting pertinent people of your intentions, and setting up taping schedules.

People in the street could be interviewed as to what they think the particular personality does every day. Their answers could be contrasted with the actual events that take place.

An unusual documentary may be about a day in the life of an inanimate object or location. This may be a park, bus, office building, amusement park, or room.

SAILBOAT RACING

The boat that is the topic of the documentary, should be visited a few days prior to the race. The racing crew should be interviewed regarding what they must do to prepare for the race, special equipment needed, problems that might occur. Other points to cover include, type of boat being raced, what kind of competition they are up against, and the dangers involved in boat racing.

The day of the race, the video crew should arrive at the racing site, before the boat crew. Tape them arriving, each person doing his or her job, natural conversation, but no interviewing. When the race starts, the camera operator should follow the action.

Towards the end of the race, whether the boat you are on is winning or losing, record the reactions of the crew (close-ups). After the race has been completed, questions may include what went right or wrong, general attitude of the participants, and some comments of the spectators'.

DRUG, ALCOHOL, OR GAMBLING ADDICTION

Areas to be investigated include why the particular addicts started, problems it caused them, their families and society in general. An important point that should be brought out is the underlying pressures that brought about the addiction.

Ex-addicts should be interviewed regarding the ordeal they face "staying straight", and present addicts should be questioned about the ordeal they face staying addicted. Family and friends, private and governmental agencies, should be interviewed, particularly about methods of treatment.

HANDICAPPED PEOPLE

Show the various ways handicapped people function in everyday life, even though they are handicapped. The documentary can concentrate on the life style of one person, or contrast the lives of many. Interviews should probe the attitudes of society towards handicapped people, and their attitudes towards society.

It can be shown how, unknowingly, society discriminates against the handicapped. Points to be brought out are the inaccessibility of buildings due to high curbs or revolving doors, poorly placed telephone booths and water fountains, etc.

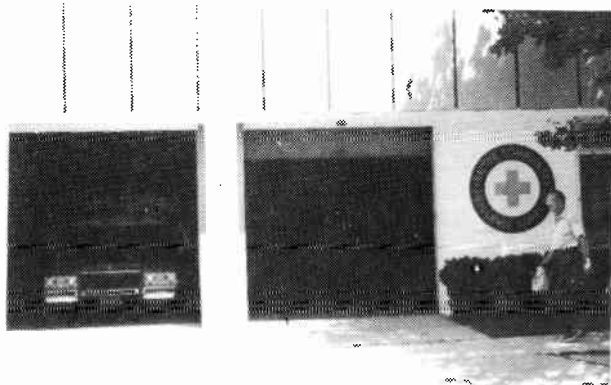
Opinions should be elicited as to how, under various circumstances, handicapped people would like to be treated by society. One problem that has probably perplexed everyone is, if you see a handicapped person having difficulty accomplishing something, at what point does one help and how.

VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE CORPS

The location of the ambulance corps is visited a number of days. The volunteers are interviewed regarding training qualifications, function relative to the regular ambulance, each person's regular profession, and years spent as a volunteer. The person in charge could be asked about methods of volunteer recruitment, calls per day, strange requests and situations, equipment used, treatment allowed to be given to patients, malpractice suits, and the telephone number to call for service.

4-1

Volunteer
ambulance
corps.



A recording could be made of an emergency telephone call being answered, the verbal exchange, ride to the house, pick up of the patient, and the ride to the hospital. After the patient has been delivered to the hospital, the volunteers should be asked for their reflections of what had just transpired.

If the documentary is to be shown to the local community served by the ambulance corps, or to other local communities who either have a volunteer department or are thinking of setting up one, a particular unit may be studied in depth. If the documentary is to be shown on Cable TV, or used for fund raising, many units may be visited.

ETHNIC GROUPS

Interview every ethnic group in your city. The basis can be race, culture, or language. Discover how they fit into the mainstream of life. Are there any problems of assimilation, do they have difficulty in obtaining employment, do they tend to cluster together?

COLLEGE LIFE

This documentary can investigate three levels of college life; undergraduate, graduate-masters, graduate-doctorate. Interviews with students, faculty, President, Deans, students' relatives. Follow one or more students as they go from place to place, classes, cafeteria, lounge, bookstore, etc.

The completed documentary can be used as an orientation tape for incoming college freshmen, or may be shown at high schools.

