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THE USE OF FILMMAKING TECHNIQUES IN TEACHING ABOUT FILM:
A STUDY OF FILM GAMES AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

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1982

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George S. Semsel
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If the study of film is to survive, film must be taught well. If it is to be taught well, administrators of film programs must protect their best teachers from those within and without our discipline who, through inexperience and incompetence, would reduce it to history and whatever scraps can be gleaned from the tables of science. Science and history have important work to do, but it must not be confused with our own. We are not appendages to them: we predict but cannot explain. We, with the other disciplines of the transitory, are methodologically distinct from the disciplines of permanence, and our importance—indeed our viability—rests on this separation.

Evan William Cameron
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This exploratory study examines ways to use the medium of film in teaching about film. It is feasible to teach about film by having students make films, but it is economically impractical in current mass-education to put a camera into everyone's hands as easily as one can a book. It is possible, though, to create and implement designs for teaching which allow students to operate the mechanisms of filmmaking as well as to appear in the works they produce. This study offers an approach which makes the filmmaking experience possible for large bodies of students in educational systems limited in time and funding. Two thousand and fifty-two students from two very different institutions partook of the film games described in this study. The study extended through thirty-six terms over the period from 1974 through 1979.

The purpose of this study is to provide alternative strategies for film teachers to use in expanding their own repertoires so that even though they may feel most comfortable in a traditional framework, they can also work effectively in unconventional situations. The designs for teaching about film presented here do not replace the
strategies currently in use, but add to them in ways not hitherto well explored. The film games studied here are designed to affect the attitude of participating students towards film and to motivate them to further concern for the medium.

**An Overview of the Problems of Teaching About Film**

For more than a decade now, there have been attempts to bring film educators within the United States together on the fundamental issues of film pedagogy. Thus far, except for some telling surveys by groups such as the American Film Institute, little significant progress has been made. There is no agency of accreditation for film teaching. There is no national agreement on who should teach about film on any level, on what they should study, on who would best teach them, on where film studies should be housed within the academic world, on what should be taught, on to whom it should be taught, on what constitutes an essential curriculum, and on what the basic needs are for offering film studies.

This study takes place at a time of considerable unsettlement and debate among scholars within the teaching of film. We've not been able to agree upon some fundamental issues of the medium and its extension into electronics, television.
Film is an elusive medium. It exists, work by work, as a series of shadows on a screen for a short period of time, and then is gone. Film cannot be held in the hand, nor is it a commodity one can possess. The film in the tin is not the experience.

The increase in film studies across the land during a time of retrenchment in other disciplines testifies to the importance given the medium by educators. Most would agree with Herbert Read:

We cannot fully participate in modern consciousness unless we can learn to appreciate the significant art of our own day. Just because people have not learned in their youth the habit of enjoyment, they tend to approach contemporary art with closed minds. They submit it to intellectual analysis when what it demands is intuitive sympathy. They have no pureness of heart and therefore they cannot share the artist's vision. That is a sad state, and it seems to me that it is one of the primary functions of the university like this, which sends out its thousands of young men and women to be the teachers and preceptors of their fellow-men to send them out with open eyes and active sensibilities.²

Though the study of film has now been available within the university system for several decades, the last of which saw an intense growth in film studies across the nation, little careful attention has been given to the problems of teaching about this medium. Several matters need to be studied.

1. How to teach effectively about film.

2. How to make use of the nature of the medium itself in the classroom in such a way as to make the
nature of the medium clear to the students, and to do so at minimal cost.

3. How to bring the experience of film from the traditional audience-screen relationship into fuller appreciation and understanding of all it involves, including film-as-process. As Ernest Rose observes:

The best way to understand and increase the pleasures of film viewing is not to study literary criticism or the application of measurement to art but to experience as directly as possible the way the artist works and the way a film works. This is the very heart of film teaching and the only justification for a separate department or center for film study in the University.

Film, still a new subject in the academic world, is difficult to teach. We do not know enough about the medium to agree upon what teachers of film must know, or what they must teach. Thus the backgrounds of the people currently teaching about film is diverse. The ongoing debate between those newer faculty members who have formal university degree work in film and the pioneers who brought film into university indicates that the place of the medium within the scholarly realm has not yet been fully defined. J. Tammy, disheartened by the conflicts, summarizes the current situation:

The destructive fights and personal attacks about whether experimental or professional film production should be emphasized, whether history reveals theory or theory reveals history, and the fights over empirical or impressionistic research, only tend to polarize students and faculty alike.

A number of the people teaching about film do so
after considerable work in other academic areas, especially English, but including many other disciplines as well. These teachers have come into film with great enthusiasm for the medium, but little or no formal studies of it. They structure their courses through their personal interest and self-training.

A second group teaches about film along with other arts. These people, usually trained in an art other than film, or in art education, understand film as a means of personal expression akin to painting, sculpture or graphic design, areas in which they often have a demonstrated talent. They are especially effective in treating the graphic qualities of film, especially as screened event, but usually ignore in-depth study of theoretical concepts of film in their classrooms.

With these groups are people who teach film production after considerable experience within the filmmaking profession. They are among the earliest pioneers of film teaching in university. These people have generally not been concerned with theoretical studies, but nonetheless are frequently the most interesting of instructors, and their teaching is of the highest order. They command the respect and admiration of their students.

The above three groups of teachers are the people whose concern for the medium as well as for the qualities of education brought film studies into university. Though
their backgrounds are diverse, their offerings diverse and uneven, their recognition of the need to study about film provided the groundwork for the thousands of courses now offered across the country. Their teaching has produced a second generation of film teachers who, ironically, are frequently opposed to them.

The new generation of film teachers are primarily scholars. All have studied film extensively on the graduate level in a historical, critical, or theoretical context. Few, however, have an undergraduate background in the medium, as is so often expected in other disciplines. Most hold terminal degrees in film or "cinema studies." The emphasis of their work at this time is on the language of film, on how the structures of film express meaning. Though their work is necessary and intense, it has not yet led to understanding film-as-process, and it has, for the most part, ignored the questions of teaching about film. The study of film pedagogy will mature with the next generation of film teachers.

Despite the proliferation of film courses over the past ten years, there is no agreement upon how film should be taught. Tammy notes "It seems obvious that many professors have not defined for themselves the concerns of the field of film studies; and thus jump from one fashionable band wagon to another." For many people, the way to come to an understanding of film is to learn how to
make films. Such studies range from small, individual production units found within art classes, to schools offering only film production, which graduate people who enter the filmmaking profession or, nowadays, television. Though much can be said in favor of this approach, current economic conditions have adversely affected the teaching of production. Currently the American Film Institute reports 3,126 faculty members in 656 colleges and universities teach film, television and media to 44,183 students in 7,648 courses (3,991 in film). These studies take place in such diverse areas as Anthropology, Creative Writing, Education, English, Film and Television, Instructional Resources, Photography, and Theatre Arts.6

Most film studies centers on the commercial narrative film, considering film to be a literary form. Unfortunately this limited viewpoint does not deal well with crucial, non-narrative elements of the film experience. It downplays the other significant formats: the documentary and the personal experimental film. Students in programs which favor the narrative film graduate with a strong understanding of the nature of narrative, but do not know, necessarily, much about the fundamental nature of film.

Film study is frequently taught within English departments, where it is treated with sophistication, including theoretical studies, but where the realities of
production are seldom available to students. In other words, students do not have contact with the technology of the medium, and often, as a result, romanticize the filmmaking process. The medium, they imply, is outside their control, manufactured in Hollywood, a magical place on the West Coast. Within an English department, a sub-department devoted to "popular culture" is sometimes formed. Unfortunately, film is reduced in such departments to a subject which must be studied because it exists in vast quantities and attracts many viewers, but which is "lowbrow" art.

Film as a communications medium is placed within departments which include radio and television as well, and frequently speech and inter-personal communications. This is, to be sure, a highly important and expanding area within the university structure, and it is fitting that film should be considered with it. Yet, it does not deeply address aesthetic questions. Instructors, generally well-grained in communication skills, speech, and broadcast problems, often have not addressed theoretical questions of film. For some, film is a dying form which will eventually be replaced by electronic image-making, or which, perhaps, will continue to be used as an esoteric art from by a stubborn few who like it for strictly personal reasons. On the other hand, they recognize that film is used to generate most of the images currently broadcast. There is not yet a strong body of literature
dealing with the theoretical issues of electronic images though the works available increase annually. Although in such departments aesthetics and issues of perception are not yet adequately addressed, this will change.

In schools where film is taught as a graphic, visual art, usually under the umbrella of an art department, only a few students come into close contact with the medium, and these are given only enough filmmaking technology to make short films on their own. Such schools teach animation techniques because it is fascinating, economical, and involves other graphic arts. Certainly animation helps clarify elemental structures of the medium. Teachers in art departments treat film as an extension of their work in other areas. Seldom trained as filmmakers, and self-taught, they use film in their teaching because of personal interest. They are often highly perceptive individuals who use the medium, properly enough in teaching, as a means for opening perceptions.7

Film is successfully combined at some schools with photography since the two mediums have a common physical bond. In some departments, differences between them cause some problems, yet in a well-designed curriculum the two work well together, and an inter-relationship based on the concern for the reality image arises within the faculty. The Ohio State University's Department of Photography, Cinema (and Video), with a faculty of eighteen, offers B.A.,

Film, especially on graduate levels, is sometimes offered as a specialized art form in small autonomous departments within the liberal arts. These departments operate with small staffs and small budgets. They teach with surprising sophistication under circumstances unusual in more established disciplines. Ohio University, for example, with a three-person faculty, offers an M.A. in Film Theory, and an M.F.A. which includes theory as well as production. Its operating budget, excluding salaries and benefits, is under $20,000 per year.

Many of the film instructor's colleagues do not know enough about film to be especially sympathetic to the problems of teaching about the medium. Some consider film as an expensive medium of dubious quality. Others find it a tool for research, but not an academic subject in itself. As a result, film teachers spend much time defending their discipline.

The Significance of the Study

There is something compelling about the process of film. The ability not only to create recognizable semblances of physical reality, but also to create new and very convincing alternative "realities" is only partially understood and, therefore, mystifying to the general
viewing public. In addition to this viewpoint, the literature and visual documents which presumably describe how various specific films were made arouse interest, though few give all of the information desired, leaving audiences to suspect there is something not being told to them, something deeper and more mysterious. Even after discussing Truffaut's "Day for Night," which is probably the most explicit feature film made dealing with film-as-process, students believe they have not been made privy to an unspecified quality of the medium.

In almost every film class this writer has taught, no matter the level or the particular subject, the first interest of students has not been in the structures or content of the films under study, but in the processes of making them. Only after some understanding of the process are they willing to speak freely about the works in other ways. Lecturing with his own films, coast to coast, invariably this writer is asked to reveal the process by which the images were made. Other filmmakers report similar experiences. Students wish to know about the processes of film even though they do not expect to make films themselves. Initial interest in the medium is in film-as-process, suggesting that this is the area which must first be studied prior to, or at least concurrent with, other studies.
Even the people who make films find it possesses a "magical" quality for them despite years working with the medium. It is as though there is some quality within the activity itself which is not in the filmmaker's control, no matter how conscious he may be of the shots he is taking.9

The activity of making movies is as pleasurable to those who engage in it as is the completed film. Often enough a filmmaker will remark that once the film has been completed, his interest in it ceases and he looks to the next project. Of New Wave director, Francois Truffaut, James Monoco notes: "It is the process of his films that he finds intriguing, not their ultimate value as commodities."10 This point of view is hardly surprising for it is characteristic of many artist's approach to their work. Witness the large number of paintings Picasso never exhibited, and consider that despite a limited marketplace that most serious poets continue to write. For the artist, joy comes in the process, the making. The final product is a different matter. We can learn from this, but in current film studies, the opportunity to work in the process of film does not often materialize for the students. Lacey is correct:

We cannot teach movies by using the techniques that succeed in other subjects, then, because movies are special types of experiences with their own forms, language, and kinds of meaning. When movies are
taught deductively or as if they were literature, the sense of interaction—of art—is lost in translation. Failure to open this aspect of the art to interested students is to deny them a full understanding of the medium. It is a central issue of film, and a way to deal with it is essential. The present study is a modest exploration of ways to bring about the interaction of which Lacey writes.

Film is an artifact; it can be controlled, studied, understood. The mysterious properties of which so many speak are inherent in film-as-process. When we deny students access to the process, we cripple their chances for fully grasping the medium. The best, most direct way to generate understanding is to bring people through some form of hands-on experience. The failure to bring people to a consciousness of the activities of the medium has contributed to the mysteriousness of the medium and to that nebulous, ill-defined concept we have called visual illiteracy. "... The film experience," writes Lacey, "can contribute to a student's sense of potency, particularly his ability to develop his own standards of judgement, to rely upon the validity of his own way of perceiving, and to become open and secure enough to accept other ways of perceiving." The film teacher's job is to bring students into contact with film-as-process because it dramatically opens their understanding. To not do so is to leave a gap in their learning.
Not only does learning about film-as-process, or better still, engaging in film-as-process, open one's understanding of visual images people have created, it is also a pleasurable learning experience. It is insufficient to read or hear lectures about the processes of making films, for crucial is what happens when students are able to work with the creation of images themselves. "If we want to know how films work, whether we are students or teachers, we must include in our experience some exposure to the processes of filmmaking." Rose is right. Actively engaging the process has qualities which need to be understood if the nature of film is to be understood. The intention is not to create a society of image-makers, but a society understanding of the nature of all images some of its members create for everyone. The issue is a matter of opening up perceptions, of helping people "tune in" to the nature of visual images, of all that they see. To demystify within the classroom the process of film would be a major step toward that heightening of visual perception which we call visual literacy. To so heighten awareness of what one sees on the movie screen will help enlighten people to grasp all implications of the visual environment. They will learn to use their eyes.

The failure to engage students in film-as-process is the failure to recognize that in film, as in most
art-making processes, there is a pleasure to be derived from the activity, and, correspondingly, that from the activity one will invariably gain insight into the nature of the involved medium. Bringing students through controlled situations in which they confront and use their materials of film directly is a useful, viable way to break down within the classroom the mystique of filmmaking, to overcome fears of its technology, to dispel suspicions of the photographic, moving image, and to deal with a number of theoretical issues their medium generates. Understanding this, and developing strategies like those presented here whereby aspects of production are carefully controlled opens new ways to study about film. The processes of the medium, placed into the students' hands, something done in film production, of course, but rarely in current film studies, can increase their visual perception as well as their knowledge and understanding of film. Effective teaching methods, designs or strategies using the apparatus of filmmaking can resolve visual illiteracy. Richard Lacey rightly notes:

We can't reduce a film experience to a few neat lessons. Audiences see movies in vastly different ways, and no package of discrete concepts or interpretations can encompass all those ways of experiencing. Although this may be true with any form of art, the student's emotional investments in an intense film experience make it especially difficult for anyone to get by with conventional approaches. If he tries, students will resist or will merely play along and fail to grow. 

"Until very recently," writes Ernest Rose,
little thought had been given to the training of
teachers in the profession. It was somehow assumed
that there would never be a shortage of retired film
producers and part-time film critics who would be only
too eager to fill any vacancies that existed in
universities.15

The teaching of film in the university is in
continual flux. Instead of a coherent system with
understood results, we have diversity without necessarily
desired results.

Obviously the numbers of visual images with which
every person in contemporary society must deal is immense
and growing. Various studies on the amount of time and
energy devoted to viewing film and video images have
pointed this fact out well, to the point where it is
common knowledge. Our children see more visual images
than did we, and they may understand them better because
they have grown up with them.

Though we recognize the fact that we are virtually
bombarded by visual images, we are not yet sure how to
treat them in the classroom. Unless we can make the
general population aware of the problems visual images
present, they will be subject to manipulation by those who
do understand, and who can use the medium to advantage.
Rose quotes Professor Robert W. Wagner:

Film literacy is not something that can be isolated
from the education of the whole man. It involves both
aesthetic and sociological perception at a depth not
yet sounded by the latter day apostles of the new
dialectic creeds.16
We need to free people to talk about films and themselves in relationship to the medium. We need to understand the medium itself, especially in terms of the student's own environment and experience. We need to understand film in order to develop deeper intuitive thinking.

Because effective systems for using film practice in teaching about film other than film production have not been well-developed, most students in the country remain visual illiterates, unable to understand the relationship between the social environment and the visual media which form a significant part of it. People are not well taught to understand what they see. If systems for the teaching about film were devised which included strategies adaptable to all levels of education, there would be eventually a significant change in the visual literacy of the country. Ideally, the quality of the images produced would increase in expressive value, socially and aesthetically. The problem is large, requiring, in the end, that not one, but several systems be devised. This exploratory study addresses how to teach about film by using film—a neglected matter.

Research

Preliminary Readings

The central question explored in this study is what new strategies beyond those traditionally used in
teaching about film are available to the film teacher. How can the established concepts of instructional gaming and simulation games provide a reasonable basis upon which to structure activities defined in this descriptive study as "film games," which bring all aspects of the medium into the classroom?

The first phase of the study was an investigation of current film studies in the United States and in Canada, since major research would involve a Canadian college. A survey was made of the literature commonly used in the classrooms in both countries to find out what subjects are commonly offered. Special attention was given works used in introductory courses where most students would not become film majors, but would remain film goers into the future. The particular works examined for the nature of their contents, their ordering of materials, and any subjects given special emphasis, are indicated in the bibliography by an asterisk.

Only a few texts placed a major emphasis upon film production as a process about which one must know in order to understand about film. On the other hand, almost every text addressed film history, using it as a convenient way to order an introductory study, and all were in varying degrees concerned with "film language," terms which one had to know in order to deal with film critically.

Most of the significant literature read about film education came from the American Film Institute, The
British Film Institute, The University Film and Video Association, and the United Nations. Some very useful studies have been published by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Preliminary bibliographical research with gaming and simulations revealed the sorts of such materials being used in classrooms, what they were designed to teach, what elements were necessary to their effective design, how such materials could be tested, and the like.

Designing Film Games

The second phase of the present study was the design of the film games. The development of the activities called film games was an organic process in which a collection of materials accumulated gradually, one activity motivating the design of the next. As the collection grew, the sophistication of the activities increased and the gaming process became more formal. The film games designed, no matter the subjects treated in them, were based in two hypotheses:

1. In order to understand the critical elements of film, students had to engage in filmmaking activities;

2. These activities had to be planned so that all participants would use cameras and would appear in front of them.

All of the film games used in this study were designed by this writer and are based, in part, on his
experience as a filmmaker and teacher. Nonetheless, analysis shows that they have certain areas in common which should be considered by all who would use film games in their teaching. These common considerations are outlined below.

