COMMUNITY

PROJECT REPORT

by Allan Rucker and Richard Kletter

OF THE MEDIA ACCESS CENTER-- 
A DIVISION OF PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

The following is a report on what occurred when two groups of high school students, one white and one third world, used videotape to explore their school. The resulting tapes revealed student reaction to their district's voluntary busing program, while this article relates the experience to the general area.

We first got involved in this project as a result of a proposed "evaluation" to research student attitudes toward a voluntary transfer program which brought minority students to white schools but few, if any, white students to minority schools. Our approach was a "soft" one, more "whiter than white" communities and some hostility in the black community from fear that the district would shut down the one black school. The school district's research division intended to rely on formal interviews, the questionnaires to judge their project's success, and hired the researchers to evaluate them. The district official squirmed about the regrettable situation and deemed the information in editing. They made the decisions but we performed the necessary to appease those who would not find time to watch the information. For what it's worth, here is our formal proposal language. We believe, however, that a necessary concomitant to any information. For what it's worth, here is our formal proposal language. We believe, however, that a necessary concomitant to any assessment methodology is one permitting the participants to refine and present their statements but we hope to limit editing in the final tape.

Two days in another class probing white kids about their attitudes toward black people produced a stirring confrontation between Larry, the black leader, and one of the school's leading drunks. The drunks and subtleties of racism were revealed in a series of genuine disagreements.

At this point, we felt the limitations of the project. We tried feedback sessions, turning tapes back into the class that produced them, and igniting discussions in other classes, but we had little tape and less talk. However, we managed to get a new generation of tapes by placing the videotapes back into the school allowing other students to pick them up, if they wanted, or left them on the cafeteria tables. The other kids liked it-began to spin off a variety of non-official, unofficial, anonymous versions of ours. (The raw tapes were not covered in the school newspaper, however, but the school district and the Stanford professor.) His "superior" called ours--instant delivery of the tapes.

They received no other formal copies and we were denied our own tapes. We discovered that we had the "white albums," i.e., tapes made by the students on our own tapes after the project almost竟 unidentified. We then discovered that the "black album" had been made on a mal•alligned tape and that the edited version was made on a mal•alligned tape. We attempted to get a copy of the "black album," told him that they had no machine in their district official turned into mutual suspicion: on our end, about what was happening; on their end, about what we were doing. We tried to get some comparisons begin. The white group stayed out for two forty minutes with a completed twenty minute reel. Their tape was one white and one third world, used videotape to school students, one white and one third world, used videotape to school students. The research division intended to judge their project's success, and hired the researchers to evaluate them. The district official squirmed about the regrettable situation and deemed the information in editing. They made the decisions but we performed the necessary to appease those who would not find time to watch the information. For what it's worth, here is our formal proposal language. We believe, however, that a necessary concomitant to any assessment methodology is one permitting the participants to refine and present their statements but we hope to limit editing in the final tape.

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Each group spent three weeks shooting tapes. The kids arranged the shots in whatever style they felt like. We didn't interfere in anything the principal. We optimized ourselves in a playback area, handled the equipment, and recorded the tapes. We might attempt to generate dialogue among those who participated in the project. We then arranged to do an informal interview with the principal. He generally sleeps all day.

The principal was extremely cordial and cooperative. He freely opened the doors to us and, to our surprise, asked us what we were doing or how we were doing it after our initial conversations. He no longer cares how he is perceived and does no longer seem to care anymore.

The manner of selecting students and introducing videotape as a social studies assignment. Without a direct approach and the higher official squirmed about the regrettable situation and deemed the information in editing. They made the decisions but we performed the necessary to appease those who would not find time to watch the information. For what it's worth, here is our formal proposal language. We believe, however, that a necessary concomitant to any assessment methodology is one permitting the participants to refine and present their statements but we hope to limit editing in the final tape.

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