COLLEGE GRADUATE CAREER POTENTIALS

What areas of employment are understaffed, overstaffed, stagnant? Interview college graduates who have obtained employment in their chosen field immediately upon graduation, and those who have not. Interview employers in industries where there are a small number of applicants per job offering. This documentary might point out career possibilities to students who are majoring in fields of study with low employment potential.

HOUSEHOLD PETS

Type of pets owned, such as dogs, cats, birds, snakes, hamsters, etc. Cost of food, type of food, special care needed, licenses, different breeds. Try to find people with unusual pets like monkeys, cheetas, wolves, piranhas and lizards.

MARINAS

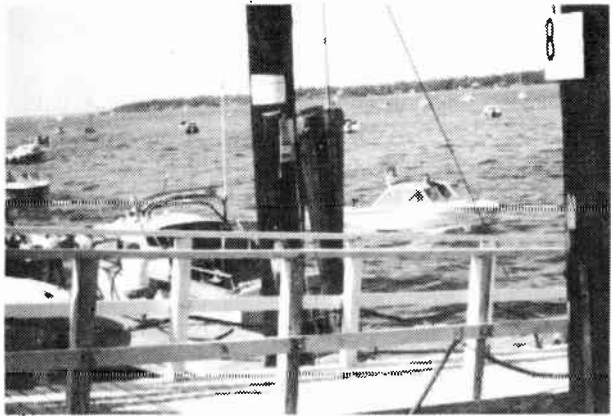
What happens at a marina? Who owns it, is water "rented" from the city, state, or county? Services performed, fishing and pleasure boats, towing, two-way radio, hours marina is open, boat painting, emergency procedures, unique problems.

Occasionally, a houseboat may be docked at a local marina. It would be interesting to compare the life style of its inhabitants to that of people living on land.

Many marinas have their own hotels and restaurants. Point out type of food served, speciality of the house and accommodations. Interview the manager and get opinions about the kinds of people he has met throughout the years.

4-2

Local
marina.



CONSUMER EDUCATION

This documentary can be about anything the average person buys in a lifetime - groceries, clothing, boats, cars, houses, etc.

The documentalist could follow someone shopping in a supermarket and ask questions regarding every purchase. The consumer may be asked if the unit pricing for each item is confusing or easily understood, if name brand items are preferred over store brands and why, if different stores charge various prices for the same food.

UTILIZATION OF VIDEO EQUIPMENT

Visit schools, libraries, hospitals, government agencies, industries, and private groups, and investigate their uses of video. Type of equipment available, how long in use, area of interest, type of funding, who uses the equipment.

Are tapes distributed, to whom, in what format, are videotapes used for training or dissemination of other information, and total cost of equipment and personnel.

CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS

Started by whom, when, why, locations, who have they helped. Is the organization publicly or privately funded, denominational or non-denominational, how do people receive help. Interview the staff of the organization and some people who have been helped.

CRIME PREVENTION

This documentary may be about any preventative measures that have been taken to reduce crime. An area of concentration may be selected, such as shoplifting. The investigation could uncover who commits this type of crime, what time of day, predominant locations in the city, and type of stores.

Show new technology that is being used to prevent shoplifting, such as closed circuit television systems, electronically sensitive garment labels, and plain-clothes store detectives.

CABLE TELEVISION

Cable TV is being introduced to many localities across the country. Compare Cable TV programming to that of standard broadcast television. Interview people who have Cable TV and find out what they watch and programs they would like to have shown.

Cable franchise owners could be asked questions regarding the operation of the system, cost per month, and the future of Cable TV in such areas as education, first run movies, public and community access, satellite transmission, and shop-at-home services.

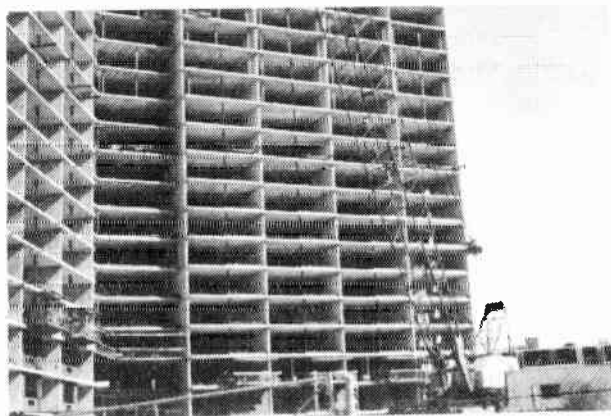
The resulting videotape may be shown on Cable TV for public enlightenment, and also be shown to communications classes.