I. The class which will use the film game
   A. The level of the study
      1. Introductory
      2. Advanced undergraduate
      3. Graduate
      4. Experimental
   B. Qualities of student participants
      1. Age/Sex
      2. Major field
      3. Reasons for taking the course
      4. Prior experience with filmmaking

II. The objectives of the film game
    A. Cognitive knowledge
    B. Behavioral changes

III. Materials needed for the game
    A. Locations
    B. Hardware
       1. Cameras
       2. Support Systems
       3. Editors
4. Projectors
5. Sound equipment

C. Software
   1. Film stock
   2. Batteries
   3. Editing supplies
   4. Props and costumes

IV. Budget

V. Preparation of the class
   A. Printed instructions
   B. Diagrams
   C. Oral descriptions

VI. Presentation of the class
   A. Involving all students
      1. Cast/participants
      2. Crew
   B. Records of observations
      1. Film game film as record
      2. Behavioral observations
         a. Notes
         b. Tape recordings
         c. Visual recordings
            1. Films
            2. Still photographs
            3. Videotape
VII. Post production
   A. Processing labs and processing time
   B. Editing
      1. Making the editing visible
      2. Student participation

VIII. Screening results
   A. Screening rushes
   B. Screening the edited film
   C. Sound at screenings

IX. Reviewing the film game
   A. Tests
   B. Discussion periods

The Film Games in Practice

The third phase of the research was the exploration of the designs under actual classroom conditions, and the making of accurate assessments of what happened. Since the intentions included changing the attitudes and motivations of the students who were studying about film, the writer found that the most effective way to conduct this exploratory and descriptive study was to borrow from practices of participant observation, recognizing this fundamental difference: whereas usually the observer does not structure the situation under study, here the researcher was examining his own designs under field conditions. This approach was
useful in several ways.

1. By making careful observations while participating in the film games with students, the writer could directly observe the behaviors of students engaged in the activities and interview students who were "waiting their turn." In the gaming, very often students would not wait to be addressed, but would initiate discussion about the processes of filmmaking first. This approach, then, allowed the researcher to conduct genuine social interaction with the students involved, something which did not happen as easily under more formal teaching situations.

2. By maintaining journals which were written as soon after a game as possible, usually within a few hours of the game, first-hand observations of what took place could be organized.

In addition to the notes and journals, there were other records of what took place: 1. In the games themselves, since they were all recorded on film, and; 2. In films and still photographs taken of the games in progress which were sometimes integrated into the projection of the materials to add dimension to the topics under study. Such materials were akin to the artifacts one collects in anthropological studies of a similar nature. The relationship between film and anthropology, in fact, is so strong that there is an entire branch of study
called "ethnographic film." The approach taken in this study yielded a great deal of qualitative material.

The kinds of information the writer was amassing was especially rich in revealing how students were responding to what they were doing. Helpful while gathering the information was the constant comparison of statements by one student with those of others, not only within the activities of the same film game, but in the same design played at different places and under different conditions. The various statements gathered while working with students often led to immediate modifications of the designs under observation and sometimes to entirely new film games.

In addition to the observations made in the process of administering the various film games, the writer relied also upon interviews, usually informal and, unfortunately, not often recorded on tape. The interviewees were always students, some of whom were also teachers, in the gaming activities.

After the interviews conducted during the gaming, the writer studied comments from the participants made during the screening of the materials filmed. These commentaries took two forms: 1. observations of students responding to the images they were seeing on the screen; 2. responses to questions about what students were seeing.
Students were also required to write, at times, about the games they had done. Some of the writings were in response to questions on their examinations, but most were not solicited in an examination context. A number of these written comments are included in the appendix of this paper.

The information gathered proved adequate for what the writer wanted to find out about student responses to the film games they did. The observations provided a reasonable sampling of the reactions to the gaming activities both within the gaming context and in the classroom. The writer often found repeated observations. Men, for example, responded much more eagerly to the gaming than did women; older students of both sexes were more timid with the technology than students of college age.

The study covered twelve film games in a variety of situations over a relatively long period of time. The diversity in which the observations took place produced a rather full idea of the workability of the problems in the film games. The observations, however, were only adequate to a study which is a first step into the study. The study is a descriptive study which is also an exploratory study of gaming in film.
Terms Used in the Study

1.

An extended definition of "film" is not essential to this study. On the other hand, some elaboration on the medium is useful here insofar as there has been considerable debate among scholars and educators as to film's basic nature and meaning, sufficiently so that though we may agree upon the physical properties of the medium, we may widely disagree on more crucial matters. Parker Tyler, who bases his concepts of film in archetypal criticism, in myth and ritual, pinpoints the crux of the matter, which is that film is the most significant art form in operation today, a form which consistently mirrors humanity as no other form of our time can. Tyler writes:

My object ... is to hail the movies as the probable savior of the classic human image in our age—certainly as an aesthetic force which has specifically "prolonged" the life of that image. What academic painting has shown as overrefined and static, the movies began to present as crude if refinable nature and as notably fluid. No art medium can convey so immediate a sensation of time in its changes, its whims and provocative shifts, as the movies. And yet, because basically photography remains a mirror (something it is very hard for it not to remain), the world of man, with man as the chief actor, is incontestably the abiding subject of this sensationally mirrored flux. To exclude man and nature as organic surfaces, as the actual contexture of the social world, would be, for the movies, simply to give movement not to life as such, but to the cannon which non-objective art has bestowed on life; to the non-mirroring wall decor of extreme abstraction ... where man is not his own spectacle and where the only 'recognizable' elements are atmosphere and geometric form.
Film, so understood, is a most accurate reflection of the culture from which it developed, technologically, aesthetically, psychologically, sociologically, politically, and economically. It is a complex structure only partially understood even by the professional.

2.

"Visual literacy," a term popular with educators in the late sixties and early seventies, has never been well-defined despite its promise as a concept. Because of this, this writer has avoided its use as much as possible, even though the study aims at ideas inherent in the term. Perhaps the term is best understood as an exclamation, a signal of alarm expressed by people who recognized that not only did much of the adult population lack a basic and essential understanding of the visual images to which they were daily subjected, but also that little had been done to overcome this deficiency in young people who, it was apparent, would see even more in their lifetimes. Peter Rollins, in an unpublished syllabus, rightly states:

The visually literate students of the future will have a grasp of the contemporary scene: they will be able to filter and evaluate messages aimed at them by self-interested corporations, politicians, television networks. Visual literacy will also involve an historical perspective: students will become conscious of how illiterate generations were incited into action or lulled into passivity by persuasive fiction and non-fiction films. Finally, visually literate students will gain a perspective within the humanities of the different
potentials of the verbal and visual forms. Teachers who have led students into this area of awareness can cite numerous cases in which students have testified that visual literacy has forced them to reject the interior offerings of the familiar form, and to appreciate the special gifts of the word.18

Students, even before they reach university, must certainly learn to recognize what is fact and what is not in both film and television. Frighteningly enough, those who cannot are open prey for persons who seek power, control over others. Charles Eidsvik modifies visual literacy into "cineliteracy." His Cineliterate is

the viewer who is prepared for and skilled at handling a film's 'terms' (who) can become fully engaged in the imaginative experience it invites; only a viewer with appropriate expectations can, on leaving the theatre, articulate his experience in terms appropriate to the film's. Inappropriate expectations can dilute or destroy imaginative involvement; inappropriate categories and terms make for skewed and distorted judgements and criticism.19

Students must learn to deal with essential critical structures and to develop the vocabulary needed to analyze their own experience with film. Film quite easily fools the viewer with visual trickery, a necessary common practice in much production. Students must develop a taste for what is good in film and television. They need also to appreciate and accept forms other than the narrative, and to understand that there is more to the medium than entertainment. Students must learn to appreciate higher values, at least to see the differences
between art and popular culture, and thereupon to make productive and worthwhile use of their time and the times of others. One intention of this study is to help create "visual literates."

3.

"Play," to use Huizinga's definition, is free activity removed from everyday living, yet in which the player is deeply involved. Play does not, however, involve material interests or profit. It is activity limited by time and space, and which proceeds according to set rules and in an orderly fashion. Already it starts to sound like filmmaking. Play is fun.

Play is expressive, containing many aesthetic elements. "Poetry," Huizinga tells us, "is born of play: the sacred play of worship, the fictive play of courtship, the martial play of the contest, the disputatious play of braggadocio, mockery, and invective, the nimble play of wit and readiness." Film is born of play. Like poetry, film includes fantasy, pretending, debate, wit; it maintains rules and conventions, contributes to the development of skills, and demands creativity. "Creativity is a discipline," Donald Pasquella writes, "but it is also playfulness."

Making a film is a form of play, and because it is a form of play, it has pleasurable qualities which make it
useful as a tool in teaching about the medium. Understanding that film is a form of play, and that play performs cultural and aesthetic functions is crucial to understanding the types of activities which are explored in this study. Robert A. Lacey put it well: "The purpose of film study ... is to play games in which, as Finny said about Blitzball, 'everybody wins.'"23

4.

"Games" involve concepts of play. Games, generally considered, are activities designed with rules and goals. A simulation game is designed to represent another situation. An instructional game is designed to teach about a subject or a skill, but it is not necessarily a simulation of some other situation or activity. Film games, the kinds of activities described in this study, are a special form of instructional game, but are not necessarily simulations, though they may be.

A simulation is a working model of an object or a situation. A class can observe the shooting of a scene in which there is no film in the camera; it sees a simulation. If the class is broken down into cast and crew members and given a sample script to film, it undergoes a simulation game of filmmaking practices, making the decisions about camera angle, lens selection, and so on, which will lead to a finished work. When the
sample script is an original, complete idea, the simulation game produces a work, not a simulation of a work. In a simulation game, decision-making is a necessary aspect; decisions close to real-life situations are rewarded. In such games, the rules demand that the players do things that people in the real situation do.

5.

The most important term used in this study is "film game." A "film game" is an activity which uses the mechanisms and physical properties of the medium as a means of studying about it. The concept involves play, gaming and simulations, though not all film games simulate real-life film production, and most do not demand decision-making, at least not in the normal sense of the term. Film games are a specialized form of instructional game, combining some of the elements of formal gaming and the free activity of play.

The concept of winning is not important in a film game. All participants invariably gain some new insights into the medium. If there is a reward involved, it comes most often upon seeing one's image on the screen and recognizing how one fits into film.

Decision-making is sometimes a crucial element in a film game, as when a player must select a camera placement, a lens, a filter, or a film stock. The choice
made will affect the quality of the image on film. But such decisions are aesthetic matters which are neither right nor wrong, assuming materials are being correctly used. Some games, as when students hold a camera at arm's length and film their own faces, involve no decision-making at all.

Film games share certain common properties. All require players to use the mechanical devices of filmmaking: cameras, lenses, lights, filters, tripods, editors, splicers, projectors, and related gear. There is no avoidance of the technology. All film games are designed to be completed within specific time-space limitations. All are designed so that the players must perform identical tasks, making the experience common to all participants, and providing filmed materials which can be later compared in discussion. All result in products which can be projected.

6.

It proved convenient in the study to separate the activities which go into making a film from that of viewing it. "Film-as-process" refers, on the most basic level, to all activities which go into the making of a film: writing, directing, acting, composing, camera operations, sound recording, editing, special effects, and laboratory work. Film-as-process as a concept interesting
in itself, apart from the creation of a product for consumption by others. In terms of this concept, the making of a film is a pleasurable activity as important to understanding the medium as any product created as the result of one's engagement in it. Further, understanding film-as-process means understanding that to understand about film one must in some tangible way make films, a consideration currently neglected in much of film studies.

Restrictions of the Study

1.
The present study includes all levels of university education, from basic introductory Freshman-Sophomore courses of film appreciation to the upper divisions of graduate study. Some emphasis is placed upon the undergraduate curriculum because this writer found it is there that most work is needed. Undergraduates will eventually study film as a regular part of their liberal arts education, no matter what their major field. Though there are now literally thousands of film appreciation courses taught in the country, few of their teachers have opportunity to bring the process of film to their students. Part of the reasons center on costs of filmmaking on all levels. Consequently, the students can only be observers of a phenomenon rather than participants in it. This study presents an approach to
the problem which can fill what the author believes to be a serious gap in film education.

The classes used in the research were offered at Ohio University, where as many as 220 students per quarter may enroll in the first level courses, and Algoma University College in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, where most students taking the film courses are public school teachers working in diverse areas and on all grade levels. Enrollment at Algoma seldom exceeded thirty-five students. Several graduate level courses at Ohio University were included in the study. Most graduate students were film majors working on M.F.A. degrees. Some were from related areas such as English and Comparative Arts.

2.

The teaching of film production for the most part has been excluded from this study. Obviously the teaching of production is a studio matter which necessitates the making of films. These student works are not, however, simulations of commercial practices, but viable, independent works of art, complete in themselves despite their brevity. In most production schools students write and produce their own scripts, hoping their films will win them some recognition or, eventually, jobs within the industry.

Teachers of film production do use exercises similar to the film games in this study. It is
traditional, for example, to have students edit a
double-system sound film at some point early in their
schooling because to be able to do so, especially with
footage shot by other people, is expected in the industry.
Often students are asked to make short films in which they
define such matters as shots, camera angles,
point-of-view, scenes, and sequences. However, unlike the
group situations of the designs presented here, in such
assignments students work alone, only when necessary
enlisting the help of others. Further, though a teacher
may direct or produce a short film as a simulation of the
process, more often the teacher is not on hand when
filmmaking assignments are being shot and edited.

3.

For teachers of non-production courses to put the
materials presented here to work for them, they must
develop more than a reading knowledge of filmmaking
techniques and practices. One cannot, at this time in the
study of film, assume these teachers know how to use
basic, manually operated cameras, camera support systems,
elementary lighting, editors, splicers, projectors, and
tape recorders, as well as how to write simple scripts.
Though much basic equipment is automatically controlled,
teachers should be able to work without such refinements
because certain elements in the designs necessitate manual
operations. One cannot, for example, teach the values of exposure control with an automatic metering system built into the camera. A teacher who presents film studies without a basic knowledge is a misplaced person.

Teachers can easily learn essentials of filmmaking. Most graduate schools granting degrees in cinema studies provide their students with at least a brief filmmaking seminar or workshop. Further, there are countless workshops offered across the country each summer which are designed specifically for teachers of film. The students who take these courses are not expected to engage heavily, if at all, in the commercial industry, but they must learn what the basic practical problems are in making a film, not by reading about them, but by hands-on experience. Without such experience, teachers would not be able to use the materials described here.

An important part of the film games given here is that students see themselves on film. The experience of seeing their own images on film greatly increased their interest in the materials under study. Students usually do not have the opportunity to be in front of cameras. They are only observers of the activities of others, of the images of other people created by other people. The significance of the image created on film starts to become
clear when students understand that they, too, can be the subject of film.
ENDNOTES


2Herbert Read, Education Through Art (London: Faber and Faber, 1943), p. 263.


4Rose, p. 110.


7This writer has frequently been guest lecturer in classrooms on all levels of education in which the teacher incorporates film production into the general study of art. Canadian artist Ashleigh Moorhouse long taught the only film course in the Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario schools, an extension of his painting. He is typical of teaching artists I have met who do this.

8Granade, Jr., p. 223.

9Note: As a filmmaker, I can respond to this in personal fashion. Often, after I have worked hard on a project I thought I thoroughly understood, on presenting it to others, I find them responding to my images in directions of which I had not thought. I begin to think that despite my own plans, there is an additional factor not in my control. Some tell me this struggle for control is the crux of the filmmaking process. I relate it to the concept of chance so interestingly utilized by the surrealists of the nineteen-twenties.


12 Lacey, p. 3.

13 Rose, p. 6.

14 Lacey, p. 11.

15 Rose, p. 96.

16 Rose, p. 110.


21 Huizinga, p. 19.


Teaching film production necessitates much practical work. The making of films in the university program is a simulation of professional practices even though that simulation results in a "real" product which has potential commercial value. Students in filmmaking programs are required to make films because it is the most effective way to learn the mechanisms and processes used in the industry whether one eventually works entirely alone and independently, with others in a collective effort, or collaboratively, as in current feature filmmaking. But though much of the work in the production courses is the actual practice of making films, a percentage of the work is a form of film game. For this reason, a survey of the teaching of film production can be rewarding in this study.

Currently on the university level, film subjects are divided into several major categories or areas of concentration: 1. film production, 2. film appreciation, 3. history, 4. criticism, 5. theory and 6. aesthetics. Each of these areas, of course, depending upon the level
of study at which they are offered, is subdivided into smaller units, some highly specialized. The two primary areas of study, those which command a large or stable enrollment, are film production and film appreciation. As universities have moved back to a general liberal arts background for all students, film appreciation courses have increasingly been included in the options available. From the economic viewpoint, film production is relatively expensive, while the appreciation courses, often using no more equipment than a 16mm film projector, generate greater monies. Film appreciation courses have become, therefore, the economic base for entire film departments. On the other hand, production courses can rely upon a small but very stable enrollment.

Film production is taught on several levels in the universities of the United States and Canada. Commonly in Canada, production programs are restricted to the colleges of applied arts and technology, although several major universities are now offering courses in the subject. Of these latter institutions, Simon Fraser in British Columbia offers the most courses, but Queens University in Kingston, Ontario, offers a reasonable program as does York, in Toronto, Concordia in Montreal, and the University of Windsor in Windsor, Ontario. In the United States, film production is taught on all undergraduate levels, and on the graduate level primarily in Master of
Fine Arts programs which offer a two or three year curriculum. Despite the range at which production is offered, the materials in the courses offered on various levels are not much different, especially in the basic technology.

Undergraduates studying film production usually begin with courses using super-8mm rather than the professional gauge of 16mm. The reason is economic. The smaller gauge, unfortunately, does not offer the same technical skills as 16mm, because its technology is highly automated. However, because the costs of super-8mm are relatively low, students can usually afford to work with it while deciding whether or not they are going to make a more extensive commitment to the medium. Some of the work done with super-8mm is quite sophisticated, involving all of the standard processes which one must know in order to work with the medium professionally, including double-system sound recording and editing. This is not, however, what is often done. Most films made in super-8mm are never printed. If they are prepared for public display, they are frequently transferred to videotape.

Bill Taylor, first M.F.A. candidate at Ohio University to present a thesis shot on super-8 on the local TV cable, told this writer he believed the super-8-to-video transfer to be the only effective system for release of small gauge images. The general feeling among the students this
writer teaches is that video technology will unquestionably replace all film. How this would affect the teaching of these media is not clear.

Most of the teaching of film production is done using 16mm film and equipment. Though at the moment it is an expensive process, it is still far less expensive than the 35mm processes of the feature film industry, and it is widely used throughout most universities and other educational institutions. Most educational films, for example, are made and released on 16mm film, and a high percentage of documentaries as well. The gauge is an accepted standard for TV newsfilm and related materials. The image quality and production hardware are of a high order. Students can achieve professional standards with it, and they can reproduce their films for release purposes.

Usually in film production courses, students work independently on scripts of their own design. As in studio courses in any art, they use their instructors as critics of their work as it progresses toward a finished product. The results of their labors are complete works, most of the time. Only a few see their course films as practice films or simulations of work done elsewhere on another level. The films students make in their production courses are often highly prized works, sometimes achieving success on an international level, at
festivals held annually throughout the world. Seldom, however, do these works have much, if any, commercial value. That will come later, after graduation.

A second common practice in film production courses is to make films as group projects. Students are given specific assignments which, they change daily, and are expected to perform assigned duties as though they are working in the field. The instructor in such situations acts as director or, more often, as producer, overseeing the entire operation. In some schools, production crews are formed in film courses to work cooperatively with students in acting courses, thus sharing common goals across the curriculum. Such approaches are unquestionably simulations of commercial practices, and the films which result are seldom carried to printing stages.

