

North Dakota to the newly integrated schools of North Little Rock, schools were beginning to look and sound different.

But can we cope with the change? Teachers, unequipped to deal with the tasks before them, flounder. School systems, not knowing what should be taught (or why), return to "basics." And parents, not understanding the changes taking place around them, demand more structure and stability in their community schools.

And so, in education in general, we've reached a point of sitting back just a bit and reflecting and questioning. Where is it heading? Does the education work? What is significant in the new technology? And on and on it goes.

We all continually question our work with kids. As

much as we dislike words like "accountability" or "behavioral objectives" we all still select our own goals and standards. Before we sat down to do this issue a number of people involved in the use of video in education shared problems with each other. Each of us was most interested in hearing the "descriptions" of what was happening.

Is education in Bad Shape? Maybe. But things are better.

And so, here are descriptions of just a few of the many hundreds of programs going on around the country that are using video to make kids smart about themselves and the world around them. We don't pretend that they are representative (or even successful) - they're merely an eclectic group of statements from people who wanted to share something with you.

The Evolution of a Non-Program

CHUCK ANDERSON

Video has never been a budget item at Longwood High School, yet two students were selected to attend the 1970 White House Conference on Youth as media consultants. The school, located in eastern Long Island, New York has never had an artist-in-residence, yet during the last five years students and teachers have used video as an agent for social consciousness raising, and as a vehicle to document the education of the hearing handicapped. The school has never purchased any equipment, yet at present, video programming, news and weather spots, and public service announcements are broadcast in the student commons via a homemade closed circuit video/audio system. On any given afternoon, Longwood students may be found looking through trash piles for speakers and discarded television receivers; they may be participating in a student intern program at a local cable television station; or they may be moving through a shopping center, conducting video interviews about local politics.

Early Work

In 1968, Longwood High School was given an Ampex video system (1 inch), acquired earlier for a Title I program in the elementary schools but never used. The English Department requisitioned the system to produce a bi-weekly electronic "newspaper" for viewing in study halls. Programs included interviews, student politics, film clips, fashion shows, news, etc.

Later that year, a dispute arose among the students over some racial slurs in an underground newspa-

per. Borrowing a ½ inch, portable VTR unit from George Stoney, (of the Alternate Media Center), the Longwood videomakers were given permission by the administration to follow the course of the disturbance. It was hoped that if students were given the opportunity to sound off in front of the television camera, a process could be improvised that might create better understanding of the issues and thereby prevent the kind of violence that had closed the schools down for a half day the year before. The video crew covered the events from the initial confrontation in the student commons between angry blacks and the administration to a series of meetings between student representatives and school leaders held during the rest of the day. (This process is documented in detail in Chuck Anderson's forthcoming book, VIDEO POWER, to be published by Praeger in the fall of 1974.) An edited videotape was shown to the entire Longwood student body the next day, followed by a series of discussions on the issues. There was no violence. The school stayed open.

During the next couple of years, Longwood students continued to develop their skills as videomakers, using the old Ampex system in the school, and borrowed equipment for out-of-school street shooting. In 1971, the school acquired a SONY Rover series portapak system, again through a little-used Title I elementary school program. At this time, the English Department began to seriously think about including TV communications in the curriculum.



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Kinescoping

In 1972-73, a Longwood video crew was asked to make a documentary about the education of the deaf at a nearby BOCES (Board of Cooperative Educational Services) school for the hearing handicapped. This project developed into one of the most ambitious efforts yet undertaken in our non-program. Working on a volunteer basis over a period of 18 months, Longwood students got a great deal of experience both in video and in working with the handicapped. Production costs, such as a day of editing at the Egg Store in New York City, and the making of a kinescope at Rombex Studios in New York, were funded by BOCES, who was becoming increasingly enthusiastic about the project. The finished product, a 28-minute 16mm. film (kinescope) called "To Break the Silence," has been shown on local cablevision, and has been acquired by the Suffolk County Library System with other libraries expressing interest in acquiring a print. Not just the video team members benefited from



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this project. The teachers of the hearing handicapped found that they had to re-examine and in some cases update their teaching methods. It became clear to administration, teachers and participating parents that both present and future parents of deaf students needed specific and positive ideas about how their children may learn to communicate with the world.

Old Beginnings

Life goes on at Longwood. Students grow up, graduate, get interested in other things. This year, the Longwood video non-program seems to be starting all over again, back at the beginning, but with a slight difference. Video is now part of the English curriculum. Teachers from other disciplines have begun to make off-the-air recordings of science and history specials for selective viewing in school. The school is hooked into the Grassroots TV Network, and recently students were able to watch a tape about Wounded Knee, made by Native American Video.

On the floor above the student commons, there is a new room called the Radio and Television Studio. Longwood's closed circuit system is continuing to grow as a result of student energy and inventiveness, Student Council generosity (about \$100 worth of coaxial cable, connectors, and boosters), and administrative coercion. (The latter took place when our principal talked the middle school principal into giving us three monitor/receivers from his brand new closed circuit system in a recently-constructed building.) We're still using the two Title I machines. By means of workshops that we've conducted, the non-program now shares the portapak with five other schools in a 4,500-student system, where austerity budgets and split sessions are a way of life.

The new video group is producing a daily show called "AM/Longwood", consisting of news, music, interviews, weatherspots, and public service announcements. "The more things change, the more they remain the same." However, we're hoping to repeat some of the good things of the past. We've started a series of exchange tapes with other schools in Pennsylvania, Washington, D.C., and New York - hopefully they will be as effective as the one we did with Kit Laybourne and the Concord Academy (Massachusetts) last year. We're negotiating with BOCES about a tape on the emotionally disturbed; the only problem is that they're as tight for money as we are. We've finally gotten through to the school board; they bought us about \$100 worth of videotape last year. Maybe one of these days, we'll be able to start building a tape library. The most important thing is that there is a growing enthusiasm for video among the students and faculty. One of our major goals this year is to see if we can get the cablevision people to interconnect the six schools that are spread out over the 52 square mile school district, and to encourage them to do more public access programming.