BUILDINGS, BRIDGES, AND TUNNELS

Follow the building of a large structure from beginning to end. The project may take months or years. At specific intervals, record the progress of the work, and interview workers, architects, and the public. The structure should be taped from many angles and heights.

4-3

Building
under
construction.



UNEMPLOYMENT DUE TO TECHNOLOGY

Interview people whose jobs have disappeared due to some form of new technology. Get shots of how the job was originally performed (use old stills or films), and show how it is being done now. Investigate companies that have re-training programs for those employees whose jobs will soon become obsolete.

RESORTS, CAMPS, AND NATIONAL PARKS

This kind of documentary makes an ideal

public relations tape. Show all activities and interview people doing each of them. People in charge should also be questioned as to overall operation, cost per day or week, accommodations, and future plans.

POLITICS

Documentary may be about any and all aspects of politics. Job functions, areas of interest, personal aspirations, etc., may be investigated.

Concentration may be centered on only an individual political figure. Follow the day to day activities of someone running for office. Attend rallies, lectures, social functions, and conventions. Interview the workers behind the scenes, who are involved in the candidate's election.

4-4

Political
lecture.



TENANTS OR HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

Interviews should include members, non-members, the president of the association,

businesspeople in the community. Items of interest are the purpose of the association, when and why formed, actual benefit to the community, amount of yearly dues, where and how often meetings are held, type of community being served, overall effectiveness, and is a newsletter published. Environmental sequences could include an auto ride through the community, segments of various association meetings, and specific projects that have been accomplished.

4-5

Community
planning
board
meeting.



COLLECTORS

Documentary may be about anything collectable. Stamps, coins, coin banks, comics, trains, thimbles, salt and pepper shakers, and all types of art. If antiques is chosen as the topic, items of interest are what is an antique, how do you know if you have one, who collects them, are they purchased or traded. The documentalist should visit public and private collections, and ask about the history of each item, intrinsic value, and actual value. Individual collectors may be asked about the best deal they ever made and how far they may travel.

SUBSTANDARD HOUSING CONDITIONS

Investigate reports of poor housing conditions. Interview tenants living in the buildings, residents of the neighborhood, storeowners, city officials. Use old films, videotapes, or still pictures, to contrast the condition of the houses today to earlier times. Show insides of apartments including walls, ceilings, plumbing, hallways, and the refuse area. An important interview would be with the owner of the buildings, who should be questioned about any living conditions that are found to be inadequate.

4-6

Investigation
of possible
substandard
housing.



THE AGED AND SOCIETY

There has been much controversy surrounding the issue of the elderly, who, in certain countries, are being forcibly removed from the main stream of life. They are denied employment, allowed to go wanting for medical treatment, some are homeless, and others waste away in old age homes.

This documentary can be about any of the preceding problems, and can be handled

from an historical, advocacy, or expose point of view.

Elderly people who are experiencing such problems, should be interviewed regarding their age, occupation when they were employed, present financial situation, state of health, and what they feel they could contribute to society, if given the chance.

If the documentary is to be about old age homes, interviews with the residents, their relatives, and the staff, should be obtained.

An investigation of large companies, regarding their hiring policies with respect to the aged, should uncover some interesting information.

ARTS AND CRAFTS

An art or craft documentary combines art and the artist, craft and the artisan. The finished product is only part of the story; why and how it was made is the rest.

If a documentary is to be made about art and an artist, for example, the following information is relevant:

1. The artist at work.
2. Purpose of the art - social commentary, inner expression, etc.
3. Working environment - type of studio, location, decor.
4. Artist's inspiration.
5. Artist's background and mental attitude.
6. Description of individual pieces of art.
7. Is the artist reflecting society, or trying to influence it.
8. The artist's life style.
9. Art being shown in a gallery, museum, etc.

Average individuals, and other artists, may be interviewed regarding a particular artist's work. Art critics may be asked to

comment on the work, and compare it to that of other artists.

An art/artist documentary can take days, months, or years to complete. You can visit an artist at predetermined intervals, and contrast the changes in his or her style, or choice of subject matter. Figures 4-7 to 4-10 show different artists being interviewed under diverse conditions.

Figure 4-7 is an interview with an artist in her studio. The camera is tripod mounted, and the cameraperson is seated on a stool. Notice that the microphone is balanced on the interviewer's knee.

Figure 4-8 illustrates the hand-held camera technique. The artist, holding his own microphone, has been pre-interviewed, and will walk from picture to picture in the gallery. He will give a detailed explanation of each picture.