"Lucy in Disguise," a sixty-minute documentary on the meaning of the ancient humanoid bones recently found in Ethiopia by Donald C. Johanson, began as a student film by David Smeltzer. His brother William and sister Anne soon came to Ohio University to help him. The project, funded for over $80,000 by the National Endowment for the Humanities, eventually involved most production students at the University. The completed film recently aired on PBS in a cut version. Such success, for students, is rare, and treasured.
In some of the larger schools, especially those on the West Coast of the United States, but not limited to the one region, there is sufficient interest in the narrative feature industry to warrant courses and programs which are highly specialized. One finds at these schools enough coursework in lighting, cinematography, directing, set design, producing, screenwriting, animation, special effects and the like to enable students to achieve expertise in a single aspect of the commercial industry. Most other schools, by contrast, even on the graduate level, offer generalized production courses on two or three levels of sophistication. It is assumed that students in such courses will become more specialized after graduation, when they enter the industry and find their place within it.

Many film studies departments developed out of film production as academic interest in film increased. This interest came after the rise of film during the 1960's, brought about by the influx of high-quality films from other countries and the underground film movement which developed in New York and San Francisco. Within the University, the development of studies in film was an evolutionary process which began with the introduction of film appreciation courses and which grew annually through the 1970's at an increasing rate which has not, at this time, ceased. New courses are added annually despite the
general troubles of higher education economically across the continent. Eventually it became viable for a university to maintain degree programs apart from film production and not necessarily taught by those who were already teaching the technology. The majority of those teaching about film did not come from production, but from English departments. Consequently, the teaching of film has been heavily patterned on the teaching of English. Though this is a natural and somewhat necessary development, it has not created the most effective system for studying about film.

Film appreciation courses, the mainstay of most film departments, are taught today at most universities and a large number of smaller colleges across North America. Canada does offer much film study in university, but film as a separate discipline has not been as well-received because the educational system is based on relatively conservative concepts of university and higher education. Thus, in Canada, film is most often found in colleges of arts and technology rather than in university. Professor Richard Hancox has been teaching at Sheridan College in Oakville, Ontario, since graduating from Ohio University. The technology at his disposal is as good as that found at many graduate departments. His students have no more difficulty finding work than do students with M.F.A. degrees, except in teaching. At this
point in time, most university students have film appreciation courses available to them.

The film appreciation courses serve two functions: first, to provide all students enrolled with a critical understanding of the medium, and, two, to prepare students for further studies into film. Teachers try to present all aspects of the medium, from basic structure to production, from essential terminology to theoretical and aesthetic concepts. These courses are usually offered on the Freshman-sophomore levels by junior faculty, teaching assistants, or both. Classes tend to be heavily enrolled, numbers guided by seats in an auditorium, students numbering into the hundreds. Of these, perhaps fifty will pursue further study of film; fewer still will learn to make films. The students come from the liberal arts, communication colleges, or the fine arts. Most have yet to declare a major field.

The introductory courses try to cover every aspect of film though individual teachers will, of course, have their own system of presentation and their favorite aspects to stress. Most will begin with a defense of film as an art form since, despite the general acceptance of film in our society, the medium has come out of lowbrow aspects of art and is still viewed by many of the learned as an upstart and questionable subject for study. Often a course will begin with an analysis of art itself. Art is
usually presented as an intellectual activity which leads to modes of expression. Levels of value are discussed in terms of the performance arts, representational arts, and the recording arts. Film is then related to various accepted or traditional art forms such as literature, theatre, photography, music and painting. Having established that film operates within terms of the arts, the teachers turn to film, most often to film as a technological art, perhaps a new concept.

General observations relate art to technology, stressing the relationship of film to technological matters. From the general considerations, the teachers will treat technological aspects of film production or, at least, survey the processes of making a film: the mechanics of the camera, the methods of sound recording, the use of optical effects and the lab, film editing, and such matters as screen size, screen shape, and systems of projecting. The technological materials of film production are seldom treated in any depth, but as the necessary business from which materials for meditation and analysis are generated. Vlada Petric, Luce Professor of Film at Harvard University, writes: "Significantly, the adversaries of the theoretical/practical integration of cinema studies are mainly teachers who have been trained in other disciplines—English, literature, painting, theater, social studies and history." The correspondences
between the technology and the results are not especially well understood, and the importance of the processes is overlooked.

Once the essential technology has been surveyed, most introductory courses concentrate upon the development of a critical vocabulary for viewing films. Because current scholarship concentrates upon parallels between film structure and language systems, it is rare that an instructor does not present such considerations in his classroom. Students are introduced to such matters as the functions of signs in film, the grammar and syntax of visual images, the codification of images, and the like. In many courses, a single narrative feature film will be carefully dissected, image by image, frame by frame, shot by shot, scene by scene, until, unfortunately, many students, overwhelmed by the process, feel a loss of the enjoyment they once had for film. "I don't go to movies anymore," one student in an introductory course told this writer as she turned in an exam. "I don't understand them like I used to."

Students relate, on the other hand, easily to historical considerations of the medium because such studies are most familiar to them. Thus many teachers will base their introductory courses upon the development of film historically, emphasizing significant shifts in the aesthetics of film. But though the stress is placed
upon technological developments and aesthetics, film is also related to matters of politics, economics, sociology and psychology. The importance of film to modern history is clarified.

Film appreciation courses concentrate upon the narrative feature film, which may not always be the best way to treat the medium since it perpetuates the idea that money and quantity are crucial matters for critically "good" works. Most introductions to film, though, will include some consideration of the documentary and experimental film, though this will often be cursory. Some first courses in film totally ignore all filmmaking except the narrative. This is a problem in current teaching.

Introductory film courses will usually survey major critical studies, and will include at least a survey of film theory as a subject that has developed markedly over the past decade. Most often, a teacher will make a comparative study of Sergei Eisenstein and Andre Bazin as representing two very basic and important schools of thought about the nature of film. Theoretical matters, though, are generally left for advanced students. All the teacher in an introductory course can hope to do is inspire some of the participants to further study later, and for the many others, to open them to the idea that there is a body of work known as film theory which is
devoted to study of the nature of the images which they see.

Film history has long been offered in the university system, often as a survey course designed to introduce the subject to undergraduates. As the numbers of courses offered increased, introductory courses replaced this function. Nonetheless, the history of film continues as an important study through which one can grasp the significance of the medium as it relates to society generally. Recent theoretical studies indicate renewed scholarly interest in historical matters and upper-level history courses continue to be among the most popular.

Most film history courses trace the development of the moving image from concepts which far predate the medium itself to the present day. It is not unusual for a teacher to note that images drawn by cave people relate to animation, that Egyptian hieroglyphics can be understood as crude film, that stained-glass windows in cathedrals told stories visually. Most courses will consider film the application of science and technology to concepts which go far back in time. Once this has been understood, students usually follow the development of film over the years, using changes in the technology as the most convenient structure from which to see the overall pattern.
Film history courses will usually be the ones in which films are related to other aspects of a society, the medium serving as mirror for the people who partake of it. Thus it is considered important to understand film as the product of the interaction of economics, political ideas and realities, sociology, psychology, in addition to technology and aesthetics.

Film has not yet developed a great body of critical literature apart from popular criticism, and thus relies heavily on critical writings from other areas, primarily from literature, where many teachers of film studies have a strong background. Seldom, by contrast, is attention given to art criticism, for it has not been considered a sufficient base from which to develop a critical understanding of film, the medium seen as narrative. Further, film criticism is not often taught as a subject independent from film theory, and when it is, it is as a historical development, starting often in literary criticism from the nineteenth century.

Film criticism courses deal primarily with popular writings and concentrate heavily on developing in students their ability to evaluate the films they see. Most of the readings are of essays, often collected into book form, by critics who have reached prominence over the years as writers for popular periodicals and newspapers. The readings serve as models for the students.
The study of film criticism is important because it forces students to define their personal critical positions in writing. Writing skills are strongly reinforced by the process, not only for the student who is specializing in film studies, but for students whose interest is less intense. The issue of student writing is crucial today and any area in which the skill is promoted should be favored.

Film theory and film aesthetics are usually taught as a single subject. Theoretical studies are the mainstay of film studies apart from film production. The nature of the medium has not been well understood though much has been determined through studies primarily accomplished during the past decade. The studies almost always require a basic vocabulary as well as an intense interest in the medium. Theoretical concepts are, therefore, reserved for the upper levels of education, are most demanding of the intellectual capacities of students.

The first course in film theory is often a survey of theoretical studies from the turn of the century to the present. Generally, the concerns are the same as those which have pervaded the study of art for centuries. How does the film relate to reality? What is the role of the filmmaker in the creation of the work, especially in the creation of the work through collaborative efforts? What is the effect of the film upon its audience? What are the
ways in which to describe the phenomenon of film? Each of these basic considerations are given intensive treatment in subsequent studies.

The concern for film and reality usually centers on whether the work is merely a way to copy reality, or instead a system for organizing the chaos of reality into a form we can contemplate. Courses which deal with such matters work with questions concerning the mechanical reproduction of images, the inclusion of non-visual elements such as sound into film, and the recording of reality, or documentation, as opposed to the staging of parallel realities which may surpass our normal perceptions, in narrative film.

A second group of theory courses study the problem of the film artist, generally accepted as the film director or auteur. The question in such courses concern the fact that since the film is, by nature, a collaborative effort requiring many skills and arts, is there a single artist whose vision is represented by the film? If the director is the artist of film, how can we investigate and identify his or her personality or statements?

The third major grouping of theoretical studies concern the description of the phenomenon. Generally methods of critical analysis are applied to film, especially the most recent developments in the study of
languages and language structures. These studies have led to a number of cross-disciplinary studies which use the structural analysis of anthropology and linguistics as the base for understanding film.

The fourth area of study, one which has been frequently studied, is the relationship of the film to the audience. Courses in this area of film theory center upon the study of audience psychology, and related matters of sociology. The questions concern the effect of film upon the people who go to see them, and the factors which lead the filmmakers to produce works of a given nature. Included in this aspect of film study is the development in the past few years of a body of feminist literature which has made highly perceptive insights into film.

In most disciplines within the university system, we expect the teaching scholars to have a considerable background in the subjects they profess. English teachers, we believe, have made a careful, intense study of literature by attending universities themselves. Likewise, we think, for all disciplines taught. But when a new discipline is offered, the traditional academic background does not yet exist. The introduction of a subject into the academic world often precedes its development with the curriculum. In the arts, in the case of film studies, we are able to witness the process of development clearly thereby to grasp the problems which
confront institutions of higher education in their curriculum development. Though this paper does not present a complete history of film as a new university discipline, it offers a basic knowledge of the process film has undergone as a way to help clarify the difficulties of the film teacher, and to prepare the reader for the solutions proposed here as partial resolutions to the problems of teaching about film.

Film studies in the university system grew out of the personal interests of individuals already working in the educational system. Though film had been taught at isolated schools, especially (like USC, UCLA and Stanford) those on the West Coast near the feature film industry, some fifty years before the proliferation of independent filmmaking in the Sixties which opened the medium to many people, most teachers of film studies had little or no formal instruction in the medium. An American Film Institute study in 1976 showed that most film teachers had professional production experience, but not, necessarily, academic knowledge of film. An almost equal number had experience in television. These teachers are the pioneers. Film production departments grew out of in-house units making films for other academic areas, and for athletic programs, and interested people with much production experience, but not necessarily much teaching experience. The first generation of film teachers
understood the need to investigate film within the university system as a step toward visual literacy.

The major task of this first, pioneering generation of film teachers was to put departments together which could concentrate in the study of film. It was not an easy task, for it was not a concerted effort, but an evolutionary process, and it resulted in studies on many levels, housed in many areas of the university. The API study found film offered in ninety-one different departments across the country, with a marked orientation toward art, theatre, and English. Initially many departments combined film production with film studies, and a majority of students expected to go into the industry. In addition to film production, these people were offered film history, criticism, and theory, mostly as generalized studies deemed essential to understanding the medium, even for studio-oriented students. Specialized areas of film studies had not yet developed.

Theoretical studies, new in the curriculum, intrigued many students. As interest in the academic study of film increased, courses proliferated, not in production so much, for the technology has remained relatively stable over the years, but in theory and aesthetics. Gradually it was clear to the pioneers that departments of cinema studies apart from production were viable, especially on the graduate level, and the students
who enrolled in them, upon graduation, became a second generation of film teachers. As they have moved into the academic work force, they have been changing the study of film.

The younger generation of film scholars, unlike the pioneers, hold graduate degrees in film. They are specialists in a small, specific area of concentration. The nature of their scholarly concerns differs significantly from those who taught them, with the unfortunate result that a continuing quarrel has developed between the newer film scholars and their teachers. The debate, upon analysis, makes little sense. Perhaps it is best equated to the relationships of parents to children who, having gained all they can from their elders, find them lacking.

There certainly seems to be an abundance of self-serving, uncommitted, narrow-minded, insecure, unhappy, and even disinterested and ignorant people in film education. However, there do exist dedicated, selfless educators who are wonderful examples of what we all should be. Unfortunately, most of them are unknown and their work is neither recognized nor rewarded.

So finds J. Tammy.

Central in the current quarrel is the study of film theory, for it has changed greatly within the past ten years. The older generation of teachers did not neglect the subject, but laid the groundwork for the studies which would follow. Their work tended to stress matters of content over matters of structure, though even here it is
a gross oversimplification to state so. A basic issue to undertake was to define film in terms of its specifics, and much work was done by people such as Rudolf Arnheim and George Amberg, the latter responsible for the creation of New York University's Cinema Studies Department. Coincident with the specifics of film was often the need to defend film as an art form. To the newer people the groundwork has been so well-stated that such a defense seems unnecessary to them. The pioneers were deeply interested in the relationship of the images of film to that which we call "reality." These people founded a theory of authorship which enabled scholars and critics to systematically sort out values among the thousands of films which had been made. And they found in the development of film a significant correspondence to the development of twentieth century society.

Any of the younger group of teachers, the groundwork for study having been prepared for them, moved away from the content orientation of their predecessor into intense study of the structures of the medium, placing as strict attention as possible on the nature of the viewing experience itself. These teachers have placed emphasis upon the narrative film and look with scorn upon the documentary and experimental forms of the medium. The structures of film are studied using the ideas of Claude Levi-Strauss as one base and the semiological studies from
Europe as another. From their structural analysis they have developed a basis for the relationships of film to larger patterns of linguistic, sociological and psychological behavior. They have become sufficiently interested in the political nature of art, including film, to develop a strong Marxist approach to film, and to develop a rather reputable body of feminist criticism in the process. Recently they have turned to the study of film history, and even more recently, to study of the processes of making films.

The newer generation of film scholars have yet to deal significantly with the teaching of film. Most of the articles appearing in film journals have been written by the older group. Agreement about what should be taught about film has to a large degree been based upon what has been done with the other arts and related disciplines. Likewise, the methods by which film is taught have been based primarily upon models drawn from other disciplines, often enough those lacking in the kinds of problems the film teacher faces. The most significant work has been done by educators in other fields, with a few studies done through the United Nations, or abroad, especially through the British Film Institute. Most of the educators writing about the teaching of film do not have the knowledge of film as an art form which the film teachers have. Their work has been valuable, but it is still not enough.
Teaching about film demands the screening of feature-length films. Obvious as this may be, it is not as easy as having students purchase a book. Films are generally too expensive to be owned by a department, even though most which teach film maintain one or two prints. The usual way to provide the diversity of study materials necessary to film studies courses is to rent prints from commercial distributors. Rentals, however, are usually restricted in use to a single screening, and even when used more than once, they nonetheless are available only for a limited time. The constant need to have films in the classroom is a major problem for the film instructor. The pooling of resources with a region provides one viable solution to the problem.

Film rentals are not cheap. The cost of a one-time rental can easily exceed one-hundred dollars depending upon the age of the film, its general significance in film history, and the demands put upon it. Few departments can afford regular screenings of feature films. The film instructor, therefore, must find a way to solve this problem if he is to have materials for his students. At some institutions, students pay a "screening fee" in courses showing many films. This, however, is not especially satisfactory since it increases costs for students at a time when educational expenses are high, and also because most distributors use formulas for rentals
which are based upon whether or not the film is to be shown free, or whether an admission charge is levied. If no reasons for a course fee other than film rentals can be found, a department may find its screening costs increased.

A more satisfactory system for overcoming the costs of film rentals is to find a theatre or film society which will cooperate with a teacher by importing films which will not only service a class, but also bring in a paying audience. This approach to the problem works in many places and reduces pressures on the departmental budget considerably. The teacher guarantees the showmen an audience, oftentimes enough to cover rental costs. The department need not be directly involved with film rentals at all.

Videotape may eventually prove the solution to the problem of materials in the classroom, but current image size and inferior image quality are not the same experience as the work projected onto a large screen. Nonetheless, videotape allows a teacher to fully control the screened event, to alter speed and direction at will, or to hold on a single frame. It is also easily made available to students who must make a close study of what they see. Most schools already have videotape machinery and the quality of the materials will improve significantly in the near future. The problem of possessing, of
"holding" the work will be to a large degree resolved. However, crucial matters of copyright and ownership must also be resolved. That may not be easy.

Screening feature-length films creates a problem with class time since most classes are shorter than the ninety-minutes of such films. Further, when students are required to attend many outside screenings, they may find the course taking up too much of their time. Yet to screen feature-length films during class time is prohibitive. The use of short films does not solve the problem since there are few short films sufficiently structured like feature-length films to be useful parallels in the classroom. The best short films, valuable works in themselves, are not usually narratives. Only a few are considered satisfactory alternatives to the feature-length narrative experience. Length is in itself a function in film aesthetics. The ninety-minute length of the narrative feature film have developed, it is well-argued, for several reasons, psychological as well as physical.

The emphasis upon the narrative feature film itself creates problems in teaching about film. Most features are, of course, narratives. But when the feature-length film is stressed in the classroom, the course invariably centers not on matters of film, but on matters of narrative. The argument that the majority of creative filmmaking is narratives of feature length, and therefore
most worthy of study, is highly questionable. It tells us that other forms are not of equivalent value, ignoring the aesthetic strength of documentary and experimental films alike. To concentrate in film studies upon the narrative film is somewhat like basing the study of literature upon the popular novel because its numbers outweigh all other kinds of aesthetic works in print.

Film is elusive; it cannot be held in the hand; it cannot often be possessed. This creates significant problems in the classroom. Videotapes or discs may be the solution to this problem. Still, teachers cannot give the work to their students to be studied at leisure, away from the classroom. The work exists only for the time it is on the screen. All film studies must somehow deal with images which have ceased to exist. Each time a film is screened, the experience is conditioned by the audience, the place at which it is shown, the qualities of the print, the qualities of the projection, and the like. Though the physical images on celluloid are the same, the experience is never duplicated. Students have to understand that the film they see at one time is not the same that they see at another. "ET" in 35mm format without Dolby II sound is different from "ET" in 70mm format with the best screening facilities available. Over the years, teachers have developed solutions to the problem; all of them work to some degree, none entirely
The usual method in teaching about film is to first screen a feature and, shortly thereafter, to show clips of it to a class, stopping the projector when making a specific point about the work. This is a serviceable method for the analysis of film structure, though it is not, of course, a practice which the student can engage in alone, away from the classroom. Similarly, to use still photographs or slides taken from a film is useful for presentations in the classroom, but not outside it. To reduce films to a series of stills often helps in a structural analysis, but it does not confront the ideas expressed within the work. In what is often a tedious process, students learn to examine every detail in a frame, but not necessarily the ideas the work contains.

