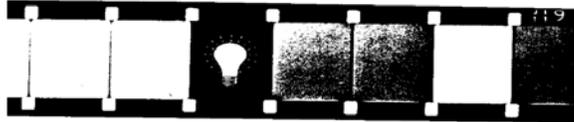


MEDIAWORKS
FILM • VIDEO • AUDIO • WORKSHOPS
WINTER 2005



Exercise: Documentary Coverage of an Event

Faculty: Laurie Meeker and Julia Zay

Shoot Film in teams of two (camera operator and assistant)

Shoot Video and Record Audio (one on each, switch at a halfway point)

Supplies Needed: 1-2 Rolls 16mm Tri-X 7266 each team; mini DV tape; MiniDisc

Cameras: Bolex, 3-chip video camera and **extra batteries!!**

Audio: Mini Disc recorder, microphones, boom pole, extra cabling, headphones

TIMELINE:

Week 3: Group BISCUITS shoots film, Group TEA shoots video and collects audio

Week 4: Group TEA shoots film, Group BISCUITS shoots video and collects audio

COLLABORATION LOGISTICS: Please note that in the above timeline, your PEER GROUP of 4 works together both weekends. Each sub-group of 2 will be shooting FILM one weekend and VIDEO/AUDIO the other.

FILM LAB LOGISTICS:

BISCUITS Timeline: Group BISCUITS shoots film Fri-Monday January 21-24

Biscuits Film goes to Film Runner by Wed. Jan 26 and to the lab that night;

Pick up Fri. 1/28; Screen in class Tuesday Feb. 1

TEA Timeline: Group TEA shoots film Fri-Monday January 28-31

Tea Film goes to Film Runner by Mon. Jan 31 and to the lab that night;

Pick up Feb. 2 Wed. afternoon; Screen in class Thursday Feb. 3

Documentary Coverage of an Event: Choose an ongoing event, something with interesting visuals and adequate natural light. This is as much an exercise in “seeing” and envisioning as it is an exercise in developing your skills in documentary production. Choice of subject matter is very important. An ongoing event means something is taking place in the community, in a business, or in the natural world. Sports, pets, and children are considered some of the most difficult subjects to film – it can be done but usually takes a higher shooting ratio (in film).

This exercise does not involve acting, fiction, or set-ups. This should be a record of “actuality” representing the “historical world” ...a form of “social representation” (Nichols’ terms). Events happening in the historical world cannot be controlled or directed, and filmmakers must develop their shooting and recording skills to create an audio-visual construction that captures the spirit of what happened. This is the challenge – to construct a visual record or social representation of the event, remembering that representation almost always involves a perspective.

Scout the location with your group and draw a storyboard before shooting. Each member should draw their own storyboard, or contribute to a collective one.

Think about the following in planning and executing your SHOTS:

- establishing shots (establishing the location, visual environment, context, etc.)
- visual variety: shoot a variety of shots (vary camera angle, focal length, and distance between camera and subject)

- spatial context (backgrounds may contain relevant details)
- screen direction continuity (direction and pace of movement)
- respond to natural variations in rhythm and pace
- close-ups to show interesting visual details
- cut-aways from the action that add texture or depth to your material
- cover essential actions, including entire events, entrances and exits from frame
- motivated camera movements

DIFFERENCES IN HOW YOU'LL SHOOT VIDEO AND FILM:

- You'll be able to record sync sound w/ video camera
- You'll be able to run the video camera longer, let actions play out longer, follow activity to see where it leads you (shoot more "on-the-fly") because video is less expensive than film and you'll have less film stock to shoot.
- Shooting film forces you to plan your shots more thoroughly, but when shooting video you also should work methodically and consciously—follow the list above.

Think about the following in planning and recording AUDIO:

- The sound recordist's role in this assignment is two-fold:
 - a. record event/location audio with MiniDisc recorder. You won't be able to record SPEECH to be synced w/ video or film (lips moving) on a separate device, so MD recordings can be audio interviews, wild/environment sound, sound "close-ups" of various activities and actions. This allows you to separate from the cameras and work on documenting the SOUND of this event.
 - b. record sync audio w/ a mic plugged into the video camera. This will be important to try as part of your shoot. Will you be in the shot (remember *Four More Years?*) holding your mic like a newscaster? Will you stay out of frame and hold the mic with a boom pole? Will you use a LAVALIER or WIRELESS mic?
- record 1 min (at least) of LOCATION "WILD SOUND" AKA "ROOM TONE"
- take at least 2 different microphones to respond to various sound sources, events, and environments. If you can scout the location ahead of time, you will have a better idea of what audio challenges you might face.
- For gathering sync audio when the camera mic won't be adequate you will want to bring a BOOM POLE for holding the mic away from you and keeping it out of the shot (if you want). You will need extra cabling so sound recordist and videographer won't be tethered too closely.

Documentary Coverage of an Event Exercise in relation to the Essay Project: The event you choose may or may not be connected to the topic of your group's essay film. The *Documentary Coverage of an Event Exercise* is centered on skill development leading up to the Essay Project. So we encourage you to do this exercise to build your skills and the resulting material may stand alone. The film and audio/video will be screened in separate workshops and you are not required to edit it into a final piece. However, we would also encourage you to find an "ongoing event" in the historical world that may be relevant to your Essay Project. If your group wants to work with your Essay topic in this assignment you may end up with some material that could be used later in the Essay project.

DUE at the time of the film screening:

- A COPY of your camera log
- A COPY of your storyboard