Figure 4-9 is an example of an artist being interviewed in the intimacy of her home. The camera is tripod mounted and, in this case, the camera operator remains standing. Additional lighting is necessary, and the lights are bounced off the ceiling.

Figure 4-10 is a pre-interview in progress. The artist makes life-sized dolls (one is immediately to her left), and is discussing what points to cover in their description.

Art may take many forms. It can be representational, which shows things as they really are, or abstract. Abstract art may be comprised of electric lights in particular arrangements, bottles, cans, wood, etc., or the artist may physically be part of the art. An example of this would be an artist having a conversation with his or her own picture that is being shown on a television screen.



4-7 Interviewing an artist (R) in her studio.



4-8 The hand-held camera technique.



4-9 Interviewing an artist at home.



4-10 A pre-interview in progress.

A VIDEO DOCUMENTARY

The procedures necessary for the making of a video documentary, are themselves the subject of a video documentary. Crew #1 is shooting a documentary, and crew #2 is taping them.

Start at the very beginning, as the discussion gets underway deciding what topic the video documentary will be about. Crew #2 should then be sure to be at the production locations before crew #1, so they can record the set-up procedures. Crew #1 should be interviewed regarding any problems they are experiencing, and how they feel about being the subject of a documentary.

Crew #2 will have to be informed about everything crew #1 has planned, including any changes in the Production Overview.

The edited tape should include procedures including pre-production, actual production, logging, and editing.

This is a difficult video documentary to coordinate, but a valuable one when it is completed. It may then be used as a teaching tool with future video documentalists.

DRUG REHABILITATION CENTER

Visit drug rehabilitation centers in various areas. Find out who started the program, how it is funded, who attends, ages, what happens every day, possible job placement opportunities, and the staff's qualifications.

Residents of the neighborhood should be asked their opinions of having a drug rehabilitation center located near their homes, and any special problems that it presents.

ZOO, BOTANICAL GARDENS, AQUARIUM

Visit any of these facilities with an eye for capturing not only what the general public sees, but also what procedures take place to maintain operation.

At the zoo and aquarium inquire about medical treatment for the animals and fish, special problems with the newborn, how, when and where new animals are obtained, etc.

At the botanical gardens ask about planting procedures, specialities, disease and insect problems. Interview the staff regarding the operation of a greenhouse and nursery.

COMMUNITY PLAYHOUSE

Interview the members regarding their regular professions, theatrical background, production specialty. Tape auditions, set construction, make-up application, and the rehearsals. During the actual performance, tape backstage and also from the audience's point of view. Interview members of the audience during intermission and at the completion of the performance.

DISCO

Visit one or more discos. Show people dancing and talking, the disc jockey, interesting types of clothing, and the decor of the club. Interview the disc jockey, manager, bartender, and the patrons. Find out the cost of admission, hours open, location, and the age group that frequents the club.

This topic, if handled in a suitable manner, will draw a large audience when shown on Cable TV.

CHAPTER 5

POST-PRODUCTION

Now that all the interview and environmental tapes are completed, one enters into the final stage in the making of a video documentary. Post-production, commonly referred to as "editing", is divided into four steps:

1. Logging
2. Storyboard preparation
3. Electronic editing
4. Adding music, titles, voice-overs, etc.

LOGGING

Logging means writing on paper the type of information that is contained on a particular videotape, and at what point it appears.

When logging the raw footage of a documentary, you must take many considerations into account. Each segment must be noted for its subject, quality, annoying background noise, etc. Each interview must be analyzed for particular information, such as the name of the person speaking (if you know it), topic of the interview, point of view, quality of the picture and sound, and key statements. Keep in mind that interviews that have good audio, but poor video, can be used as a voice-over with other visual segments of the videotape.

After the logging is completed, each entry is marked regarding possible use in the final tape. That is, interviews that

reinforce your point of view are indicated by marking USE in the margin. Segments that are not usable should also be indicated. Figure 5-1 is an example of an editing log.

TAPE NUMBER: 1 TOPIC: Substandard housing

FILE NUMBER: 272 DATE:

<u>COUNTER</u>	<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>COMMENT</u>
000-057	test	
057-102	interview with woman resident. She has been living in the area for 5 years and is moving.	
102-143	interview. person didn't understand the question.	
143-160	footage of broken windows and vacant lots. Natural sound.	<u>USE</u> <u>VIDEO</u>
160-190	interview with a six year old child.	
190-215	interview with the landlady. She says that the repairs are done very quickly.	<u>USE</u>
215-303	interview with two residents. They say that the repairs take weeks.	<u>USE</u>
303-315	the basement of a building.	<u>Dark</u>

5-1 Editing log.