Students are most secure when they are learning about how something is accomplished, when they can place hands upon the machinery. To deal with the concepts involved in a film, the ideas expressed in a series of shadows is far more difficult. Students, especially those on the basic levels of university, are more willing to confront the technology than they are willing to consider philosophical questions. The structural analysis of film appeals to them, but as it is currently practiced, it fails to bring the technological experience to them sufficiently. Until they understand the basic mechanics
of film, and partake of its processes, they will not respond well to the expression that technology offers them.

For every student to make a film is probably the best solution, but that is unviable outside the Film Production classroom. The film gaming strategies described later in this study offer a more reasonable alternative solution to the problem. When they are carefully and intelligently designed by the teachers who use them, they bring students into an intimate contact with film-as-process which increases their willingness to learn about the medium, in all of its aspects.
ENDNOTES


2Mercer, p. 11.

3Mercer, p. 3.


CHAPTER III

FILM GAMES: PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

The first step in planning a film game is a careful study of the nature of the class in which it would be used. Each class of the same course will respond to film games in a different way. This had to be understood and acknowledged before attempting any game. Film games were most effective when they were designed for the particular participants in it. The self-image on film game could be an excellent way to begin an introductory course for example, but a course in which the students already were conversant in film would not give them much from the experience other than a fleeting pleasure. One must measure the students before considering the designs which would work for them.

A brief poll at the beginning of any course gave a reasonable profile of the students. There were the general and obvious considerations such as age, major field (if any), reason for taking the particular course, prior experience with filmmaking instruments, and the like. Students who had never handled cameras before, and they formed a surprisingly large group of people, needed some very basic instruction before I confronted them with a game.
If students had never handled cameras before, a few very basic games were useful in overcoming any fears of the technology. The camera can be an intimidating instrument. It was useful to design games in which the camera was fixed to a tripod or similar support to help alleviate student fears of somehow breaking what they often considered precious.

A special consideration was made of the importance in the design for the students to be able to see themselves on film—the one common ground which led students to respond most favorably to whatever gaming process they engaged in. If they were in the film, the project took on an unusual meaning for them. Because they felt directly involved in the process, their cooperation was always very high, even among those who did not believe they gained from the process, or who did not understand it. This attitude was sufficiently strong to lead one to feel that being behind the camera was not enough in a film game. Being behind the camera was to become a voyeur to a certain degree, to at best simulate the filmmaking process in a crude fashion. To be in front of the camera created an entirely different atmosphere. The converse was also true. Students who appeared in front of the camera felt they had missed something significant if they had not at some point also operated the instrument. The feeling was often very strong, students coming after class to say they
hoped that another chance would take place for them. This basic attitude was strong enough to conclude that the most successful designs meant that the games had to put students into both positions as fully as possible with limits of time and place, which, of course, always had to be given due consideration.

There were three major considerations in the planning of any of the film games: 1. the definition of the objectives of the activity; 2. the materials which would be needed to accomplish the game; 3. the nature of the class which would engage in the activity. Of these, the most important stage was the defining of what it was that would be taught, with some consideration given to what would not be desirable as an outcome. It was also necessary to consider the possibility that a given film game might be teaching things other than the initial objectives, and that this might not be desirable.

In the process of planning any one of the games used in this study, the first consideration was to ask if there were elements under study about film which might be better taught by an activity rather than a lecture. This meant a careful study of the subjects which had to be offered in any course. Several introductory texts suggested that the idea that a person could be filmed was a central issue in the medium, that film was about the people who could be subjects, the people who made film,
and so on. The idea sounded interesting, yet few students had any opportunity for holding a camera, and only a few had been film subjects themselves, usually in the home movie. Careful planning could put everyone in a class both behind and in front of the camera, and in the process could demonstrate that the filmmaking concept was based on issues of the self-image. Many in the group overcame their fears of the technology. Once one recognizes what systematic games might do, one can work on specific designs which would illustrate the point.

One has to consider what might happen in a game, what might be taught that had not been considered. The statements by students indicated that the results were usually positive, but not always in ways planned. Students were always glad to get out of the classroom, but that was expected of anything that would bring them outside. For many students, seeing themselves on film for the first time was far more important than the nature of the shots they took to achieve the image.

Consideration of what to teach produced lists of different possibilities.

First, I outlined the mechanics of cameras and film, placing emphasis upon super-8mm since that was the gauge most likely available for a class.

I. Cameras: The Mechanics

A. Formats and Aspect Ratio
1. Super-8mm
2. 16mm
3. Others

B. Film Transport and Frame Rate

C. The Shutter
   1. Variable
   2. XL (existing-light)

D. Lenses
   1. Focal Length
   2. Aperture
   3. Depth of Field

E. Focus

F. Exposure Control
   1. Automatic Systems
   2. Manual Operation

II. Film: The Mechanics

A. Film Speed (A.S.A. Ratings)
   1. Fast
   2. Slow

B. Grain

C. Sharpness

D. Contrast

E. Color

F. Black and white

The second list outlined basic elements of film structure.

I. Shots

A. Types of shots
   1. Long shot
   2. Mid-shot
   3. Close-up
   4. Extreme close-up
   5. Extreme long shot
   6. Two-shot
B. Matching shots
   1. Image size
   2. Movement in the frame
   3. Eyeline (direction of view)
   4. Cutaways
   5. Reaction shots

II. Composition
   A. Camera angles
   B. Zoom shots
   C. Lens selection

III. Moving the camera
   A. Pans and tilts
   B. Tracking shots
      1. With a stationary subject
      2. With a moving subject
      3. From subjective point of view
      4. Tracking speed
   C. Crane shots
   D. Hand held shooting

IV. Parallel action

V. Time and space
   A. Real time
   B. Compression
   C. Expansion
   D. Jump cuts

VI. Editing
   A. Continuity
   B. Rhythm and tempo
   C. Symbolism

The third list contained some of the questions which could be examined through filmmaking activities with students.

1. What happens in a film when the offscreen space is given more importance than screen space?
2. What happens when a number of people are told to take the same shot?

3. What happens when the same script is filmed by two different groups?

4. What happens when an action is filmed in one long take instead of many short takes?

5. What is a "cinedance"?

6. How are poetry and film related?

7. How does presence of a camera influence an event?

8. Is there a difference between shots someone makes of himself and those he takes of others?

9. Must there be movement in a "movie"?

10. Can direction and sufficient film elicit a performance from anyone at all?

Final consideration was given to materials which could be entirely taught as games which extended through longer sessions than a day. Interest was not in games which would be shot on one day, edited on another and presented for discussion on a third, but in an extension of gaming into a full quarter or more, as a possibility. This became the basis for the cinedance course, later discussed in this paper.

In all consideration regarding what to teach, I made some careful consideration of how the practice of gaming would contribute to the attitude of the students towards film. Negative reactions did not seem to change student attitudes towards film, but towards the instructor using the game. This happened only when students found
they did not understand the reason for the game. In most cases, this was not caused by a poor presentation, but by some failure in communications with the particular students involved (absences, latenesses, silence). Through the games, students begin to talk more freely about film, and themselves in relationship to it, to develop their intuitive thinking, to understand the medium in terms of their own environment and experience. The film games help students to overcome the passivity which pervade classrooms. If the games succeed, students want to know more about film. Their understanding of the relationship between production and final screened work becomes clarified. The games increase student perceptions of all the visual information they encounter.

Film games depend upon the availability of filmmaking equipment and a reasonable budget with which to work. The games can usually be designed around a single camera with one sturdy tripod. To have more than one camera available is helpful, but not necessary. This equipment need not be especially sophisticated. Generally, super-8mm is the most efficient gauge with which to work because it is readily available and inexpensive to operate. These cameras are most often governed by built-in automatic exposure meters, eliminating at least the chances of getting an image which is incorrectly exposed. Even when exposure is for some
unforeseen reason not "normal" it is usually still workable in teaching about film. Nonetheless, the simpler the camera, in many cases the easier to design games which do not become bogged down in the technology of the camera itself.

The camera this writer used most of the time was a Bauer Mini super-8 camera. It cost under $20.00 new. It had no light meter and no focussing. Setting the camera was a very simple matter. Outdoors, it never failed to produce a usable image. It was especially useful when working with a class that had no experience with cameras before. The fewer knobs and wheels and meters on the machine, the less intimidated the students were. Fear of technology eased as the study progressed, perhaps because cameras, and related electronic instruments, were becoming increasingly available to a general, middle-class population. Canadian students were usually more uneasy with the apparatus than their American counterparts. Older students were more timid with it than the young. Women were uneasy handling equipment. Students in the studio arts were more relaxed than those from other areas. These cameras were inexpensive enough to be considered disposable. If they broke, they could be replaced without much problem.

Obviously far more sophisticated cameras were available, and they could do many interesting things. If
a single camera was to be the only machine available, this writer would seek a machine with a number of features:

1. Variable running speeds. This would allow both slow and fast motion.

2. Single-frame. Animation is an important part of filmmaking, and useful in teaching about film.

3. A zoom lens with at least a 10:1 zoom ratio. This capacity would overcome subject-to-camera distance problems, especially when filming uncontrolled events.

4. A fast lens. The lens should be rated at f/1.4 or more to allow shooting under low level lighting conditions.

5. A large, clear viewfinder, with reflex viewing and a built-in rangefinder which is easy to use. The rear diopter should be easily adjusted to anyone's eyesight, and should not be loose.

6. A built-in fade/dissolve unit. Fades and dissolves, basic in film structure, are made in the film lab professionally during printing. Since in the film gaming, and in many first films students make, printing is not done, it would be useful to have the capacity to create fades and dissolves while shooting. This forces the filmmaker to very carefully consider shot relationships since once shot, the fade or dissolve can only be removed by editing.
7. An intervalometer. The intervalometer would allow stop-motion studies, and its use is helpful in teaching about time as a variable in film.

8. Sound. Two possibilities exist regarding super-8 single-system cameras: A. The camera has a built-in sound-on-film capability. Though single-system sound is frustrating to edit, as a teaching tool it is useful; B. the camera cannot record sounds-on-film, but its film chamber will accept super-8 sound cartridges. This capacity would allow sound to be added later, after shooting, and would thus be very useful in animation and other projects where frame rate is not normal.

At Algoma College, I had access to a Nizo 860 camera which had many of these features and an exceptionally sharp lens. At Ohio University, I sometimes used a Beaulieu. Both cameras produced images of broadcast potential.

A sturdy camera support was necessary. A tripod was useful not only because it did much to generate smooth shots, but because by mounting the camera, solidly, there was less chance of a mishap of any type. The camera could be easily placed to accomplish what was necessary. The Star-D tripods used most often were simple aluminum stands with telescopic legs, and a friction head operated with a single handle. These mounts were very steady, though lightweight, and easily leveled on uneven ground.
It is wise to teach future filmmakers to always work with a tripod—a minimal game which demonstrates the difference between a hand-held shot and a tripod mounted shot is clear and to the point.

The Bell and Howell Multi-Motion projector used most often could run forwards and back or freeze on a frame. It was highly desirable because it allowed one to analyze a game quite carefully in the classroom. An Elmo sound projector used on some projects allowed sound to be recorded onto striped film. Though this writer has not worked with sound projectors which allow recording onto two independent magnetic stripes, their potential in teaching is very clear.

A good, simple tape splicer was needed, and usually a plastic reel or two to accommodate more than fifty feet of film. The Fuji single-8 splicer proved not only inexpensive, but very strong. Unlike other makes, the Fuji is made of sturdy metals, and its cutting blades are easily replaced. It uses pre-punched tape, making very clean splices, but availability of that tape is a problem. An editing bin was simply constructed from a plastic garbage can and pins. A type of pin, the card pin, used to hold index cards, proved a useful devise because it held film firmly without penetrating the sprocket holes at all and thus endangering proper running of the film. A cardboard box lined with a garbage bag proved sufficient.
There was a need to be able to hang film shot by shot prior to editing.

The Minette editor was especially sophisticated. It provided a clear image so that crucial decisions could be easily made. It was an advantage to have an editor which allowed the film to be marked easily at cutting points without destroying frames, just in case an editor changed his mind about the cut. If there was a problem in the gaming process, it was with editors which are by and large designed as one person machines. Very few provided an image that many could see at the same time. It would be useful to have such a machine. Students have complained that though they could see the motions of editing being made, they could not see exactly what was being done by the person making the decisions. Editing tables, such as the Steenbeck or the Movieola, project an image several people can watch. These machines, unfortunately, are too specialized and too expensive for most non-production departments.

A bottle of film cleaner and some flannel did wonders in keeping film clean. Film should always be cleaned before projection, especially with super-8mm where the image is small and any piece of dirt in a projector gate can add to scratches. Dirt tends to remain in the gate and build up continually. The cleaner the film running through, the finer the image quality. The need
for cleanliness is something which should be taught as a control or understanding of the nature of the image. It clarifies why people become excited about 70mm projection vs. Super-8.

Part of the mystique of film is cost. Film is an inexpensive medium, to be sure. But it was not as expensive as one is led to believe on considering the monies spent in Hollywood. Gaming can dispel some of this for teacher and students alike. All of the equipment necessary for gaming could be purchased for under $500.00 (1982 inflationary figures). If the equipment is properly treated, it will last many years, even though super-8 gear is often considered flimsy. The Bauer Mini used I have had ten years. It has been dropped, running, from a four story building, gone water skiing, been used in the rain, kept in a glove compartment in intensely hot weather, and otherwise abused, but it still works. At least 1000 students have handled it.

The cost of film was a minimal problem in gaming. Each participant contributed one roll (50 ft.) of film with processing. This amounted to no more than a single paperback text in current economics ($5.45 for film plus $2.15 for processing). Schools would subsidize this sometimes, and teachers would also add a roll or two. If a class were very large, a fee rather than a film contribution was required, reducing costs for everyone
(with 262 in one class, if I had asked for them to each contribute film, I'd still be shooting it.) One must consider the kind of game to be used and estimate the amount of shooting to be done per student. Students who shot were required to hold the camera release for at least 5-10 seconds for an average of 2 ft. per student. Thus 25 students could shoot a single roll of super-8 film; one multiplies by the numbers of students to find out how much film is needed. Students often had enough technological paranoia to rush their shots. This, of course, made editing difficult. Timing with a watch helped to overcome this, as did making them count out loud. Students shot freely at first, because it was useful for them to understand the fear and how they had rushed shots. Simple arithmetic helped set a minimal budget.

Other costs were for batteries, splicing tape, and items such as reels and tins. Most teaching situations had enough of a budget to allow purchase of these items without difficulty.

Before deciding to work with a film game, then, care must be given to what equipment is available. The games were designed around it. If only one camera was to be had, clearly one could not design a multi-camera game.

Artificial lighting is normally used in filmmaking. However, it is a special problem, especially with beginning students. The effects of lights could be
clearly seen with one or two instruments available. A large white cardboard reflector was useful in showing how light could be controlled. Many super-8 film stocks may be used extremely low light conditions, and unless the aesthetics of lighting were important, it was not necessary to become involved with it. The games were often planned for outside, so that lighting was simply not an aspect of the game (other than the availability of good daylight conditions). Postponing a shoot because of weather reinforces the reasons the commercial film world goes into studios to work. Working on a slightly busy location also told students that studio controls were not a matter of extravagance, but a necessity if one were to get images efficiently and economically.

Effective preparation of the class which would engage in a film game was essential for the success of any such project. Students usually had read about the particular materials which would be illustrated within a given game, with exception of the self-image game used often on the very first meeting day. The initial step in preparing the class was to explain in lecture the terms which they had to know in order to understand the process in which they would be working. It was also necessary to relate to them the reasons for using a film game, what the game would do, why the game was a useful tool in learning about film. This writer also prepared a printed page or
two with very complete instructions of the whole process, including the terms which would be learned. Often the design of the game on paper, with appropriate instructions, were incorporated into the gaming process. This was especially seen when the game announced a given pattern of movements in order to operate. A diagram on paper, students quickly learned, was very different from going onto a location. What looked so neat on the flat surface became rough and less easily visible on a geographical location. Samples of games and instructions are included in the appendices at the end of the study.

Sometimes the instructions would include references to the text in use at the time so that the game would reinforce the readings assigned. In some instances, this was not possible since the game was designed to illustrate matters not defined elsewhere in a course. In some instances, especially the games used in theoretical studies, there were few outside references of value, the games themselves being explorations into materials not necessarily well-defined elsewhere. This was the case with the cinedance course, where the purpose of the course was to work out a potential definition of cinedance as well as to explore relationships between film and dance.

Students felt much more secure when they had a document in their hands prior to a game than when they had the instructions for the game given to them orally. This
was most readily observable with games done at the first class meeting, when students would find themselves being asked to hold and operate cameras, something they might never had done or considered before. On the other hand, the paper explanations sometimes did not relate as strongly to a situation as students thought they might. This at first seemed a failing in the instructions. Later it became clear that this was not quite the case, but that students had not been making necessary relationships between reading and physical activities in the field.

The paper explanations of the games were not enough information for a class in most cases studied. It was invariably necessary to spend some lecture time describing the entire process which would be undertaken, and what the students could expect to gain from it. It was necessary to warn students that we would be working under certain conditions, often outside, and that they had to be prepared for whatever weather conditions might be on the day a game was assigned.

The reasons for the activity were always explained very carefully so that the game would reinforce what the students had already studied, or would at least modify their understanding of the process. The more details provided, the smoother the game would progress. The only special thing to note was that in many instances, the problems of setting up the machinery took longer than
expected, an observation often made when working on commercial locations. This is part of the process. The problems of working on a location are an aspect of filmmaking not well treated in texts. Students often did not understand the difficulties of going onto any location, and the delays which occur because materials for the shoot had not been ready, the weather would not cooperate, or unforeseen events would interfere with work. Weather was the most noticeable problem. An unforeseen event, such as a bicycle race coming through the middle of a chosen location, annoying at the time of shooting, began to clarify for students the problems of location shooting, usually after the experience itself ended.

Prior to engaging in any game on any location, one must make a careful assessment of the equipment to use, and to ensure that it was in proper operating condition. A list was made of all materials to be used in a game and frequently this list was included as part of the paper of gaming procedures which was given to all participants. Eventually a list of all conceivable materials one might need in any gaming film was developed and one could go over this list, checking off the items needed for a given activity (See Appendix). The list itself has since proved useful in teaching film production where it almost eliminates a student's foregetting a crucial item such as fresh batteries on reaching a location miles from the
nearest source.

The selection of locations was also something to carefully consider every time one works out a film game. There were a number of considerations such as space for the whole class, places with little traffic which might interfere, and so on. Locations had to be within easy reach of all members of a class. It might sound interesting to say to a class that we could conduct a game in the local state park, but to do so would require some means of transporting as many as three hundred people to such a place. The athletic fields of a university usually are the best places for outside shooting. On any location, the conditions of the place had to be considered. The most frequent problem was backgrounds. There was seldom opportunity of working where there would be no traffic, cars or people. This meant that to some degree a simulation of shooting techniques would be used. Students would manage traffic on sidewalks, and on some rare occasions, in the street as well. The latter was to be avoided as much as possible since it could involve safety, traffic movement, and, thereby, the local traffic police. In all cases, it was desirable to select a location which would not be an exact duplicate of the materials described on the paper handouts. This was to provide a reality situation.
The procedures by which a game would operate were always carefully given on paper before hand, and explained in the classroom. Yet there was always a need to establish a firm order and control on the location. The problem was the relaxed atmosphere at a location as opposed to the classroom (which tells much about why classrooms, uncomfortable as they may be, have been designed as they are). It was important to make clear that though the film game was a form of play activity, that it would only work with close cooperation.

