

terns. Playing with the patterns in accompaniment to rock music makes for an effective and artistic presentation.

15) Prepare public service announcements, such as concise reminders to recycle paper, conserve wa-

ter, save electricity, etc.

16) Prepare announcements of activities. In this case, the announcer should be positioned in front of a rear projection screen, and slides related to the announcements should be projected.

The Tactics of the Truth

IRVING FALK

The date? 534 B.C. The place? Athens. The cast? Thespis, the actor, and Solon, the legislator. The setting? A backstage scene between the above as related by Plutarch and quoted by A.M. Nagler in his book Sources of Theatrical History. The action? Solon, living an old man's life of leisure, went to see a performance by Thespis. After the play, Solon spoke to Thespis and asked him if he were not ashamed to tell so many lies before such a multitude of people. Thespis replied that it was no harm to do so or to say so in a play. Whereupon Solon chastened him, ". . .if we honor and commend such play as this, we shall find it some day in our business."

There is a derived caveat from Solon's remarks which still ensnares us today. Point a video camera at a scene in a street, a park, a subway, and roll through that camera half-inch videotape, and behold, the truth will appear on that tape when it is played back. Nothing could be farther from the truth. To test the idea, simply ask the student video director to shoot the scene in various ways, such as from the top of a nearby building, from the sewer level in the street, from a subjective character point of view and the lesson will become clear

to him. The truth is elusive and always will be as the film *Rashomon* says, or as Pirandello says in Right You Are If You Think You Are. Illusion is the condition of life and communications technology has introduced more people to more lies than even Solon anticipated "in our business." Take that same student-shot scene above and add the techniques of editing to the finished master tape and the lies become compounded.

Very often teachers using video with their students in class criticize the video product with the remark that the student has nothing new to say. This is a common complaint. It is an impatience exhibited by the teacher not with what is said (Solon *aside*), but with the manner of saying it. There may be some unconscious hope that the student using videotape will uncover some new universal truth not realized before when what is really being asked for is a fresh restatement of what we already know. So many of the fundamental truths have been expressed in the past four thousand years. Thespis, as well as the teacher and the student, knew all the basic hopes and fears and frustrations and ironies and ecstasies and despairs which are mankind's. Yet to each age and to each one of us, they come as if they were being expressed for the first time. Seldom has even the greatest of artists been original in his work. What he feels, millions have felt and thought before him. We treasure the work of the great artist because of his manner of saying it. In language, in dance, in music, in painting, in videotape, mastery is achieved by filtering the old universals through the prism of the artist's personality so that we see the old truths with new vividness. Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Donne, Goethe, Tolstoy, all said nothing about the deepest concerns of man which mankind did not already know or feel. But what they said, they said in such a way that mankind's apprehension of these concerns were quickened - our emotional and intellectual batteries were re-charged.

Process of Truth

Frustration has been a theme throughout the long history of creative work. Few artists have given it as eloquent expression as Shakespeare did in *Macbeth's* "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow."



Mary Sheridan

However, we may be sure that artists will continue to tackle the theme of frustration. Here is a good cue for the teacher in assigning the use of video technology to a student creator: let him express his view of ambition, of honesty, of frustration, of parental love – any and all the emotions common to any and all of God's children. What the student comes up with will be a face of the truth calculated to turn his experience in upon himself for a calculated and inspirational expression of that face of the truth. For in the final analysis, the tactics of the truth lie in searching oneself with honesty and discovering the commonality of thoughts and feelings with humanity as it was and is and portends to be. It is basic to the new structuralism so effectively espoused in child-learning by Piaget and Levi-

Strauss which in essence is finding relationships between separate phenomena, schematizing them in a communicable way, testing them with the tools of validity and reliability from the natural sciences, discovering the organizational pattern between the parts and the whole, and moving from a particular discipline to inter-disciplinary inquiry to discover their underlying principles. The videotape then and its new technology is simply another small step in trying to mobilize our energies in uncovering the tactics of the truth. Videotape is limited in its use by teachers and students not so much by its technological characteristics as it is by the creative, inspirational tactics of the teacher and the students.

In the end, the truth will out.

Video in a Psychiatric Context

BOB BEHR

I have been teaching in a high school in a psychiatric hospital for nearly four years. When I've had the chance to videotape, the results have been very exciting. My students clearly get a lot of benefits from videotape with its larger-than-life command of a classroom, its instant feedback, and its use of the human mind and body as a resource. But videotape has special importance for kids with severe psychiatric problems because of the lively and close relationships it creates among them.

The teenagers who come to my classes present a wide spectrum of personalities - some very frightened and withdrawn, some extremely active and impulsive, others out of touch with the "real" world, and still others who are quite secure in the classroom but have difficulties in other areas of their lives. What they have in common is uncertainty in knowing and accepting themselves and in dealing harmoniously with other people. I have learned that a group experience with videotape can lessen these uncertainties because of two opportunities videotape offers: 1) The chance, while producing a tape, as part of a team, to choose the task you are most comfortable in carrying out; and 2) The chance to express creatively one's ideas and to experience yourself and others as you "live" an idea on tape.

The Role of the Team

When a group makes a tape, people need each other.

Once the students have decided to do a tape together and have a direction, a variety of needs arise. In my experience, I have tended to encourage my students to choose the task they can do best and in addition ask, (or occasionally require),

them to experiment with tasks they feel less confident with. As deadlines appear, scripts must be written, machinery operated, roles acted. When one person completes his part of the job, others feel the need to do theirs - otherwise, the activity will lose its meaning. When a kid has something to do that is his own, he sees himself and others in clear definition. He begins to understand his usefulness contribute to his developing esteem. In a group where there is some positive feeling (and the presence of videotape equipment often generates that!), students will try to cooperate with each other.

Even among students, who often feel incapable of achieving very much - both individually and especially as part of a team - there is usually something each student can do well. One boy who felt he had very little creative ability quickly learned to operate the equipment and do some repairs. He became invaluable to his class. A girl who was insecure about script-writing and absolutely terrified of being on camera agreed - when we needed her - to operate the camera. Students who can write, draw, act, do sound effects, or even watch the clock are all needed.

Kids can feel their effectiveness as soon as they begin. If you carefully avoid the "star" system, each student's contribution can be as valuable as the next and students learn to respect each other for this. In a sense the tape is the star.

Group Expression

When given the opportunity to brainstorm, kids come up with ideas for tapes that reach out for assurance or contact with others. One boy would frequently take off his shirt to see his muscles and