STORYBOARD PREPARATION

The Production Overview, explained in Chapter 2, provided a guide to the possible interviews and environmental sequences that could have been videotaped. The Editing Storyboard, on the other hand, provides an overview of the actual footage to be used in the documentary, and its relative position in the edited tape. It will also indicate the length of the documentary. Therefore, the running time of the tape can be increased or decreased before the electronic editing takes place.

Any documentary data that has been gathered should now be re-examined, with the possibility of using some of it in the final tape. Still photographs, films, audio and videotape, can be used as verification of events that have taken place in another part of the world, or at another time, perhaps decades ago.

This documentary data, and the usable raw footage, are now evaluated as to where they will appear within the documentary. It is at this point, that the actual editing process takes place.

Re-establishing the concepts discussed in Chapter 1, there are three factors that determine the value of a video documentary:

1. Consistency of theme - each sequence must be relevant, and also reinforce the point of view stated in the introduction. If the point of view is one of advocacy, naturally it will be the only one presented. If it is objective, many points of view must be represented.
2. Thought provoking - the information must be presented in such a manner, as to involve the viewer.
3. Credibility- the viewing audience must

feel that what they are viewing is a true reflection of life.

It would surely be ideal, if there were a simple, exact, formula, that could be used to edit every videotape, and have the results come out perfectly. Realistically, however, there are hundreds of audio and video combinations that may be used with any one video documentary, many of which would give favorable results.

In general practice, every video documentary contains an introduction, body, and conclusion. It is this structure, which allows the documentary to maintain its forward thrust. Before any information is placed in the squares of the Editing Storyboard (figure 5-2), evaluate the following editing techniques.

The image shows a 3x3 grid of nine empty rounded square boxes, arranged in three rows and three columns. These boxes are intended for an editing storyboard.

5-2 Editing Storyboard (actual size, 8" X 11").

INTRODUCTION

The introduction of a video documentary serves the same purpose as the introduction of a book. It imparts to the audience, the intent of the forthcoming presentation. A video documentary, however, unlike a book, may be introduced by using various video and audio combinations.

Types of Introductions

NARRATIVE

A member of the crew, standing in front of the camera, states the purpose of the documentary. This may be done by first stating a fact, such as the substandard housing conditions that exist in certain parts of a city, and then detailing what the ensuing videotape will show. Who is doing the documentary, and when it was done, may also be relevant.

NARRATIVE WITH ENVIRONMENTAL SHOTS

The opening visual sequence may be of the area about which the documentary was made. It could be an overview of a city, a street, or a particular building. Many times, a segment showing people engaged in an activity is used.

Using a voice-over technique, the narrator states what is being seen, its relevance to the documentary, and what the documentary is about. The narration may begin at the same time as the visual information, or somewhat after it. Except in special cases, it should not begin more than thirty seconds into the tape. The narrator's voice can either replace the natural sound, or be

heard over it, in which case the natural sound must be lowered. An audio mixer may be used to create this effect.

VISUAL ONLY

A true "visual essay" documentary relies only on its visual impact. It cannot use any contrived or preconceived printing or narration. As it can use written information that is independent of the documentary, introductions may be made by using newspaper headlines, campaign or slogan buttons, street signs, billboards, license plates, magazine covers, or signs which appear on buildings.

TITLES

A video documentary may also be introduced by the use of titles. The words may either appear by themselves, or with other visual information (superimposition or key). Example: "The following documentary concerns itself with the substandard housing conditions in the city of"

BODY OF THE DOCUMENTARY

Almost as important as the information itself, is the manner in which it is presented. Interviews and environmental segments cannot appear in random order. Their placement must be planned, to be truly effective.

Regardless of the type of information the body of a video documentary contains, there are certain techniques that not only present the documentalist's point of view, but do so in a manner which is conducive to keeping the viewing audience's attention. They are, namely, "balancing", "inserting", and "intercutting".

BALANCING

Balancing a documentary means spacing interviews, environmental shots, and events so that the information is presented in a proportional manner. Figures 5-3 to 5-5 show a typically balanced sequence. First an interview is used, as in figure 5-3. The young men are describing what it is like to live in an area where many of the houses are boarded up, and the vacant lots are covered with garbage or broken bricks. One of the interviewees says, "They should build more playgrounds or ballfields here."