What often helped in execution of film games was for the teacher to serve as an executive director or producer who would oversee all activities, and to appoint directors and crew members. An alternative to a rigid crew was to teach the first participants how to go through a film game and then have them teach their fellow students. In the case of very large classes, the activities were controlled by having at least one crew member operating and overseeing each stage in the process.

A key to success with the gaming process was to see that everyone participating had a specific task at all times, and was always working in some way. The few times everyone was not involved were resolved by casting and assigning specific times for people to be on location. If a student was not on location at exactly the time required of him, he was considered absent. This helped
keep order, and helped resolve situations where there were too many students and too little equipment for them to use.

In all gaming situations, some students would invariably remain through an entire procedure even when they were not directly involved. This was healthy, since it gave them ample chance to continue to observe the situation with no pressures upon them. It also invariably gave them opportunity to talk about the processes in which they were engaged—a critical point in the entire process.

The maintenance of accurate records and observations was absolutely essential to this study. Three different types of journal entries were kept for this study. First, a prose summary of the games was written prior to any actual design of them. These short essays were not observations of the process of film games, but a notebook of potentials. The entries are sometimes dull, and at other times cryptic notes which were abandoned. They provided a record of thinking as this study developed, and they were very important at the beginning of the study, when it became clear that the work was worthwhile, and could be useful to others who might teach about film. The importance came clear as ideas began to accumulate and were sharply reinforced by similar kinds of studies being published in the UFA Journals of
that time by Timothy Lyons, Dennis Lunch, Ernest Rose, Robert W. Wagner and Vlada Petric.

The second type of journal entry was notekeeping maintained during the process of each game played. These, of course, became the most important because they were an immediate response, often containing the kind of criticism needed to keep enthusiasm from interrupting the study. It was necessary to be as objective as possible, and many of the self-critical observations in the journals were helpful in being so. The notes were not carefully written on the spot, and were, as all such jottings, in many instances, written not always in a neat round hand in a notebook. But they were, no matter on what they were written (most of the time the initial observations were made on copies of the game itself, a crude system which seemed workable at the time), immediate responses to what was happening. They very often contained such observations as: "Must not keep hovering over the camera. Let them do it, no matter what." Or "I should have brought a piece of white cardboard to use as a quick demonstration of a reflector" and "----- misheld the camera and missed her own face."

These notes were transferred to a notebook immediately at the end of a game. This was necessary in order to remember what had been written since my handwriting in the process of the gaming was often indecipherable just a few hours later.
The third type of journal entry maintained was a considered study of what had happened, written in as much detail as possible, usually on the evening of the activity itself. Kept with this type of entry were some notes about responses to the screenings of the completed shootings or editings as a record of the class's response to whatever happened in the screening room. These were an excellent record of thoughts at the time of each activity, and each time a specific game was repeated. I was able to compare responses of different classes in different situations to the same game and from the entries tell whether or not a particular activity was continually useful, or if it was an item that worked at one time, but not at another.

A small tape recorder as means for keeping notes at the scene, might have provided a new dimension to the process, and a very precise record of what students were saying at the time they were participating.

In addition to journal entries, sometimes, but not in every situation, a photographic or filmic record of what took place was kept. This sort of information was useful in communicating to others just what a film game looked like in operation. From some of the games stills have been made, but these are a different matter. In some instances, a short film by the teacher was made of the gaming process, and one could look back at the material,
often enough with others, to determine what had happened within a situation. These were very useful in showing how the class in a given game was responding. The process of taking photographs at the games did not seem especially obtrusive to the students who were involved with the assigned activity. They regarded picture-taking as a kind of snapshot activity the teacher was conducting, similar to the snapshots taken at a class picnic. In some of the photographs, obviously only a few people are deeply involved while others are sitting in the shade, telling that the activity was limited. In others, one can see some confusions among some students, telling that they were unsure of what they were doing, even though journal entries were highly favorable of the particular game. This should become a standard procedure in all film gaming.

The games themselves, since they were usually recorded on film, serve as interesting artifacts which are records of their own making. Few of them are substantially edited, so that they are full of information. They tell us as much as any filmed event can tell us about the situation they contain. Having made all of my written observations, and talked to the students about the gaming, one always had the record of what had been done. These films are useful in describing the event, and are also useful in demonstrating just what sort of situation had
been used for any game designed. Since only a few games did not end as films of some sort, they formed a reasonable record with which one could compare games between classes.

The entries and visual information combined gave a very full picture as it were of whatever was happening with the film games. It was exceedingly useful to be able to weigh and compare in this fashion, for it helped to keep me somewhat objective.

One of the problems almost all of the film games must face is that of the delay between the time of a shooting and the time in which film is back from a processing laboratory. This is the same delay that is encountered by many independent filmmakers. The studios and most industrial filmmakers can usually have their footage returned within a day of shooting. This is not the case with amateur gauges, with very few exceptions. Even at an university which for a while processed super-8mm footage in its own lab, one could not have materials immediately. The delay in film processing can be a great problem in an outlying area, where film must be sent to a lab, sometimes by mail. It is one of the arguments for the use of videotape which requires no processing and the results of a shoot can be seen immediately after completing it.
The fact of processing means that the teachers had to understand the problems beforehand and make sure that every delay is minimized. The further the students were from the shooting, the less interest they had in the results. A long delay in the lab was a serious defect. This seldom happened, and it was a simple matter to consult the various available systems within the location to determine the fastest, least expensive, most efficient system. In designing the games one had to consider the delay and how to use time between shooting and post-production processes. It is very important to let the students know there will be a delay, even before engaging them in a film game, and to remind them at the first class after a game that the film was not going to be seen immediately. Tell them when they could expect to see it, and remind them about it at every class meeting until it is to be screened.

Screen the rushes before the class to know just what would be seen. Then screen them several times in the classroom. The first screening is often in silence, or subjected only to the initial responses of the class, which will be, for the most part, like the responses one normally gets at a session of home movies. Students had earned this privilege. On a second screening, this writer would make observations and comments as the screening progressed, calling attention to various items in the
footage. It was always important to make clear that students were looking at unedited materials, and that post-production activity would alter the effect considerably. Once they had heard the comments, they could open the game to discussion. The discussions were always guided back to the main point to make with a given game. From there, one could digress into a number of issues concerning film which would inevitably materialize in the classroom. Student discussion of the games often revealed whether they were perceiving the images closely or not.

There were two ways of approaching the editing. One way was to sit down with the footage and to edit it all as quickly and efficiently as possible. This diminished somewhat the editing process in favor of completing the entire game so that students could see it as a product to not only be studied, but enjoyed. Though reasons for editing in this fashion were well-intended, it hardly ever failed to produce some negative responses from the class which felt that it had somehow been shortchanged, that they had been kept away from a significant process.

Most often the editing became an in-class demonstration of the process, with a workbench set up at the front of the room and students gathering around as closely as possible. In large classes, this writer would
work on a stage, but was never satisfied with this procedure. In small classes students could make at least one splice each, just so they could deal with the tactile aspects of the process, which are very important. (Those who dislike video often claim it is because they cannot hold the images in their hands and see what they are dealing with.)

Despite a number of separate editing games, some of which are presented in this paper, I was always at a loss with the subject. Editing has always been a personal matter and that might have been a portion of the problem, however I think now that it is a question of the design of editing machinery. Most of the viewers, except in highly sophisticated editing machines used by the professionals, are very small, designed for use by only one person with, at best, a second looking over his shoulder. Given this restriction, it is just not possible for editing to be done by many people at once. An inexpensive editor which would project its image onto a small screen, as the high-cost flatbed editor commonly in professional use does would be useful.

It sometimes worked to give students actual visuals in an unedited fashion and to have them "edit" them on paper. A highly ambiguous group of shots was prepared for this purpose and it became a useful game.
After editing, the completed game would be projected for the class, often with music added to enhance the effect. Most of the time, this was a very dramatic presentation. Most of the films became, upon editing, interesting. It was important to devise systems of projection which were in themselves interesting and often different from the norms, but I did not for this study concentrate as heavily on the screened event as might have been desirable. There was always a marked difference between the response of a class to the finished game and its initial responses to the process as well as to the rushes.

A discussion followed the screening, and students very often expressed surprise and delight that not only they had learned something about the film process—whether it was what had been anticipated or not—and that they had actually ended up with a film worth looking at. In several instances students wanted to conduct a public screening, or at least to show the film again when their friends could also see the work.

The final stage of study of a film game was to have the students write a brief commentary about the activity they had undertaken. Some of the comments were directed at the film the games themselves, some were comments about what they had been studying. This final survey was a necessary measure in determining success or failure of a given film game experience.
CHAPTER IV

THE SEMSEL SYSTEM OF FILM GAMES:
DESCRIPTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

Film games presented in this study were used with students at two different institutions: Ohio University, in Athens, Ohio, and Algoma University College, in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada. The study included three levels of investigation, and the games have been grouped in terms of their levels: 1. introductory; 2. advanced studies, and 3. theoretical studies. The patterns of the games are similar from level to level, but the nature of the content changes in sophistication. Twelve games were used in thirty-six different classes to a total of 2052 students. Ten of the courses were introductory level; twenty were on an advanced undergraduate level, but open to first year graduate students, too; six were primarily graduate level, but open to undergraduates. These latter were experimental courses.

Algoma University College

Algoma University College is a small undergraduate college affiliated with Laurentian University in Sudbury, Ontario. It is a commuters' school though a few students
take rooms in the city only in order to attend the college. Most students live in the region in Northern Ontario, and are relatively isolated from the more highly developed areas in Southern Ontario where there are more universities from which to choose, and large cities. The College has been in operation since 1970 and is still not stable. Emphasis is on the liberal arts curriculum.

The Canadian College has approximately one thousand students each year, many of them attending as part-time, evening students. A large number of the students are public school teachers working on the full range of education from first grade through high school. A few are teachers at Sault College, which is a community junior college of arts and technology serving the area. The ages of the students who take film courses at Algoma are relatively high compared to the average incoming student. It is not unusual to have senior citizens in the courses. Most of the students are married and have small families. Most are women. Ontario students must take a thirteenth year of high school rather than a Freshman year in University. Those who get into the University system usually have a reasonably strong ability to write and are quite familiar with the use of a library.

There is no film major at Algoma University College. Three courses are available to students, all of them on an introductory level, though with different
emphasis. Each course offers one undergraduate credit. (Canadian courses usually run for a full school year though it is possible to offer two half-years in some institutions.) The basic course is the History of Film. The second course is called "The Director's Cinema" and is built around the works of a few "great" contemporary filmmakers. The third course is a comparative study of literature and film. The film games in this study were done with students in both the history of film and the director's cinema since students may use either one as a non-major elective for their degree. These courses have been approved by Laurentian University.

Film courses at Algoma are taught only during the summer session, a six week period in July and August. This writer teaches all of them, alternating them year by year. The classes meet five days each week for two hours per day. Students are assigned a common reading, sometimes a bibliography, and usually a short paper. Generally the course alternates lecture periods with screenings, day by day. In those courses which used film games, the games were often done after the scheduled class meeting. Some games were done in the classroom during regular sessions.

The Canadian students had not seen as many films as their counterparts in Ohio, but they were fortunate enough to have the resources of the National Film Board of Canada
and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation at their disposal. They otherwise saw no more than students in the United States might see on television or at local movie houses. The tastes of the Canadian students were more attuned to film as an art. These people frequently had seen a more diverse collection of work than students normally can in Ohio, especially in their viewing of documentary and animated films, especially since CBC has been running shows dealing with film for a number of years now, and students are familiar with these offerings. Canadians have an exceptional institution in the NFB which is the exemplary governmental film agency in the world. Canadians are more easily exposed to good films than are people in the U.S.

On the other hand, students at Algoma University College had markedly less contact with filmmaking than did their U.S. counterparts. Very few had been involved with home movies. On the average, only five in a class had been in home movies, and fewer still had ever had direct experience with a movie camera. Their response to the medium was that it was an art form quite remote and unavailable to them. Their fears of the technology were greater, even among teachers who had ready access to other audio-visual materials in their work. Yet, perhaps because they were older, in their late twenties or early thirties, they responded readily in the classroom and were
always more open to discussion on a sophisticated level than were their colleagues in Athens, Ohio. Their goals were already set, and perhaps their general social lives as well, by the time they took a summer film course. Their attitude in the classroom made it pleasurable to work with them.

Ohio University

Ohio University is a small university in Southeastern Ohio. Athens is a small community in the midst of Appalachian poverty. The University is part of the state system, and has approximately thirteen thousand students, a considerable drop from the near twenty thousand at the beginning of the 1970's. It operates a large dormitory system for the many students who attend, primarily from the suburbs of Cleveland and the nearby industrial cities in Northern Ohio. The Film Department is a very small autonomous department within the College of Fine Arts.

The Film Department at Ohio University offers two graduate degrees: Master of Arts and Master of Fine Arts. There is no undergraduate degree program, but there are a relatively large grouping of courses available to undergraduates in any area. A few students pursue a B.G.S. with an emphasis in film, but they do not make up much of the total undergraduate enrollment in film. The
graduate enrollment in film averages twenty-five total in any given year, spread across three years of study. Because there is no formal undergraduate degree, the University considers all undergraduate film courses to be service courses.

Students at Ohio University who take the introductory film courses come into the course as Freshmen or Sophomores. Most of these students are young, in their late teens. Most intend to major in the studio arts, but a large number also come into the course from the College of Communications. A small percentage of the enrollment has not yet declared a major, while an even smaller number have almost completed degree work in diverse areas of study and are taking the course as an elective. There are usually more than one hundred and fifty students in the introductory film course at Ohio University, and the numbers have sometimes reached over three hundred.

"Aspects of Film," the course in which most introductory film games were attempted, was a prerequisite for further studies in the Film Department, but also was serving all other areas of the University as an elective. The course was offered twice every year, first in the Fall Quarter, and again in the Winter. Film games were restricted to the Fall quarter in part to make use of the generally good weather conditions, but in addition as an opportunity to make comparisons between classes which
gamed and those which did not. That one class did not have the gaming experience was useful. I did, on two occasions, game with the winter sections of the course.

"Aspects of Film" was a general introductory survey of film, based in the history of the medium because it was a convenient way in which to structure materials, but placing emphasis on the development of a critical vocabulary. The course was designed to acquaint students with film as an art as opposed to film as popular entertainment. Though there was a necessary emphasis upon the narrative film, almost half of every quarter was spent with the documentary and experimental film modes. A standard basic textbook was usually assigned, and this was supplemented by a printed syllabus of thirty pages.

The course met twice every week of the term. In one two hour session each week, the students would usually hear a lecture by the instructor. In the second class meeting, students would watch a film which exemplified the area under study. After a film was screened, it was discussed with the class. These discussions often were the first item of business of the subsequent lecture day.

The differences between the two schools and their students was very helpful for this study. The writer could use the same games with both sets of students and thus see the designs operating under quite different
educational conditions.

People in contemporary society, despite the proliferation of image-making instruments, rarely see themselves on film. Less than ten percent of the undergraduates who took the introductory film courses at either institution had been the subjects of home movies, though most had seen a reasonable number. Even fewer had ever handled a movie camera. Yet it was clear that the basic fascination with the medium was its ability to record with no little accuracy, everyday people in everyday situations. Film can show each of us how we look to others, including how we move. It was this capacity that generated the initial fascination which excited the world in the 19th Century. The films of Auguste and Louis Lumière, the first filmmakers of note, were essentially home movies of the people living around them, including each other. The interest in seeing physical reality brought into motion on a screen is essential to the medium. For this reason, it was important for students to not only hear about the development of the medium, but to see what they themselves looked like on the screen. Equally important at the beginning of their studies of the medium was for them to handle, even minimally, a motion picture camera, to develop thereby a direct understanding of what it means to point this instrument in a direction and to record with it something, or someone, close to
them, within their own environment.

Because they had had little if any direct experience with the medium as a process in which they could engage, many introductory film students had developed a fear of the technology film involved. Almost from its invention, people considered film as a form of magic. As the industry grew, a mythology grew along with it. Students had already learned Hortense Powdermaker's definition of Hollywood as "The Dream Factory,"¹ which produced, according to Parker Tyler, "The Hollywood Hallucination."² Consequently, the medium was to be revered, not something in which to engage. The film industry had long ago become a large enterprise, largest ever in the arts, and it was not accessible to students. The technology was expensive and difficult to grasp. Large machines were necessary, special lights, make-up, studios. The machines were costly and delicate, not to be touched.

If students were to be brought to a closer understanding than they had at the start of their study of film, it had to be demystified. To do this as directly as possible, it seemed necessary to design a system which could bring them into physical contact with a movie camera and, further, could also put them in front of cameras as the subjects of film. It was possible, this writer thought, to base an understanding of film on the idea that
film was, on analysis, about the people who partake of it. Vertov saw this well in the 1920's when he produced his excellent theory on film, "The Man With the Movie Camera" (Vertov, 1928). In that film, the audience comes to watch a film and finds itself looking at itself. From this idea came the first and simplest of the film games: filming oneself and filming others.

**Game Number One: Filming Oneself**

On the second meeting of my Fall, 1974, Aspects of Film class at Ohio University, without giving the students much preparation, I told them that they needed to start their study of film by direct confrontation with the processes of the medium. To do this quickly and efficiently I would have them use a super-8mm camera, first to film themselves, and later to film one another. The response to this first film game led me to this study.

I told the students to form a line, and demonstrated to them what I wanted them to do, which was to hold the camera at arm's length with the lens pointed at the bridge of the nose, and to make a slow rotation, for a count of five, while pressing the shutter release. This game was done out-of-doors to avoid problems with lighting, but I later found that indoor shootings produced more interesting materials for discussion because of the lighting controls.
Most students found this process amusing and strange, quite remote from their normal classroom experiences. As I watched them hold the camera, I could see that some were very intimidated by the simple instrument—which needed no settings at all—so much so that they could not aim it straight, resulting in footage of foreheads. Most of the students counted very rapidly to five, some much faster than others. Most admitted that they felt foolish doing this activity in front of so many people they didn't know. But I noticed that the procedures sparked a number of people to talk to one another, and to me, finding, apparently, that to talk about the event helped them to overcome fears that they had about what they were doing. A significant number felt compelled to perform in some minimal way as they shot, the most common performance being to stick out a tongue or to raise eyebrows. One or two would move the camera towards and away from their mouths while shooting. A few would modify the required circular movement and move up and down. The game did not take a great deal of time. All students had a chance to be in front of and behind the camera, and all had a chance to observe one another at the assigned task. The game became, in the process itself, a form of ice-breaker, freeing many people to respond openly and relaxedly to the remainder of the class.
Excited and pleased with the way this first game had gone, I thought I should place a great deal more emphasis on similar projects. The first times I did this game, and some related games, I had not yet understood the process of gaming sufficiently to maintain accurate records of what happened. But I did duplicate the game itself a number of times, almost every year that I have taught an introductory film course. The results have been consistent with my first, enthusiastic response. In the times taught without using these, or any other games, the class did not come to close terms with the medium, but remained aloof and silent, and reluctant to discuss film in as open a fashion as the ones in which there were games.

The classes which game often become very impatient for the film shot to return from the lab. At least once a day someone would ask if the film had returned by people on the street, or in other areas of the university. This delay remains a problem of filmmaking with classes both in terms of maintaining class interest in a project and in meeting the demands of a teaching schedule.

