PROCES SING: editing in-to VIDEO

RADICAL ELEMENT #1: "...YOU DON'T EDIT MUCH; WHICH PRODUCES VERY LOW DENSITY TAPES...", DO NOT GOUGE

These tapes probably are not appropriate for mass group viewing unless the topic is right-on-center of what the mass wants to see; however, they are extremely appropriate for the person who wants to investigate the topic or area. Because,

IN ALL THOSE WHOLEs BETWEEN THE LINES IS LOTS OF DATA...

it's not generally linguistic data-literally: IT'S DATA ABOUT HOW YOUR FAMOUS MAN STANDS UP...

DOES HE REALLY LOOK-LIKE A GREEK-GOD...

We all know that video-taping a straight lecture produces almost-always a video-tape which would BORE a group audience, even though the lecture would have been interesting. ...the normal thing one says, is that, you clean it up by-editing; but you can't edit a lecture...IT'S ALL TALK. I mean, in order to edit you have to say that some of what the guy or girl says is not as important as the other stuff...but-typically about EVERYTHING-IS-OF-SAME-IMPORT. So, you do high-lights of the lecture which ain't the lecture (it might direct you to the lecture) - or - you kind of let the whole thing in. But what Phil does is to apply a layer-over-that. That layer which he applies at some level is nothing but VISUAL-TINSEL-****-or-FROSTING...but frosting makes the cake and nobody eats cake without frosting.

THIS FROSTING LAYERING-OVER THE CAKE'S SUBSTANCE AT A META-LEVEL EDITS INTO EDUCATIONAL TV SYSTEM-CONTEXT NEW-LIFE; IE:

MOVE-OUT-BABY (and-over)

...like the album cover on records makes the record. I am told that before they started putting pictures on record covers, records were nearly impossible to sell...and I believe it from personal experience of walking record shops. Now that level of analysis which is super-ficial from one point of view ends up to make the difference from the system working and not-working.

And that level of over-processing that Phil does even on straight images seems to make quite a bit of difference.

Like, in a normal lecture circumstance there is the guy talking, there's the room with all its interesting stuff, there's the people with all their interesting stuff and then there is the POTENTIAL-INTERACTION like, you can ask a question, you can get excited and there is an outlet for your excitement (clapping, squealing etc...) But, the video tape presentation except for: stopping the tape, coming back to it, grabbing a friend and showing him the tape (which is a level of interaction that is very prominent in Phil's facility of the video data bank)...ahhh, you have to do something to substitute for that lectural-context which has all that fantastic peri-full-fill in it which is so interesting. OVER-PROCESSING substitutes for that...

IT'S STILL NOT QUITE RIGHT.

A SECOND WHOLE ORDER OF RADICAL CONTRIBUTION IS THE PLAYBACK FACILITY:

ITSELF is optimized for individual and small group playback, is self administered and self selected so the tapes do not have to have a lot of candy-appeal; in other words, they don't have to be produced like Sesame Street because the people who are going there are looking for the stuff which is there and that's all that it takes. And this isn't true for playing back a tape for an introductory Art Class which doesn't know
what it is looking for and ain't in the position to decide anyway because it is a class...and so a video-tape for them to have to have enough flash-n-szap to keep them interested even if they aren't (explicit-subliminal addiction) or even if they don't know they are interested in the content.

But in the individualized playback system a whole multitude of stuff which is sins in any other system, become virtues: like, self-indulgences of the person who is speaking is almost always a sin except if you are looking after the information that person's got...and his self-indulgence is part of that information and you lap-it-up...

PROBABLY THE MOST RADICAL THING IS JUST DOING IT...DOING IT...DOING IT...DOING IT.

In other words taking a bunch of video tapes and getting them into a form that is ACCESSIBLE and simply making them ACCESSIBLE...and they are made accessible in Phil's context by putting them on cassette-form so people (students'n'faculty) can just throw them in the machine; and making an environment dedicated to playback and the room having large hours...

ANOTHER FAIRLY RADICAL CONTRIBUTION is the general refusal to video-tape lectures. Which, as I understand it, there is only a very few straight lectures in the data bank shot in Fullerton Hall...but to shoot the discussions which happen after the lectures has several virtues:

AFTER THE LECTURES HAS SEVERAL VIRTUES:

One, is that the things that get talked about have already been pre-selected by the students, so the things that are interesting that the lecturer has to say to students is selected by students in - question and answer - terms and at least the probes that start the guy back off talking. That's of critical importance because the potential audience or same-group of potential audience starts the guy off talking (selecting questions and probes the lecturer post-facto-is).

YEARS FROM NOW, HOW ONE'S PREVIOUS GROUP AUDIENCE WAS. THAT IS, INSTANT ART HISTORY OF ONE'S GROUP LOCALE;

WHERE MY PEERS WERE COMING FROM-THEN...

Secondly, the interactive context, the discussion-business reveals more of the personal character of the guy that's doing the talking (and the students doing the probing)... and that's very important because in most cases you can get the guys 'DATA' from his books or his art work or if he's sufficiently famous from what critics have said about him.

What you can't get from these 'data' modes is the more subtle-nuancey things about the personality interacting with STUFF and the discussion format allows this interaction-with-stuff...