The next shot, figure 5-4, is purely visual. It shows a child playing in a vacant lot that is strewn with all types of junk. This visual image reinforces what the interviewees in 5-3 are talking about. By inference, it points out the need for playgrounds.

The shot in figure 5-5 shows the general environment of the neighborhood. In the foreground, there is a vacant lot covered with rubble. The background shows burnt out buildings with no windows.

The fourth shot could be another interview with a contrasting viewpoint, if the documentary was historical, or a reinforcing viewpoint if the documentary was one of advocacy.

In other words, interviews and environmental scenes, viewpoints and contrasting viewpoints, should be spaced throughout the documentary. This is the preferred presentation, rather than have all the interviews at the beginning, and all the environmental shots at the end, etc.

It should be noted that the opinions or viewpoints which have the most effect on an audience, appear at the beginning and end.

5-3

"They should
build more
playgrounds
or ball fields
here."



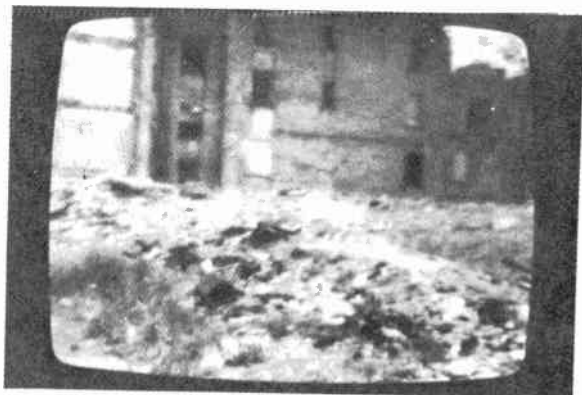
5-4

Child playing
in a vacant,
junk strewn,
lot.



5-5

General
environment
of the area.



INSERTING

The use of inserting is a common, and quite effective, method of establishing a particular point. An insert merely combines the audio of one scene with the video of another.

Figures 5-6 to 5-8 show a sequence that exemplifies the use of inserting. Figure 5-6 is an interview with a person who lives in a run-down apartment complex. He is recalling what the houses looked like when he first moved in three years ago, and what they look like now. When he starts describing the broken windows, the video portion of the interview (his face), is replaced by a picture of the broken windows, as in figure 5-7. This new video remains until the point is covered, and then the video of the interview may be seen again. In some cases, video inserts may be used throughout the entire interview, after the opening shot establishes who is being interviewed.

Figure 5-8 is another interview. When the interviewee speaks about events or environmental changes, which have also been videotaped, that video may replace the video of the interview.

The preceding examples describe "video inserts", which is when new video is used with existing audio. The same technique may be used with existing video - new audio may be used to reinforce an environmental segment.

Assume you have one segment, with good visual impact but poor audio, and another segment, with a good interview that contains excellent information but only shows a visual of someone's face. By combining the video of one tape and the audio of another, you can create a very dynamic presentation.

5-6

"The houses
never looked
like this. A
few years ago
they stopped



5-7

repairing
broken
windows, and
now they're
almost all
broken."



5-8

"If nobody
comes here
to check on
the garbage
area....."



INTERCUTTING

Intercutting is a technique, by which one interview is constantly interrupted to present another reinforcing viewpoint, or a contrasting one. The interruptions may be in the form of another interview, an event, or an environmental segment. An example of intercutting is shown in figures 5-9 to 5-11.

The person being interviewed, in figure 5-9, is a landlady. She is stating that the repairs that are needed in any of the apartments, are taken care of immediately.

The interview is interrupted at this point, with an interview of two of the tenants. They are saying, in figure 5-10, that it sometimes takes two or three weeks before even the smallest type of repair work is started.

Figure 5-11 shows the landlord again, in a continuance of the first interview. Any other controversial statements she might make, may then be followed by an opposing viewpoint. If, for example, she were to say that the interiors of the apartments were in perfect shape, the next segment could show an apartment with the paint peeling off the walls.

Intercutting may also be used for quick comparison. The campaign promises of two political candidates may be contrasted by intercutting between them.

If an authority figure has been interviewed, his or her opinions may be intercut with the opinions of other authority figures with contrasting viewpoints, or with members of the general public who either agree or disagree.

This editing technique is very dynamic, and also provides the viewer with a sense of continuity.

5-9

"..... and
the repairs
are taken
care of
immediately."



5-10

"It sometimes
takes two or
three weeks
before....."