Students became very excited when the film was ready for projection. It was screened first to them without comment, in linear fashion with one projector. The response was as predictable as the response one expects with the home movie. People laughed at their own
images with the usual comment, "I look like that?" and at the way the others looked as well, applauding or commenting aloud at each person on the screen. They cheered at the end of the film.

The images from this project are mildly unusual for the participants when compared to other film images they may have seen. Because the camera is held in a relatively firm position in front of an unchanging subject, subject remains constant in its aspect, but the background whirls by, almost unrecognizable. Even without editing, the moment of stasis between faces is not especially obtrusive. The camera angle and relatively wide-angle aspect of even the simplest instrument mildly distracts subjects in this game.

After a first screening, general observations about the film's characteristics are made and the film is screened again, with the teacher commenting over the images. The class, of course, becomes more subdued. They usually ask about the reasons the background shifts, and why their faces seem a bit fat and misshaped. They are asked to speculate on what would have happened if the camera had a wider lens, a different frames-per-second rate. I note the differences between counts of five and have them state why this is so, and when possible have them relate the experience back to me of viewing themselves. The discussions are usually brief compared to
Shot from a Self-Image on Film Game. Algoma College, 1974.

Shot from a Self-Image on Film Game. Ohio University, 1976.
Shot from a Self-Image on Film Game. Ohio University, 1975.

Shot from a Self-Image on Film Game. Algoma College, 1976.
other game discussions, but in most cases the class remains positive and open in subsequent meetings, fulfilling the basic purposes.

**Game Number Two: Filming One Another**

The game in which students film one another was designed to be done together as a unit with the game in which they filmed themselves. I wanted to have them consider the difference, if any, in the two approaches to making images. Obviously there would be some.

To perform this game, the class was divided into two groups (more sets when there were more cameras available), which formed a line facing one another. The camera was given to a student at the head of one line who was told to view through, centering on the person she was facing, and to film for a count of five, then to give the camera to that person and to then go to the end of the line. In this fashion, back and forth, everyone filmed someone else.

The attitude towards this game was very different from that of filming oneself. The students would often make comments to one another as the filming progressed, giving directions to the cameraman. They also performed much more formally in front of the camera, mugging, turning, sometimes playfully avoiding being filmed. Each seemed to develop a performance for himself or herself.
Students felt much more like specimens, as though they had no control over the kinds of images being made. The performances were almost invariably predictable—nose thumbings, tongues sticking out, face-making of various types.

The response to camera was not too different from the response of the self-image game. There was a small amount of technological paranoia, though students knew now how to hold and work the machine. A few students did more than just film the face of the person in front of them, tilting up a figure, or down. None moved with the camera except when necessary to follow the subject in some way. The count of five was more regular than in the self-image game.

The class response to the screening was somewhat like that of the first game, students applauding materials they were seeing for the first time. They were intrigued by the differences, though, in the two kinds of images. They said they found a deep difference between how someone else had filmed them and how they had filmed themselves. Some said they would never film themselves as they had been. A few recognized that the games were forcing the issue by the design and didn't know if the difference was in that fact, or in the people involved. The images were much less interesting in themselves, or more normal, according to one student. The portraits made by others
were much more like snapshots. When asked about the moving camera in the one game they agreed that it had something to do with their perceptions. A number wanted the film edited whereas in the first game the film was accepted as not in need of any editing at all, even though the potential was expressed. Students found the first game more magical, strange, in its effects upon them than the second, which they continually referred to as more normal, even though they had not encountered such situations before.

**Game Number Three: Matching Action**

**With Three Cameras**

Shooting oneself and shooting others were activities designed to bring students into contact with the processes of film at the onset of their first studies of the medium, and to produce materials for study in the process. In this they succeeded. A third type of game was designed with more specific objectives to teach. This game required students to move through a predetermined pattern which would bring them in front of and behind at least one camera, but usually behind three or four, in a specific, physical arrangement. Though I used more than one camera since several instruments were available, one is all that must be available for use.

There were several basic elements of film which were taught with this film game: camera angle, lens
qualities, camera-to-subject distance, shot designations, matching action. In addition, the game demonstrated the differences between the shooting plan or script of a film and the exception of that plan on a location. Though these items could be taught separately, they interrelate and were not especially difficult concepts to master.

Most of the time I worked with this activity, used three cameras were used, each set at a different distance from a central point, each camera also at a different camera angle, and each using a different type of lens: (1) 13.5 mm, (2) 25 mm, (3) 8 mm. The location was usually not a flat area, but one with mild hills or depressions.

Students were instructed to line up behind the first camera. The first student in the line would look through the viewfinder and at the same time shoot for a count of five. Then the first person would move to the point at which all three cameras pointed, and the second person would be in position to shoot. As the second person shot film with the first camera, the first person would rotate, or otherwise move, so that at one point in the activity, his arms would be straight out from his sides. After this shot was taken, the first person went to camera two, the second person became the subject, and the third person shot with camera one. Through this arrangement, everyone in the class would have the
opportunity to work with all cameras and to be a subject as well. The design created an orderly system for the project.

The design provided the class with an opportunity to see what various shots looked like at the time they were being made. It gave them an opportunity to see what a location shooting situation was like. Looking through the camera graphically demonstrated camera angle and distance. The design gave the activity an order which it would not have had if it were simply an assigned filmmaking task (go out and take three different shots of the same subject). The class was sufficiently organized to complete the project without undue delay, a problem that often pervades filmmaking assignments. Even though the class started at the same time, those who finished first had completed their responsibility and could either stay and talk, or could leave. The design gave the class a chance to respond to one another in an activity that was organized yet comfortable and relaxed in atmosphere. The entire game with more than a hundred people participating took no more than normal two-hour class sessions and created information to which students could later directly relate. They shared an experience within the context of a film class.

The class was very orderly during this game when it first began, and the activity proceeded without much
Match-Action Game with Three Cameras. Algoma College, 1975. First shot from camera two, showing camera one (left side) and three (right side).

Second student shooting with camera one. Shot taken by first student at camera two.
First student at camera one. Third student at camera three.

Student shooting with camera three. Shot taken by the researcher using hand-held camera.
Student at camera center, at start of movement. Shot taken from camera two.

Shot above continued. This researcher appears in the shot, shooting with a hand-held camera.
The shot taken by researcher during the shot on previous page. Cut to match with it.

Students at camera two. Shot taken by this researcher with hand-held camera.
A student at camera center. Shot taken by camera two.

Another student, shot taken by camera one. Cut to match with arm position above.
A student at camera center, shot from camera one. Cut to match with bottom shot on previous page.

Students waiting their turn in the game. Shot taken by researcher with hand-held camera.
Student at camera center. Shot taken by camera two.

The same student, shot taken by camera one, cut to match action.
Continuation of the shot on the previous page.

Continuation of above shot. Student's arm moved downward.
Student at camera center. Shot from camera two. Cut to match arm position and movement in previous shot.

Student at camera three. Other students, in background, wait their turn behind camera one. Shot taken by this researcher with hand-held camera.
Shot taken by camera one, shows playful attitude in a participant.

Shot of same student, taken by camera two. Cut to match action with above shot.
Shot of same student taken by camera three. Cut to match action and head direction with the previous shot.

The completion of the above shot.
problem. As the game progressed, students began to alter their performances, often feeding off of one another's ideas. There was little evidence of the fears of the camera that had existed with the first two games. The students held for a full count of five. Most of the students wanted to make modifications to the game as it progressed: raise the camera, lower it to ground level, and so on, so that the shots would become more diverse and strange in aspect. A number of students wanted to discuss more about the mechanics of filmmaking. One or two moved the lenses of the cameras and thus unwittingly changed focus or the composition. In later versions of this game students served as camera-guards, assisting their fellow students with camera operations. Many students went through an "aha" reaction as they looked at the shots they were taking with either second or third cameras, realizing what the differences were between the camera compositions, and to some degree why.

The rushes were screened as soon as they returned from processing. Many people in the class were somewhat disappointed. They thought it did not make good sense. The rushes were not discussed with them, other than to tell them that they were unedited.

I edited the film in a single evening in order to save time. The game was designed so that whenever a person raised his arms out straight to the sides, one
could easily cut to another person whose arms were in the same position. In this way, action was matched, giving the film the effect of continuous movement despite the change in people. One could also cut a shot of one person with one camera to the same person with another camera. One could start with the shot from camera one and proceed to three, or could change that order. The cutting took time, but it was easy to do.

The projection of the finished film had a marked effect upon the class which responded favorably and knowledgeably to the concept of matching action and the use of a variety of shots and what that meant. Many students wanted to do more filmmaking, asking if there was some way the class could do a "real" film instead of the games.

**Game Number Four: The Cloverleaf Design**

There are two significant variations to this basic game. In the first, four cameras are used instead of three, and they point towards the center between them. The students shoot with a camera, then sit in the center, shoot with the next camera, and sit again. The game is more interesting visually and conceptually. Students responded most favorably to this variation of all those tried. The footage from this variation was edited so that all shots from each camera were of equal length, and a
reel made for each camera. Though perfect synchronization between the four reels was never perfect, the screening was always very exciting to students and discussions were long. The reels were projected on four projectors, one representing each camera, onto a four sided screen. One could walk around the machines and view four different perspectives of the same subjects. In addition, by careful editing, the shots for one camera could be placed on the projector of another, so that as one moved around the room, one could see the same person sometimes, or different people from the same perspective, and so on. It is one of the few times that I tried to make the projection into a kind of physical activity as well as the act of shooting.

The projection stirred an exceptional response, indicating that the matter should be pursued further. Students brought others to see the game and asked if it could be available for a longer time. One student tried to race around the screens with his own image, another went in the opposite direction so that he would "meet himself." The project was not extended, however, because the interest was in the strange projection system rather than in the material to be taught. On the other hand, the class held one of the longest discussion sessions and we not only dealt with the problems of shots, angles, and the like, but also dealt with the concept of projection and
the possibility of film as gallery installation rather than as screening.

**Game Number Five: Leapfrog**

A minor variation was accomplished by having the class play leapfrog while others filmed with six cameras. Few people have access to this much equipment, however, and it was done once. The students had a great deal of fun, but that they had learned much was unclear even though the projected film, projected onto two screens, was very interesting. The leapfrog game kept all noncameramen busy, but it prevented discussion at the time of shooting.

**Game Number Six: Continuity**

A third variation, and one which is a resolution to multiple camera arrangements is to shoot a simple script with one camera. The script is designed so that screen direction is always maintained, shot by shot, and action can be easily matched. A different cast appears in every single shot though the continuity is maintained throughout. The cutting on the action is usually sufficient to make the continuity tight and to thereby diminish the changes in people. The class designed the script so that in the last shot it was possible to project the first shot and film it, thus the final people in the film were, through the editing, looking at the first shots of the film in which they appeared. Students respond well to the
project, which requires two shooting days. The variation has the interest of being a simple narrative, and thus has an interest there. The difficult aspect was in the projection of the finished work. To make the points about film elements clear meant the same kind of analysis that was being used in looking at feature films. Nonetheless, the results were very good.

**Game Number Seven: The Mirror**

Incorporating a film production into a brief summer session proved demanding in time and energy. "The Mirror," written for an introductory film class at Algoma College, was designed to be shot twice, modifying or altering techniques in each version. In the classroom, students could compare the two versions to determine relative values of techniques used. Hopefully, projecting the two versions simultaneously would also reinforce the concept of reflection on which the script rested. Through the project I hoped not only to convey basic concepts of film, but to move students into a film experience they had not previously met.

Because the course was brief, a script was written which could be shot on a single afternoon, thus allowing sufficient time for processing and editing. I wrote the script prior to the beginning of the course and directed each version, acting as master director. Given more time,
the students could write and direct their own scripts, although it is valuable for the teacher to first direct a short film himself to illustrate the problems involved.

The class, of greater diversity in age and experience than similar classes during the regular school year, was divided into two units, one for each version of the film. The project was designed so that every student could actively participate in the work and yet could observe the filming process in its entirety. Since the two versions were shot on separate afternoons, half the class was free during each shooting sessions to observe the process from a distance. This was valuable scheduling for through it each crew and cast could compare the processes of filming each version as the project progressed. Later, of course, the two films were readily compared in the classroom.

Unquestionably the two shooting sessions provided an excellent learning experience for the class. Although unpredictable weather gave us a constantly changing sky and high winds, making some planned shots impossible, it forced us to reconsider the script and to make some adjustments. Silence dominated the screening of rushes. Students were, in fact, disappointed with what they saw and doubted that anything of interest could be made from the footage. This reaction later helped reinforce the processes and capabilities of editing. The simultaneous
screening of the two edited films produced a revelation in the class. They were pleased with what they saw.

In addition to the stresses of time, some lesser problems had to be resolved to keep the filming simple and workable. The productions could not be done within the class period and the students wished they knew of the extra hours beforehand. This was an oversight, for a lab period could have been scheduled long before registration. Nonetheless, although filming took place outside scheduled class time, students participated without complaint. In the end, they wished more time and energy devoted to the projects and more time spent covering production techniques and the uses of film in the grade school classroom.

The mirror script was designed to avoid complicated lighting situations. Only one interior was used, a local band shell demonstrating a means by which interior problems could be overcome. Students were surprised that the band shell in the film appeared to be an interior space. The use of outdoor lighting for an indoor scene allowed references to silent film techniques. A director's joke was in the use of reflectors to fill in shadows in a script based upon reflection.

The college lacked sufficient equipment to make the use of sound a possibility. However, this was no great problem since sound has problems better treated in other
ways. The final screening used random music as a background, and the class discussed the influence that music had upon the presentation.

Ideally, the students would edit projects under a teacher's supervision. At Algoma, I handled all editing, but considered this a disadvantage for the class could only watch the work rather than deal with the problems themselves. Yet screening the rushes and a rough-cut version of each film as well as screening the "Gunsmoke Editing Series" and other supporting materials overcame the difficulty. To reinforce the potentials of editing and the role of the editor as a creative force in film, out-takes from the shootings were used to produce a third version of "The Mirror." The class was not told of this beforehand, but were presented with this version with the other two. This version gave a solid basis for a lengthy and rewarding discussion of the whole filming process. Such editing of out-takes has immense instructional value.

Game Number Eight: Film Editing on Paper

Editing is a solitary task for many people, a direct confrontation of filmmaker with the materials themselves. Though some decisions have been made by nature of scripting and the shots to be edited, there is usually much flexibility for the person who finally
decides how they will go together. It is a creative task second only to the directing of a film.

Normally editing can be demonstrated with any one of a number of films which display the equipment as well as the possibilities which the editor may select, and then show the choices the editor finally made in putting the film together. Most of these films work, but they do not offer the student an opportunity to confront the editing problem by himself.

To bring students through an editing experience, a reel of film was designed which would contain a number of shots which could be interpreted in several different ways. In an ideal situation, the reel would be copied and given to each student to edit. This would be costly and take much time. The alternative would be to list the shots on paper and to show the reel to the class as many times in a class session as it thought necessary. With the paper shot list in front of them, they could make notes as they viewed the footage. From this, they could perform a "paper edit." (See Appendix III)

The footage contained three sets of shots. These shots centered on a boy, a girl, and a woman dressed like a priestess. The shots could be interpreted in two or three basic ways: boy meets girl, kills her, flees; girl meets boy, they fall in love; girl slays boy; priestess kills them both, and so on. The shots were all very
carefully constructed so that they could actually be put together into a short scene that made narrative sense.

The class edited on paper by listing the shots they would select and the order in which they would appear. By this process, they were performing all the decision-making tasks an editor confronts, though they were not actually handling the material. The class responded to the assignment much as they might a test. They found the footage in itself amusing since it contained shots of the instructor, but once the editing task began, the room was silent.

The various papers were collected and read to the class, as many as possible. No two paper edits were alike although the narratives were somewhat similar. Each student offered a minor variation to one of the several basic interpretations. They began to argue about each edit as it was read to them, essentially arguing for their own versions. This was interestingly close to the actual problem of editing.

After the meeting, a random sampling of the paper edits was selected and duplicated for the whole class. I also edited one version of the footage, and my T.A., Brian Patrick, edited a second version. These were screened for the class.

At the presentation of materials, students were very responsive to the edited versions on the screen,
though hardly anyone agreed with either versions shown to them. They asked why I had made my interpretation. Some argued that the decisions made were incorrect, on the basis of the footage itself. The footage was screened three times. Brian and I discussed our separate versions as we saw them, explaining what we had done.

The class also reviewed the paper edits and made comments about them. It was very interesting to note that though there were disagreements, everyone had made a workable choice of shots, and it was very clear that the standard patterns of editing a scene were understood. A few of the edits were highly creative; all were personal interpretations.

The class was mildly disappointed that they did not have the same kind of hands-on experience that Brian and I had, even though they understood the problem. It might have helped to edit in front of them so that at least they would have been present when the actual decisions were made. They would also have thus had a chance to see the machinery in use. As stated earlier in this report, there should also be some modification of the machines so that a group of people may observe the footage as it is edited. On the other hand, it might be more effective that students be able to see how personal a process editing often is.
The paper editing as a design for a large class worked very well, and the writer believes it could be modified somewhat further so that students not only had a verbal list of the shots in the reel, but also a still, possibly a Xerox, at the very least a drawn story-board of all the materials so that they would be editing visual information. Most of them made little sketches on their papers to define movement, and some more gifted visual artists made a story-board from the verbal descriptions. These were very accurate when compared to the original footage.

Film games were used in several advanced courses at Ohio University, all of them historical surveys of specific aspects of the medium, or periods in its development. Silent Film History, The Coming of Sound, Documentary Film, and Experimental Film are courses offered to upper-level undergraduates and to first-year graduate students. Each is one quarter long and is limited in enrollment to twenty-five students total (graduate and undergraduate combined). The courses met twice each week, two hours per session, for ten weeks. These courses are primarily lecture courses with a number of bibliographical assignments.

Most of the students who enroll in these courses are Juniors or Seniors from other areas of the College of Fine Arts, or from the College of Communications. A small
number are working on a Bachelor of General Studies degree with an emphasis in film, the closest one can come to an undergraduate degree in the medium. Usually a few students from the English Department take these courses also, and at times students from other areas with personal interest in film will take the course as an elective to complete their degree requirements. Graduate students who take this course are usually film students emphasizing production.

All of the three hundred students who took these courses had some prior experience with filmmaking, some of it very advanced and sophisticated. Only four or five per course had never handled a camera before, but had appeared in films other than home movies. One-fourth of the students enrolled expected to continue filmmaking at some time in the future, though only twenty-nine expected film to be their full-time career. Almost two-thirds of all those who took the courses thought they might eventually teach film in some fashion, even though most had not given very careful thought to that prospect. Those who were committed to a teaching career wanted to be able to use film in their teaching no matter the level on which they hoped to work.

The film games on the advanced levels were primarily simulations of conditions in filmmaking during the period under study. Unlike the introductory games,
where everyone engaged in exactly the same activity, in these exercises the students were usually broken into production crews, sharing problems and solutions together. This paralleled the processes of most commercial filmmaking, since emphasis in all but the experimental film study invariably was placed in the industry. The games often extended over several days of shooting and editing, and, at times, necessitated work beyond normal classroom time. Whenever possible, equipment used was equipment from the period under study.

