EGO ME ABSOLVO is an annual single-processed, non-confessional set up against the wall. The painter/performer is seated in a flat white suit, facing the wall, while the priest, the performer, is seated next to him on the floor. He slips into an audio track, which guides him through an appropriate confession. While he continues, he is filmed via television. When finished making his confession, he goes behind the wall of the room’s configuration. The tape is taped by the next person. Appropriately audio tracks could be given to bring him into tangential areas of his experience which are not developed for different kinds of people, e.g., girls, serious boys, married women, etc... All audio tracks could be the authentic voices of real priests in real confessional situations. Unenhanced.

GUNS, KNIVES OR VIDEOTAPE seems useful for the question it suggest rather than for any clear community it provides. Essentially it is a mutation from the hardware form of the words, "The area should be large enough so that participants can come and go without interfering with others."

COLLEGE IS A HIGH CHAIR is based on one of the video experiments done in the fall of 1969 at Victor Gruen’s Center for the Study of Social Change using Roosevelt Hospital facilities. The choice of a baby to imitate comes from my own experience imitating the movements of babies. What modes of behavior are appropriate for someone who is simultaneously recorder and performer? What areas of interpersonal relations are explorable in this videotape encounter not explorable in ordinary encounter groups? Is not the metaphor of “shooting” tape misleading?

COLLEGE IS A HIGH CHAIR: a room fifteen by ten feet in area, eight feet high. Equip it with all the necessary programs on the monitors receiving outside tapes, it should prove an excellent tool for concentration is relaxed. Reality and illusion do sixty-nine. The mind achieves clarity in the sensorium, as an environment for getting stoned in, and can be used by couples and groups? Is not the metaphor of “shooting” tape misleading?

These pieces juxtapose video with three existing cultural cliches: confession, the shoot-out, and the college classroom. By deliberately putting a new media in old winebags the interface between the existing culture and the new information technologies can be profitably explored. Generally the introduction of new technologies has taken little account of the way in which the existing culture is already programmed. For example, talk about the upcoming home communications centers pays little heed to the fact that the kiosk system is already a highly complex and fiscally designed data processing system. The mindless mutation in family structure wrought by the third parent, broadcast TV, will seem minor compared to the effect of home communication centers designed by hardware heads with no real understanding of culture is software.

As an alternative to merely talking about the information contours of existing cultural cliches and their relation to YTR, these pieces are designed to provide some experience of the interface for those that are interested. The cultural cliches are approached as information structures. The expected experience is transformed by video design. Electric is elastic. These pieces are structured to help provide a sense of the possibility of cultural changes through electronic information technologies.

Confession is structured in such a way that the priest has authority over the experience of the penitent. His authority is based on his knowledge of the “revealed dogma” kept by the Church. Out of that body of information he provides feedback for the conscience of the penitent. The priest guides according to the norms of the Church. Videotape undercuts the authority of the priest by providing the “penitent” with a closed loop information system: intake (camera) processing (deck) output (monitor).

This complete information system enlarges a person’s ability to self-cybernate. He can take himself going through the confessional routine. He needs much tape of himself in many situations, with different friends, and alone. The point is that with video it is possible to build up such a self-cybernating data base that undermines the authority of the priest and his body of information. These considerations also hold true for many forms of private therapy.

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