5-11

"the insides
of all the
apartments...."



CONCLUSION

Just as the introduction of the video documentary must be geared to make the viewing audience aware of the purpose of the tape, so must the conclusion leave them remembering. What ever information is presented during the last minute should be explicit and reinforcing to your particular point of view. For instance, if the documentary is about slums, the final segment could be of someone saying, "..... it's been this way since I can remember, and it'll be this way when I'm gone. Nobody cares."

As the introduction says, "This is what we are going to show you", the conclusion says, "Now that we have shown you, what is your reaction?"

Many times, the conclusion is a summation. This type of ending might be used in an historical documentary. A member of the video crew, acting as narrator, reviews the preceding documentary. This may either be done on camera, or the narrator's voice may be used with a visual segment.

STILL (FREEZE) FRAMES

An interesting way to begin or conclude a documentary is to use a series of still frames. As the tapes are being played during the logging process, they are stopped at various points which show particularly good representative shots. (The recorder is placed in STOP MOTION.) If the shot is usable, it is noted on the logging sheet. Eight to ten shots are then selected to be used as a series, to introduce or conclude the tape. Each still frame is used for a duration of about two seconds. They are

edited into the tape, one after another. When the documentary is played, the viewing audience sees eight to ten still pictures of integral segments. A voice-over, or music background, may be used with this visual sequence.

Example: If the documentary is about summer camps, the eight still frames could be children playing basketball, volleyball, baseball, tennis, and also horseback riding, swimming, canoeing, and hiking.

The eight still pictures in the sequence could have also been obtained by using actual 8" X 10" still photographs, and recording them with a portapak or studio camera.

TITLE AND CREDITS

Usually, the title of the documentary precedes the introduction, and is the first visual that the audience sees. Examples: THE ZOO, SYOSSET VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT, A VISIT TO THE CIRCUS, etc. If a character generator is available, the title may be shown superimposed over the first video segment.

Credits should appear at the end of the tape and may include the names of the crew, production company or facility, and other people who assisted with the production.

MUSIC

Music is used in media to create moods, attitudes, and atmospheres. In the days of silent films, the audience was aided by live music to envision the story before them. Even after the inception of incorporating film and voice, music has been used to

artificially stimulate the audience. There is "chase music", "love music", "fight music", etc.

Music may be used in video documentaries, however, its effect is such, that if used incorrectly, it can change the tone of the presentation.

The criteria of whether to use music, or not, is based upon the viewing audience. A documentary whose main intent is to stop further deterioration of certain buildings, that is to be shown to city officials and business executives, should not contain music. Those people want cold, hard facts, and will resent any emotional influence. Documentaries that will be shown on Cable TV, for instance, usually appeal to a wider and more receptive audience, and music may be used to heighten certain effects.

If you decide to use music, the right type must be chosen. The music, independent of the documentary, must appeal to the particular taste of the audience. Rock music may alienate conservatives, and classical music may turn-off the younger generation.

The use of music and song may enhance visual images by directly relating to them, (point), or by being opposed to them, (counterpoint). In other words, playing a song about poverty, while showing poverty, reinforces the point; playing a song about "the good life", while showing a visual image of poverty, might intensify the effect considerably.

VOICE-OVER

During the post-production process, a narrative description may be used to include additional information, such as interviewees' names and the locations of events. It may

be combined with the natural sound of the master (original) videotape, or replace it entirely.

STORYBOARD COMPLETION

Now that the many possibilities and combinations of introductions, bodies, and conclusions of a video documentary have been evaluated, the exact segments to be used may be entered into the appropriate boxes of the Editing Storyboard.

Figure 5-12 is an example of a completed storyboard. It is advisable to use pencil, for erasures will be necessitated by changing ideas.

Notice that the storyboard contains:

1. The videotape number.
2. The segment's position on the videotape (88-109, etc.).
3. The time of the segment in minutes.
4. Indication of an interview, environmental shot, etc.
5. The first words of the interview, if necessary.
6. An indication that the segment is to be combined with a voice-over (V.O.), or a video insert.

ELECTRONIC EDITING

Using electronic editing equipment, the segments of the documentary may be put together. The Editing Storyboard should be followed, and a check made next to each item that has been completed.