Simulations were chosen for these film games in order to bring students through the same technological experiences as the filmmakers whose works they were studying. For students who had grown up with sophisticated electronic sound equipment, it was difficult to grasp the problems of working in a medium without the capacity to record sound at all. While they did understand the problem as a concept, they seldom gave deep thought to the implication it had for the filmmaker of the period. Similarly, since they were well-experienced with magnetic tape, they had not thought much about what it meant to record sound with an optical-sound camera, and how the instrument affected the film styles of the 1930's and 1940's. Until they had to confront the Mauer, a heavy, hand-cranked camera, they did not understand why it took many years for filmmakers to incorporate camera movement
into film's aesthetics.

There were several experiences that students needed to understand in order to gain a "feel" for the periods under study. It was not possible, however, economically or timewise, to construct simulation activities for all of them. Therefore the activities were restricted to one or two for each course. A list was made of the important subjects in each course and from it developed priorities. In Silent Film History, two experiences were most important: 1. the improvisational qualities of early comedy, 2. the development of Russian montage.

Much of early silent narrative film was based on improvisational activities. Often enough a script only developed as a rough guide to shooting shortly before the filming itself took place. Certain concepts were pre-determined, facilitating the execution of the film, but the particulars of a situation occurred frequently concurrent with the shooting itself. The clearest examples of this are found in the comedies of Mack Sennett, and it was his approach to filmmaking that had the most promise for simulation in the classroom.

Sennett's films followed standard patterns—elements not considered in the realm of genre films. A well-meaning character would create a disturbance in a commonplace situation leading to an angry crowd, and a chase, often with a somewhat frantic but inept police
force in pursuit. Using this formula, Sennett could construct a film around ordinary events taking place not too far from the center of his operation. (Thus we find Chaplin's first use of the tramp character in "A Kid's Day at the Races" which was built around an actual event taking place in Venice, California.) The approach to film contained elements of genre, narrative structure, the star system and the studio concept, all central to the development of the film industry. To work rapidly and effectively was important, demanding a group of people who were able to coordinate thinking as well as execution of ideas.

In addition to the collaborative effort, a good comic chase scene required, for a simulation event, the technology at the disposal of the filmmakers of Sennett's day. Cameras were often heavy as well as hand-cranked. They were not very mobile. Film stock was relatively slow in response to light, and the amount of film a camera could hold was limited. Since sound was only employed in the exhibition of a work, and not subject to much control by the filmmakers, visual systems of expression had to be carefully devised. The technology dictated style.

A simulation of a silent comedy could easily involve an entire class. It also could be quickly shot and edited. The super-8mm equipment normally used in film games was too automated, however, for this project,
so the project, and others like it, was shot on 16mm using cameras which required manual threading, manual exposure control, and which did not have reflex viewing systems. On one occasion, a student loaned the class a hand-cranked 16mm camera patented in 1922! Though this was later than the early comedies with which we were working, it was close in design to the mechanisms of the day, and it worked very well. Students responded exceptionally well to that experience.

**Film Game Number Nine: The Chase**

**Planning**

The procedures for this simulation were relatively simple. After a lecture on the production of silent comedy and a screening of exemplary works, the class was broken down into cast and crew and told that it had until the next class meeting to shoot 400 ft. of black and white film (a single load of the camera being used). The campus newspaper was given as a source of script ideas. During the class time, students discussed ideas and developed a rough script including the cast and specific crew, and a shoot was scheduled. Within the two-hour class period, a full plan developed. The writer became producer, overseeing all aspects of the production, giving advice, but otherwise not interfering. Problems the students might encounter with locations, costumes and props, and
suggested sources were pointed out. Imitations of Charlie Chaplin were ruled out as not fruitful to this exercise. (I later considered having everyone in the class do a Chaplin imitation on videotape and to use the tape for a comparative study of his character, but never had opportunity to carry out the plan.)

The idea was very simple. A mild-mannered character would try to assist some ladies who were having trouble with their automobile. A second character would interfere and try to woo the ladies in the process. In the quarrel that would develop, the car would be damaged further, the ladies would become angry, the cops would come, and a chase through the campus green would develop. Only the car and a few auxiliary props would be needed in the film. Those not cast in main roles or in the crew would serve as the bystanders, and later, as elements in the chase. It should not have taken long to shoot. Locations were not a major problem. The local campus police would have to know what we were doing. There was no problem.

The students responded to this simulation with great enthusiasm. Such comedies had always had a strong attraction for most people, but few had ever considered the possibility of making one. Everyone wanted to work on the project. Students eventually put more into this simulation than into all the other film games. They asked
If the class could extend its production further in time and film. This request was denied because the project would become too much of the making of a viable film and less of a simulation for a course.

**Shooting**

The shooting went exceptionally smoothly for the kind of project the class was trying. There was the best cooperation any teacher could expect. The class acted on the highest professional level. When minor problems developed, such as the need to block a sidewalk for some of the shots, students quickly saw to the business. No one in this project simply stood around waiting for things to happen. Even in the crowd scene people were kept constantly busy. This was the only project of the twenty or so attempted which did not have a single negative response in the shooting. Students expressed some frustration at their not being able to do all they had envisioned, which is part of the process itself.

In the process of making this brief film, students did come together and work very well with one another. They were highly imaginative in the approach they took. There was no reservation about getting dirty, greasy, stepped upon, and the like, or running hard, over and over again to get shots from varying angles. At times the enthusiasm was starting to get in the way. Everyone had
an idea, everyone wanted to direct. The students found out quickly that some things look easy on paper, but require careful efforts. One shot required grease getting on one lady's dress. No one had thought about what materials might be used for this until the shooting took place. Then they realized that they might not want to ruin a garment. Chocolate syrup was eventually the solution. Related to this was the need for the "grease" to fall with accuracy in the right place. The students had not considered that it might not be easy to aim a liquid and have it arrive exactly where one wanted it and when. They soon discovered the principle of matching-action and used it effectively. They also learned that the more organized they were, the smoother a given scene would go in shooting. In dealing with the chase, they learned that a chase doesn't just happen, but is a very carefully choreographed piece of work, with virtually every participant given a precise direction. They learned also that even though the idea was essentially an improvisation, it was still necessary to conduct rehearsals. The shooting took an entire afternoon.

Editing

The film was processed immediately by the department lab and we looked at rushes at the next class
meeting. Even though much careful planning had gone into the shooting, there were certain shooting errors that would have to be resolved. Students thought the film still had a modern "look." We discussed what they meant by this, and developed a list of things which separated the project from the real thing. One student pointed out that the action seemed smoother than he had imagined even though we had undercranked a good deal in order to produce a slightly speeded-up action on the screen. This, we concluded, was caused by a superior camera mechanism compared to older instruments. That most of the time our cameras were spring-wound was indeed different than the hand-cranked machines of the past, and the design of the shutter was probably different also.

Another student noted that the quality of the image itself was better than the old movies. This, it was determined, was due to improvements in film. The older film stocks were, as we knew, nitrate based and dangerous. They were also different in their response to color, and in their apparent "grain." The newer film had a longer grey scale, too, and this affected the nature of the image. Obviously the setting and costuming was different.

Several students noted that in the project there were more shots taken and more camera set-ups used than was apparent in the Sennett films, and the class concluded that our concept of what was style or correct was
different.

One lady said it was very difficult to try to act in a silent movie way. The class could not decide if this was because of acting style, general body movement, or matters of camera technology. It was probably a combination of all these things.

A number of students expressed surprise at the amount of editing which would be needed to complete the film properly. The concept of editing, the class apparently thought, had not developed, despite the obvious use of it in such significant early works as "Birth of a Nation" and "Intolerance." The writer learned from this that editing is not often well-treated in studies of early silent film history, even in texts. How the film should be edited was discussed, and the class decided it was not a group effort, but the work of one or two people. Several volunteered to produce an edited version at the next class meeting.

The Finished Film

The final screening of the edited film did not bring out many new responses. The editing had brought the film closer to the "look" of an early silent film. Students noted that timing, which they had already found to be very critical in filming a silent work, could be partially resolved by careful editing. They thought the
film lacked some good close shots to be used as cutaways, and that some of the effectiveness of the chase was lost because so much of the chase was constructed from edits rather than from the properties of what was recorded on the film. We discussed this point and decided that though the editing did much to improve the overall quality of the film, it took away some of the integrity of the chase itself as it happened. There were too many short segments when there should have been only a few long takes.

Rescreening Silent Films

The discussion of the edited film led the class to ask to see the silent films again. This time as we watched, they concentrated on certain things they had been hoping to do. They found that while chases were obviously carefully planned out, they always included masses of people in single takes. One student thought this made the effect more "real" than what we had done in the classroom. Another student noted that a strong pattern of angles and reverse angles had already developed. Other students began to see that the early silent films were quite well thought out, even if they relied upon improvisational approaches.

This game revealed much to students that they had not considered about silent film. They built a strong
sympathy for the people who made films under circumstances now considered passe. Students were able to compare effectively their own attempts at a project to the films they had seen and from the comparison to understand a great deal of what it must have been like to work in the period under study.

Film Game Number Ten: Film Haikus

Russian film theory during the silent film period is perhaps the most significant work of the times. Eisenstein's studies provide a philosophical base for film as well as a link to politics which moves the medium from its position as an entertainment to a medium of serious expression. No film history course dealing with silent film can exclude this development. From montage theory comes some of the most significant theoretical studies of the contemporary medium. At the least, by weighing Eisenstein's concepts of film against alternative ideas, film scholars are able to clarify many of the ideas expressed in cinema over a fifty year development.

Eisenstein's ideas are based in several concepts. First, he argues that film has inherently a collective impulse, an affinity for large groups of people, for their collective story, rather than for the problems of the individual. Second, he claims that from the effective understanding and use of image comes feeling, and from the
feeling evoked by images come the theses of the work. Third, film, he claims, rests its form in dialectical principles, in the juxtaposition of images, and forms within images, and the like. This concept is a crucial basis for the structural criticism of Noel Burch, which is an important contemporary point of view and the basis for much film study. Finally, Eisenstein claims that it is crucial for filmmakers and audience to develop the ability to think in terms of montage. To understand film, and perhaps the way film relates to the rest of the world, one has to learn montage thinking.

Eisenstein's montage theory is based in organic relationships found within shots as well as between them. Each shot contains tensions which are the basis for subsequent shots which led to resolution shots, or synthesis. Through juxtapositions something more is achieved, a new idea. This process, Eisenstein claims, is the essence of film. Much of Eisenstein's concept of montage has been explained through comparisons to Japanese art. Eisenstein related his ideas of film to oriental ideograms, to Kabuki theatre, and to the way a Japanese child selects a detail to relate to a whole is akin to the way a filmmaker selects his shot. Understanding this, and using it, is montage thinking.

Students in the silent film history course were able to recite the usual explanation of Eisenstein's
theory, which states that one-plus-one equals something more than (or greater than) two, the simple sum of the parts. In addition, they had to read some of Eisenstein's writings and had seen his film "Potemkin," (Eisenstein, 1925) the clearest example of the theory into practice available. Yet despite what appeared to be an understanding of the concept, students were not able to deal with montage away from Eisenstein, in other films by other filmmakers. In addition, much contemporary film theory argues against the theory, leading many students to consider it archaic, to be discarded. To have them see the relationships of montage to contemporary film, was essential to their understanding of film. Therefore a system was developed through which all students could create a montage sequence.

The First Shoot

Since Eisenstein has used Japanese art to explain his position about film, it was useful to base the exercise in a Japanese form of poetry, the haiku. Students were already somewhat familiar with this seventeen syllable form of poetry for it is often used in English courses in the study of creative writing, especially. In the individual haiku, usually two related images create a feeling or idea. A second haiku, often by another poet, is then generated from that idea, and subsequently, a
third, and so on, forming a haiku chain which can reach book length. The system of creating chains of poems, highly imagistic, can be seen as a correspondence to Eisenstein's concept of film form. Borrowing the idea of a haiku chain, which exemplified for the class, the class was asked to generate a series of images on film, the images of one student to respond to those of another.

Students worked in threes. Each set of students was to film three images representing the images of a haiku. The second image was to be a response to the first, and the third, to represent an idea generated by the juxtaposition of the first two. Though the initial impulse had been to have each student work alone, to create a single image, but upon careful thought, this would be impractical, in time especially. The game had to parallel other aspects of the study of Russian film. This limited it to no more than a two week period of time for this project. To extend it further would probably work against the effect of the game. Students might lose interest. A collaboration of three would provide sufficient images for the study. In this class, eighteen students worked in six groups.

Only three super-8 cameras were available for this project, so the shooting was assigned over a two-day period. Three groups had the camera for a full day before passing it to another group. Because the class met on
alternate days, it meant that everyone would have shot before the next class meeting. This writer did not accompany the students on their shooting. Instead, in the classroom, the students worked out among themselves the kinds of images they wanted to film and I answered some questions for them. Could they go anyplace? Was there any restriction on subject matter? The concerns were basic. Fifty-feet (one cartridge) of Kodachrome II was allocated to each group.

Students came back to the next class quite excited over what they had done. One student said that the "images just seemed to fall into place once we got started." Another student said that her group kept adding to the images so that the more they shot, the more they amassed until they had used up the entire roll. Only one group had shot just three images, and had not finished the entire roll. When asked what they had shot, some wanted the writer to "wait and see," though others talked about the river, the moon, trees, flowers, the grass, the college green, girls. The film was sent for processing and arrived back in time for the next session.

**First Screening**

Although no restrictions had been placed on the kinds of subjects filmed, all groups selected nature on the first shoot. The students told me this was because of
their understanding of haiku poetry. Here is a list of the images:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.</th>
<th>2.</th>
<th>3.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. tree</td>
<td>river</td>
<td>couple holding hands, walking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. river</td>
<td>moon (no good)</td>
<td>sunrise?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. river &amp; bridge</td>
<td>feet walking by</td>
<td>girl crying wipes eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. flower</td>
<td>girl reflected in river</td>
<td>two people kiss in river</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. bird on lawn</td>
<td>squirrel</td>
<td>dogs playing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. trees</td>
<td>trees</td>
<td>chapel</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Other images included more trees, more shots of the river, people reading on the college green, people walking along the bike path, walking with camera pointed up at trees. All but a few of the shots were essentially far shots, and there was very little camera movement.

The class viewed this footage several times and were somewhat disappointed with their shots. The shots did not seem to convey to them the strength of the feelings they thought they had captured. As we discussed the shots individually, we concluded that distance had effected their expression, that though they had set a mood, not much happened in them beyond that. They were asked if they had satisfied the assignment in terms of montage. Most said that they had not, that there was a quality lacking.
As we discussed further, it was suggested that the information was too general to work well. The one set of images which seemed to them closest to a true montage was the flower-reflection-kiss, but the images themselves lacked strength in composition. As we talked about this, students started to talk of what would have worked better, and eventually found themselves talking about how Eisenstein would have strengthened them by enforcing a "collision" of ideas. Several students were using the work "radical" in reference to the images needed to clarify the statements.

The Second Shoot

After the discussion of about one hour, the footage was reassigned and the groups discussed among themselves what they were going to do with the second set of images. They were much more sure of what they wanted to do in this discussion than when they had started out the previous week. They asked questions about the cameras, about how close they could get, and the like. There was an air of "let's get it done" in this class, and I feared that the project would not succeed. Specific enough instructions might not have been given prior to the first shoot. Even so, though, we had had a good discussion of the images in comparison to the kinds of observations Eisenstein had been making about film.
The class came back with their film, highly excited and anxious to see the images. One student said that she thought they had made a breakthrough in their shooting, and that the writer was going to be surprised. (I began to fear that they might be trying to please me rather than to engage in the assignment.) When the film returned, these are the images which had been derived using the last shot of the previous shoots as the base.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.</th>
<th>2.</th>
<th>3.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. hand caresses face</td>
<td>hand forming pot</td>
<td>man polishing car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. empty street a.m.</td>
<td>coffee cup filling</td>
<td>teacher giving lecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. umbrella closes</td>
<td>window opens</td>
<td>book opens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. couple holds</td>
<td>arm wrestling</td>
<td>broken eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. sheep in field</td>
<td>students crossing street</td>
<td>mannequins in window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. stained glass in church</td>
<td>beer bottles</td>
<td>man sleeping under tree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

That this set of shots was different from the first shoot was surprising me. There were a number of qualities to them that did not seem evident in the first. In this set, there were close-ups, or at least shots taken much closer than in the first set. But much more important was the way in which the students had related images to one another.
Second Screening

The students were very happy with the results of this second shooting. The tone of the class was as of a rejuvenation of spirits. Asked what had led them to the change, they said that one major thing was the disappointment they had with the first set of images. They wanted the project to work right. One student said she went back over some of the materials we had already covered on Eisenstein and thought that in the first shoot the class had missed the importance of the idea of a collision between images. One student said that the idea of the Haiku poetry got in the way of the concept of montage as she found it in Eisenstein's writing. She said the haiku was too romantic a form and that it did not, except in a conceptual manner, relate well to montage theory. Considering this criticism I should not have introduced the haiku at all, but the rest of the idea, of interrelating images was workable.

Project Extension

The students wanted to go further with the idea and we spent some time talking about it. One student said that he felt he was just getting started and had ideas now in his mind that he wanted to carry out. To go further was a good idea, but it could not be done in the classroom. Instead, cameras were loaned to those who
wished to pursue the matter. Three people borrowed equipment, and at the end of the term I showed several short works all based in juxtapositions. Though these were not incorporated into this study, it was clear that the concept of montage thinking had been communicated, and that the idea of a chain of film images also had developed for some people into a way of making film poems.

This game needs a good deal more revision. A better way of preparing the class for the assignment so as to avoid the near disaster of the first shoot must be developed. Nonetheless, some direct experience with montage problems is a highly useful way to teach about this important aspect of film theory and is useful in film history.

Film Game Number Eleven: Kinok Camera

Kinok Editor

Documentary Film is an upper level history course. Though the study is based in the historical development of film documentation, the course usually concentrates more on the most recent work, especially cinema vérité or direct cinema, which developed late in the Fifties, primarily because of innovations in technical aspects. New lightweight, synchronous equipment allowed the filmmaker to go into the field and to record not only what people were doing visually, but what they were saying.
The desire to do this was evident far back in documentary film history.

The students who take the documentary film course are a mixture of graduates and undergraduates primarily interested in film production rather than film scholarship. The class usually numbers in the twenties, but has at times been as large as 60 students. Most of the students have had a fairly strong background in the techniques of film production, and have made some films in 16mm themselves. They are comfortable with the technology. The largest number of those who take the course are enrolled within the Film Department. The second largest group are students from Radio-TV, which is part of the College of Communications. A few students from other areas take the course as an elective. It is not a required course for any discipline, whereas the general film history course is required of graduate film students. Only a few students who are concentrating in film theory take the course. Theory students, and often the faculty as well, concentrate on the narrative film and offer little in either the documentary or experimental film, an apparent flaw in the study of film theory.

In the documentary film course, a simple direct cinema film is often made as demonstration of the process. An assistant films the class as it hears about the subject of cinema verite. The footage is later presented to the
class in an inter-lock format and the work is discussed. The equipment necessary to do this is costly and not generally available to students. The demonstration is an efficient display of the topic and promotes usually a very good discussion since invariably the observations made of the class by the filmmakers are quite different from a "canned lecture." The films are usually interpretations of the nature of the class itself rather than a simple recording of the lecture material.

Cinema vérité reflects upon concepts of Dziga Vertov, Russian filmmaker of the 1920's. Vertov's "The Man With the Movie Camera" is an excellent filmed theory often used in this course and in others. At the heart of Vertov's concepts is the idea that it is the job of film as medium to bring people together by showing them how they are alike, how they interrelate, regardless of their personal differences. Film is able to do this through careful consideration of subject matter as well as perceptive editing.