As every good story writer knows, you reveal the structure of the person, NOT by talking about the structure of the person but by allowing the great fictitious person interact with events and people to reveal his structure. And that's just what happens by these discussion formats that go on after a lecture in another environmental context...it allows the extracting of relevant features of what's normally present in a lecture format, which is for some reason almost always doomed to failure (the lecture format)... except for the most-projecting kind of characters who really-really know how to lecture.
So, that and the detailed character of the playback facility, those two features are I think the most radical and different from the way everybody else does EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION, either with light-weight hardware or heavy-weight stuff...

THE SURFACE VISUAL PROCESSING I DON'T UNDERSTAND; just like I don't understand why pictures on album covers and frosting on cake...I MEAN I DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT...

BUT IT SEEMS IMPORTANT...though, I DISLIKE IT CONCEPTUALLY!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

THINGS TO COMMUNICATE TO THE 'FOLKS' IN SO MANY WAYS THAT IT CAN'T BE MISSED
(BY NOBODY...NO HOW...FOREVER KNOWN):

One, is the details of the playback environment determine equally as much as the way the video-tapes themselves are done as to how the information comes across...now that's a non-understandable thing, like pictures on record albums which has nothing to do with the SONIC-MATERIAL inside...just nothing to do with it...just nothing; but it's something that one can identify with visually that allows one to grab the album, select the album, be titilated by it in all sorts of funny ways on funny levels that I don't understand...BUT IT'S ABSOLUTELY IMPORTANT. The playback environment and the details of the playback environment and the details of the details of the environment are CRITICAL.

Second thing that can't be missed is: if one just straight forwardly decides to build up a data bank by video taping visiting lectures in a lecture-context and then editing it; ONE IS DOOMED TO FAILURE. That will not work, it never has worked, probably never will work except on rare occassions where the person who is doing the lecture is SOO000-0-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-0 good at lecturing that it all pops up to a meta-level and works...and there are those people; some of those people that's the very best with but there are so very few of them (and they usually ain't what we call 'artists')...they are usually LECTURERS.(People who do the lecture-trip as their thing)...people like Bucky Fuller and Ram Dass and Ashley Montegue I suppose; those people who are lecturers by profession. OTHERWISE TRY SOMETHING DIFFERENT...something else; and that which Phil has discovered or invented is very appropriately tuned to/for his institutional space.

It would be very inapporpriate to Univ. of Ill.'s institutional space unless I were to be come Phil which I'm not...and do as my primary thing or at least one of my MAJOR things...which I might...I just might! - but I would require a different space than I now have.

When a person who is into EDUCATIONAL TV talks about taking a lecture and making it into...ah, I mean transforming it into a TV program, he will probably say things like it's important that we just not have a lecture and video tape it; but that we have alot of graphics and visual-aid informations and stuff like that to go with it. From a conceptual analysis, that strikes me as superficial...that-that ain't the problem with video taping a lecture and if you spend alot of time making up que-cards and the like with pretty pictures on them, IT WILL STILL NOT BE VERY GOOD.

(You might try to tell yourself and your buddies that it's good; but at some level you all know that it AIN't GOOD!)

...that the process of adaptive-transformation is considerably more complex than 'pretty-tricky-visual-aids' (which typically serve more as 'pretty-awful-perceptual-BLINDERS', discouraging process-level interaction).
The next thing that you have got to convince everybody (hee-hee) there is that:

THE ONLY WAY TO DO IS TO DO IT...

In other words if they and there buddies want to get together and make a video tape about how-to use a press or how-to use an animation stand or how-to use a camera or any of those very obvious things that would be of use to a 'teacher' (that substitute for the 50-100 times you have to tell-it and you know could be done better by a well thought/ worked-out video tape than going through it half-interested each time)...
do it yourself...look at it...refine it...pay attention to what students say about it...do it again(or if you aren't interested in repeats)do another one maybe instead of again...and focus on that, eventually you will evolve a 'style' which has to do with your approach to the problem and it will work alot gooder than going to a producer in an EDUCATIONAL TV studio and having them do it for you...GAURENTEED!!

CAREFUL OF WHAT SLISH YOU EDIT-OUT...

...when I was doing a video-tape instructing on a compute-system, thrice during the hour and half of taping the phone rang...we specifically didn't edit it out; because that 'noise' turns into message in that it brings people back into what they are seeing. You can get sucked so much into the surface of the presentation (conventional video tape techniques try to make that happen): like the fake-back drop with the books on the selves or black (green) boards or whatever is supposed to be the con-TEXT you know...all to pull people away from the reality of what's happening-simply; which is, that there is a TV camera looking at a process and a person is trying to point you to stuff in that process...

...it all can pop onto the surface so fast that the 'dirt' like the phone ringing and the ink being dropped or the exposed beer can...all can be virtuous.

...because it pulls the receiver into what simply is going on which is somebody trying to tell you this or that about this or that:

TRYING TO EXPLAIN WHAT THEY ARE INTO

...and it ain't a dance of funny stuff on a funny screen (I mean it is that too; but polish can be a real detractor for furrowing fellow fellows...

'polish' often (most times) fails to reveal what's going on, or at least what one wants to be going on...or thinkgs is going on...or...

'polish' has to do with making the structure NON-apparent; polishing-over the seems so the seams ain't there anymore-right...can you believe it...

...there is EXTREMELY VALUABLE INFORMATION RESOURCES in the structure which is being used to present something...and to polish over-all the xeems is in the structure...

PHILIP LEE MORTON

SAIC/VIDEO - Video Data Bank

Dan Sandin - Asst Prof; Inventor of Image Processor
University of Illinois, Circle Campus