Title
Substandard
Housing
#3 10 sec.
120-123

Your Town
Your City
#3 10 sec
187-190

Narrator
Intro.
#1 1 min.
305-315

Narrator
#1
315-328

Overview
of area
Video Insert
#1
210-218

Interview
"I always...
#2 2 min.
190-227

Broken
Windows
#2 90 sec
250-278

Interview
"It may...
#1 2 min.
156-172

Children
Playing
#3 45 sec.
312-320

Vacant Lot
#3 15 sec.
47-58
Replace audio
with music

Conclusion
Narrator
#1 30 sec.
50-67

Credits
use
Character
Generator
over visual

5-12 A completed Editing Storyboard.

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PHOTOGRAPH AND ILLUSTRATION CREDITS

ALL PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS ARE THE WORK OF DON HARWOOD WITH THE EXCEPTION OF:

AMY HARWOOD

FIGURE 3-12, PAGE 41
FIGURE 3-15, PAGE 44
FIGURE 4-4, PAGE 73
FRONT COVER, UPPER RIGHT

MARTIN COHEN

FIGURE 3-22, PAGE 56

STANLEY T. LEWIS

FIGURE 4-7, PAGE 78
FIGURE 4-8, PAGE 78
FIGURE 4-8, PAGE 79
FIGURE 4-9, PAGE 79
FRONT COVER, UPPER LEFT, LOWER RIGHT

JOAN DALY LEWIS

FIGURE 3-23, PAGE 56

Special thanks to Amy Harwood, Dr. John B. Haney,
Dr. Stanley T. Lewis, Adam Gregory Harwood.

The pictures on pages 89, 91, and 93 are of an actual documentary,
and were photographed from a television screen.

APPENDIX

The following pages contain examples of the types of equipment necessary to produce video documentaries.

Basically, there are two levels of equipment that can be used, either of which will give satisfactory results.

The least expensive is Industrial Quality, which also may include some home video recorders and cameras. It is used extensively in educational institutions and the resulting videotapes may be shown in-house or on cable-TV.

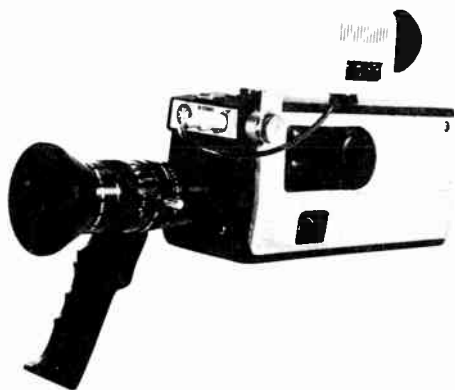
The higher level is Broadcast Quality and, as the term implies, it is the type and caliber of equipment that is used by all commercial broadcast stations, top echelon corporations and some independent producers.

Regarding cameras and recorders, please bear in mind that the two most important considerations are picture resolution and correct color rendition.

If batteries are to be used, buy the best quality you can find and keep them fully charged at all times.

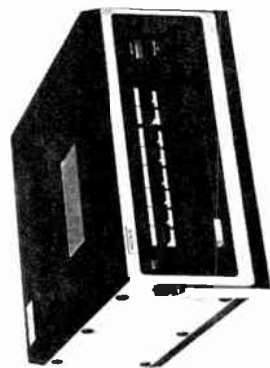
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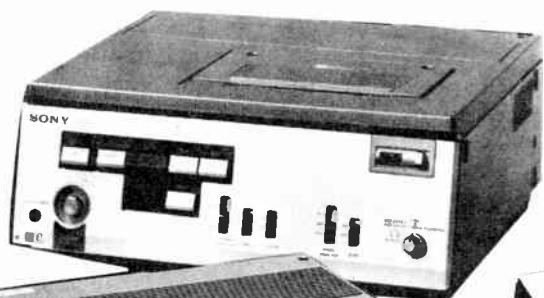


RECORDERS





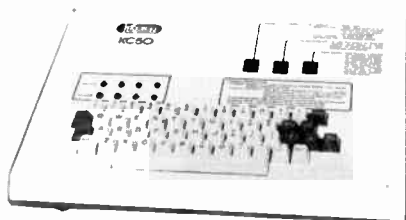
EDITING SYSTEMS



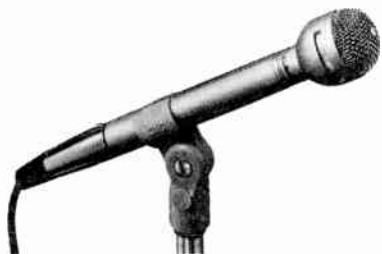
MONITORS



Character Generators



MICROPHONES



MIXERS



ACCESSORIES

