

About This Issue

It's been a year now since the two of us first sat down to talk about doing some sort of publication devoted to video and kids. Our ideas have changed a lot since then.

At first, we simply said we would gather together everything we knew and put together a book. Fortunately time caught up with us. The more we worked in video the less we seemed to know and the more we saw that there was to learn. Looking back, we realized that in our first years of working with video and kids we had immersed ourselves so completely that when we finally came up for air, we were gasping not for reflections but for fresh ideas.

At the same time we encountered some educational backlash. In face of increasing pressures in schools to return to "the basic," we began to question the value of the new technologies. As media missionaries, we still had strong inner beliefs but no longer seemed able to articulate successfully the reasons for our enthusiasm about video. The Gospel approach had come to an end. It was now necessary for us to examine and rethink the state of two arts – video and teaching.

To do this we needed help. A field had developed and we were out of touch with it. All sorts of video programs were operating in schools, storefront centers, hospitals, educational television stations and other weird sites from Maine to Miami and Sea to Shining Sea.

Yet it wouldn't do, we felt, to simply survey the field. Instead, we would need to locate a variety of individuals and institutions involved with using video and kids and give them the opportunity to talk about their own work.

The Things We Went Through For This

In June of 1973, we organized a meeting which brought together 15 people representing schools, universities, alternate video groups, libraries and themselves as individual video artists. Everyone agreed on two things: we felt isolated and we were having trouble sustaining our enthusiasm in face of myriad problems.

As our group talked about our feelings, we agreed that a guide for those using video in various educational environments was an obvious need. Collected resources could serve many: teachers just starting video work with kids, media artists serving residencies in schools, experienced teachers of media who want information about what others are doing, and school administrators who need to have supporting documentation for what their schools are doing.

We also felt it was important to share our work with each other before we sat down to write about it as individuals. So another meeting was scheduled for the fall. We promised to give ourselves time to really find out what each of us were into and to discuss common problems and goals. In the interim, it