The task of the cameraman is to go out into the "real" world and to record the things that are taking place. He serves as a collector of materials. Vertov's film stresses the ability of the camera to go everywhere, to go places we cannot ordinarily reach. The current films being made inside the living womb is a prime example of this, or Cocteau's fine footage of whales rounding Cape
Horn. Film can achieve all vantage points. Vertov also points out that though we cannot perfect the human eye, we have, in the camera-eye, a mechanical device which can be perfected. That it is, can be seen in developments of zoom lenses and fibre optics. The film the cameraman achieves is given over to the film editor—the kinok-editor.

The editor's task is to examine the footage given to him and to interpret what it contains. It is his special task to show how all the various parts of the world as seen by camera are related, linked, into a unified whole. Through the work produced by the cameraman and editor, we, as audience are able to perceive our own positions in relationship to all other things. It is a cosmic view of the medium. It is also highly humanitarian, for it implies that through the medium there is the possibility of bringing all humanity together into a single understanding of the world. Another aspect of the medium is that the subject of film is the audience which views it.

This view of film is a crucial element in the development of documentary film as it is understood today, and it is for this reason that Godard eventually formed the "Dziga Vertov Group" which intended to employ the concepts of Vertov to a post-1968 civilization. The importance of this early theory led me to treat it extensively in the documentary film course.
on a bus, sitting in front of the county court house. Another student said this was simplistic and would not bring everything together enough. A third student thought the film could be separated into activity-types and location types best. The basic location types were outdoor and public, indoors and public, and indoor but private. The activity types were group and anonymous, formal group activities, a group of informal but related activities, and private activities or individual moments. The class responded to this general observation and we talked of beginning with the larger outdoor group activities, going to the indoor but public activities and ending with private moments. One student suggested we start with a bird's eye shot of people crossing the street going to an eye-level shot of the same activity to similar groups, and at the end, return to the street crossing. With this observation—a sense of a structure which might not be based in time at all, the film began to make sense to most of the class. An editor was brought into the next classroom and everyone assisted in breaking the footage down into suitable groupings. The resultant film had some unity, and it was clear to most participants that the process was important and that film had indeed the capacity of which Vertov spoke.

I was pleased with the response to this project, but on careful consideration thought it extended longer
shooting places, the footage from one person to another was seldom duplicated. The one kind of shot which did show up four different times was that of the filmmaker's reflection as he waved to the camera, a self-image. Much of the footage consisted of full shots rather than close-ups. The class thought this was in part because the cinematographer wanted to show all of an activity rather than parts. One student pointed out that this was also because of a mild reluctance to get especially close to an activity and in the process to alter it by causing the subject to become camera conscious. It was suggested that the zoom lens was the technical means by which the close-up is achieved without necessarily being close to the activity. The class was surprised that differences in weather and general film tones did not matter very much in the footage. We were all willing to accept a great deal of diverse and inconsistent footage.

The Editing

After screening the initial footage twice in the same class, a system for editing was structured, dividing the film up into separate 50 ft. sections once again, and returning it to different students. Nobody could edit his own shots, but everyone was to take a reel and try to structure it in some way, before the next class meeting. editing equipment was reserved for this purpose.
Rescreening

In the next class, the films were remounted onto two reels for convenience. The footage had been cut by about one-third. There was approximately 500 ft. remaining. After we had viewed the films, people talked about the materials that had been removed. This writer did not know whether a person speaking had taken out footage to which he was referring.

The most noticeable footage missing was simply poor quality shots, shots too dark to use, shots which were so severely underexposed as to not be intelligible to the viewer. The second grouping of shots edited out were far shots in which many people were engaging in an activity, or in which the activity was so far away as to be only a part of a general landscape. Footage taken along the bicycle path was almost entirely gone. All pans had been removed, though they had been few to begin with. Students said that they were not useful shots, they didn't show anything definable. The only other material that students pointed out as missing was footage of close-ups that might have been reaction shots to something not seen, or close-ups of items which would normally have been considered cutaways or inserts. The class said that these shots did not seem to fill a purpose for them, but seemed instead to be evasions of what was central, or attempts at solutions to problems the cameraman had encountered.
(meaning gaps in continuity). Students kept referring to potential inserts as shots taken to cover up shooting errors. This intrigued me since nothing had been said at the first screening, and no value had been placed on shots by me in making the assignment.

As we continued viewing the footage, the class made lists of ways the shots could be grouped to make, perhaps, a single film. To do this meant that a shot list would be useful. Thus we went through the film, stopping the projector after each shot so that a list could be drawn up. This was duplicated and given to everyone before the class ended.

The Re-edit

At the beginning of the next session, the film was screened and people talked about the groupings. Two basic categories were immediately apparent to everyone. One group of shots were shots in which the people were essentially anonymous—crossing the street, children in the playground, the gas station (which was a far shot of the whole place)—and the like. The second group was that of shots in which specific people were engaged in definable activities: shopping, doing laundry, reading, etc. Almost every student had a similar list of these items. There was also a large group of relatively close-shots which were defined in terms of screen size and
subject rather than by activity: girl's face, man's face, child's face. One student had made a list of activities: shopping, lauderering, reading, walking. Another had listed outdoor and indoor activities. A third had listed types of people: student types, children, townies. After discussing the groupings, students considered ways the footage could be linked together to form a unified film.

Vertov had edited "The Man With the Movie Camera" around a dawn-to-dusk format. The film becomes a day-in-the-life-of-a-cameraman film. In the class, we clearly noted that such a format did not exist with our footage. If there was a structural base, it did not exist in time. A student suggested that we consider groups by ages, starting with the shots of children in their activities and ending with some shots we had of older people, crossing a street, walking with a walker, getting on a bus, sitting in front of the county court house. Another student said this was simplistic and would not bring everything together enough. A third student thought the film could be separated into activity-types and location types best. The basic location types were outdoor and public, indoors and public, and indoor but private. The activity types were grouped into anonymous, formal group activities, a group of informal but related activities, and private activities or individual moments. The class responded to this general observation and we
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This project, on careful consideration, extended longer than was necessary. Too many such projects start to become caught in the filmmaking trap. There is a point at which the project has demonstrated, as far as possible, the subject under study. The temptation, however, is to extend the project beyond that point and into a filmmaking project in itself where the quality of the work as film becomes as important as the subject which it was designed to demonstrate. Students do respond well to all such lab activities and they do want to make films in some way. But the wise teacher has to maintain perspective on the purpose of the activity and see to it that the class does
not become sidetracked into making a movie. The project should be modified slightly, by having students work in groups rather than as single cameramen, or by having the footage edited in a simpler fashion. The game went on too long. On the other hand, it did make Vertov's theory very clear, and the evidence strongly suggested that students would have pursued the entire business further. A number began to talk strongly of uses of super-8mm in this respect, and we had at least one fruitful discussion of the possibility of extending Vertov a little further by putting cameras into everyone's hands, to tell their own story.

Game Number Twelve: Cinedance

The more deeply film games were used as a method for dealing with film as a process in the classroom, the more it became clear that it was possible to structure a full course on film game activities. This became possible when Dr. Elizabeth Behnke, then a student of Comparative Arts at Ohio University came to me to discuss the relationships between film and dance. She was willing to serve as an assistant in an experimental course in the subject. Dr. Behnke, an accomplished violinist as well as scholar, had been working for the university dance department as an accompanist. After a series of discussions, a course was developed in which to use film
games most fully.

The relationship between film and dance had long been recognized by artists and students in both media, but had rarely been investigated by the university. This was unfortunate for this was a bold, exciting area which had already produced creative works of significance, and from which undoubtedly new works would come. In the course was a chance to come to an understanding not only of both arts, but also the interdisciplinary nature of the creative act. A ten-week course open to both graduate and undergraduate students from any department, and with no prerequisites was designed.

Twenty-two students primarily from the Film and Dance departments, but also from Philosophy, Communications and Comparative Arts, registered for the course. The diversity of the students contributed a great deal to the study. To bring dance students into such a study became a problem because they had a rigorous rehearsal schedule as well as performances among their responsibilities. Nonetheless, some of the best senior dancers took the course. Film students had a similar problem because they were driving hard to complete their required productions within the quarter system. Even with these problems the class met twice week for two-hour sessions which often extended beyond the allotted time.
It was not workable to completely omit all standard classroom procedures, partly because the writer felt mildly insecure about his own knowledge of dance. Miss Behnke had similar fears about film. Consequently a series of lectures describing the problems and development of both dance and film, stressing how they related to, or reflected, a contemporary view of the world, was designed to accompany a series of film-dance projects. The projects themselves, some of them drawn from my prior experiences with film games, would form a unified whole by the end of the quarter. A bibliography was also assigned, and, whenever possible, dance films were screened to the class.

Because this course did not have a budget assigned for it, materials were limited. There was access to super-8mm equipment, and students willingly contributed raw film stock. The Ohio University Film Laboratory contributed processing of black and white footage, and the instructors contributed all color film used and its processing.

Without a budget for the course, the desired numbers of films thought necessary for the study could not be rented. Nonetheless, films brought into the university for screening in other courses in both Dance and Film were used. These selections included Leger's "Ballet Mécanique" (Leger, 1924); Maya Deren's "Meshes of the
Afternoon" (Deren, 1943), "A Study in Choreography for Camera" (Deren, 1945), and "Ritual to Transfigured Time" (Deren, 1946); Ed Emshwiller's "Thanatopsis" (Emshwiller, 1960-62) and "Totem" (Emshwiller, 1962-63). Students needed to see that both film and contemporary dance had their roots in ideas about the nature of humanity and its relationship to the universe. For this reason, the bibliography assigned included works which were not directly tied to the specific subjects of dance or film.

The entire study was rested on the idea that despite the general interest in film found in dance, dance students seldom had an opportunity to handle film equipment or to deal directly with the problems of filmmaking. On the other hand, film students often expressed an interest in dance, but though some might have studied dance as an academic subject, few worked directly with body movements. (Bruce Baillie, one of the major experimentalists of the Sixties, visiting one summer, told me that he had somewhat similar observations, that he consequently wanted to begin any teaching about film with a study of Tai Chi, a Chinese exercise program.) As Miss Behnke and the writer discussed this business, we found ourselves consistently talking about getting the dancers to film the filmmakers dancing as a central issue to resolve. We did not, however, want to film performances, though in practice we found that this was a necessary thing to do.
Self-Image

A series of film games were designed which would give all students, and the teachers as well, opportunities to use cameras and to dance. Using materials already gathered from prior experience, we began the course by placing the camera into the hands of all participants. The self-image game served as means for giving everyone involved a common experience to share within the course structure. Each person, then, was given the camera and told to hold it at arm's length, lens pointing at his or her face, and to shoot film as he or she made a slow turn in place. This game would tell at once who in the class was already aware of the camera and relaxed with it, and who was intimidated by it.

The Circle

The same day each person filmed the person on his or her right all the way around a circle, with the camera constantly running. Again the responses of the class could be observed and potential problems could be seen. The responses were somewhat predictable in this small class, since most people either performed or filmed. No one was especially intimidated. If there was an immediately observable problem, it was that many participants were very anxious to work with the camera. The games, nonetheless, broke the ice, freeing everyone at
the outset of the study and people were anxious to see the result. Because the film department was then processing super-8mm film, I knew we could have the processed film to project at the next class. This screening brought forth a great deal of discussion about what kinds of films might be made by dancers using cameras as part of their performance. People were inspired and wanted to pursue the idea immediately. Much of the discussion centered around the idea that the camera in the game became an extension of the dancer's eye and body together as well as some discussion of the narcissistic aspects of the process, and its relationship to all creative acts.

**Body Movement**

In the second session, no camera was used, but the dancers gave a lesson in body movements. Each person was to define a space around himself and to give it expression. Interest was not in having the class learn particular dance movements as much as in having the participants loosen their bodies, to feel freer, and to become conscious of the meaning of movement. The class was kept away from anything which might place a value upon movements. Nothing done in the exercise was to be considered good, bad, pretty, ugly, beautiful, and the like. Everything was to center on movement of the body without implications of rightness or wrongness.
Many of the non-dancers in the class felt much more uncomfortable with this exercise than they did with the first game with camera. People were continually seen watching others out of the corners of their eyes and imitating some of the things they were seeing around them, especially the movements of the dance students. A number of the students were unquestionably embarrassed by their clumsiness.

In our discussion of the exercise, we concluded that we had, even on this simple and basic level, defined both dance and movement in very strict terms. Dance had a very particular meaning for everyone in the course, teachers and students alike. The discussion told that a good deal more work could be done with the movement of the body, prior to any work with camera and film. We started to wonder if working with both media in the one course was going to be as fruitful as hoped. Later this proved not as serious a problem as it first seemed; if there was a problem it was probably in the structure of the course itself.

The technology of film was minimized as much as possible in this course so it wouldn't interfere with the central issues to explore with the class. Thus super-8mm was not used throughout, but cameras which would operate easily under existing light conditions so that there would not be concern over lighting and related exposure
problems. We tried to work outdoors as much as possible and unfortunately had to modify some projects because we were foolish enough to rely upon cooperation from the weather. Obviously this was no way to structure any class project. In the Spring this course was offered, it rained at least once each week. One project was finally shot in a downpour, and it mildly affected the project though it did not dampen the enthusiasm of the students.

The Cinedance Project: First Footage

The major project in the course, which was done in sections over several weeks, developed through discussions with the class after we had completed the first basic film games, several intense lectures, and a series of readings. Initially each student would work for a period of time alone with a camera and a roll of film. Each student would go out onto the streets to record whatever seemed worthwhile to him, and to use the recorded footage as the basis for discussions of motion and dance. Using four inexpensive cameras, this process began. The weather intervened. Nonetheless, within a twenty-four hour period, everyone had shot three minutes of film and given it in for processing.

The footage was screened at the next class meeting. To our horror, we found that we had been working with a batch of film which "jumped" in the gate of the projector.
This was a low point in class spirits. The writer is very grateful to Miss Behnke for recognizing almost at once, as we were disconsolately discussing this problem, that we were missing the point, that we only had to find a way to use this fortuitous footage and its movement in our project. Her observation changed our entire attitude and we set to work.

After some discussion of the matter, jumping footage was screened again, and we talked about its possibilities as a film unit. There was little coherence in the different shootings. Some people had structured little narratives, others did extensive camera movements, still others shot footage which was self-consciously "arty" and definitely cinematic. For a long period of time in our discussion, we did not seem to be finding any way to deal with what we had accumulated. Nobody had been able to find a common element within all the footage around which we could build a coherent film. Finally we decided to put it all into the hands of one person because we were not reaching any conclusions as we tried to deal with it as a group. If one person sat down with the footage, he could structure it in some very elemental fashion. If we were to proceed with the study, expediency would have to rule in this situation.
The Cinedance Project: First Edit

The more than forty minutes of workable footage was edited severely in one single sitting down to twelve minutes, and presented to the class at the next session. The class found that there were now some semblances of a structure, but that the footage was still much too long and not especially interesting to watch. The class wanted the film to become a product just as they wanted to dance, not just to move alone or in relation to one another. This attitude never changed during the course. Film was something to be screened for enjoyment; all film led to a product for viewing. Dance was highly controlled movement for display; never movement for the sake of moving oneself. We discussed the edited film and from it formed a strategy for the remainder of the course.

The Cinedance Project: Final Stages

One more edited version was made of the footage. From this edited version, the class made a study of all movements and relationships within it. These were recorded on paper as an abstraction. From the abstracted movements and movement qualities, a dance was to be constructed and performed. The process of making a film would be incorporated into this dance. By filming the performance of the dance, an edited film would result, a "cinedance." The idea was an excellent way of maintaining
coherence in the class, and we set to work. Time unfortunately ran out in the quarter before a final version of the last film was completed.

At the end of the study, we did not find that we had produced a new definition of cinedance, or any significant new film work. However, that we had clearly raised the consciousness levels of dancers and filmmakers alike. Two students in the course, one a graduate filmmaker, the other a dancer, produced cinedance films of their own, using people in the course. The dancer later became a graduate student in film production. Another graduate film student centered his experimental thesis film on the relationship between film, dance and music. Three of the undergraduate film students later enrolled in dance courses, and one dance student took a film production workshop. The course participants often came together at dance concerts and film screenings, and invariably talk of cinedance would take place.

The pressure of time in one quarter was considered by everyone to be the most severe problem. Students thought they had not had enough time to work with either medium. The dancers thought they had not gained enough experience with filmmaking to feel more secure with it than before. The filmmakers said they had wanted to know more about the movements of dance. The most serious gap was in the failure to work with editing in the classroom.
It would also be important to move people away from the concepts of film and dance as product-oriented expressions before trying to engage in a film gaming process.

The games in themselves were very workable structures. The problems were not with the designs used within the class, but with external problems. The course was too brief for what it set out to accomplish and this restricted the study somewhat. Nonetheless, it was clear that it is possible to structure full-length courses around the gaming processes. The cinedance course was the most ambitious of the film game designs.

Summary

Carefully designed activities using filmmaking processes structured upon concepts found in simulations and instructional gaming are behaviorally observable as effective strategies for teaching about all aspects of film including the theoretical, and may be a source for teaching models more effective in the teaching of film than those currently in use. The games taught factual knowledge about the practices and materials of filmmaking, and favorably changed student ideas about the nature and importance of the medium in their lives.
ENDNOTES


3Sergei Eisenstein, Film Form (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1949).


5Eisenstein, p. 49.

6Eisenstein, p. 41.

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CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The film games described in this research brought students close to the process of film as an important and necessary aspect of the medium. These activities taught factual knowledge about the practices and materials of filmmaking, increased the ability of students to perceive and respond intelligently to materials projected on the screen, and changed student ideas about the nature and importance of the medium. Useful to teachers of film is that through the hands-on experiences given in the film games, a great deal of interaction is generated between students, their peers, and their instructors. Equally useful is that in developing student interest and motivation to learn about film, the film games produce quick results.

The Need for Teaching/Learning Models in Film Studies

To be sure, the American Film Institute has done important work in at least identifying the field, letting us know how many institutions are giving how many courses in how many areas. But this has been essentially quantitative. The qualitative aspects of all this instruction has been utterly ignored, which is scarcely surprising in a field that has thus far totally failed to qualify or define itself.¹
Sam L. Grogg, Jr. well identifies the problems of film education. One of the findings of this study, drawn from preliminary research, is the neglect of film study as an instructional problem by the people in higher education who are most involved with teaching it. The bibliography of this paper includes a reasonable assemblage of the studies which deal with film pedagogy. The list is not long. The most significant work over the years has been published in the _Journal of the University Film and Video Association_. The most important single work, which should be read by everyone in the field, is the Report on the 1978 Invitational Conference & Workshop on Film/Video as an Artistic, Professional, & Academic Discipline which was held at the University of Southern California.²

Much of the available literature on the problems of teaching about film has not been written by those currently working in film and video departments, but is the work of educators in other areas. "Specific approaches to the teaching of film," writes Professor Robert W. Wagner, of The Ohio State University Department of Photography, Cinema and Video, "including objectives, media, and strategies, are commonly found in the literature of the public schools in the United States and Britain. Only recently has much been done in higher education in the United States."³

Despite the past decade, in which the study of film proliferated in university education, there is still no
film and video department in the United States offering more than one or two courses in film pedagogy. The subject is found primarily in other departments, usually as part of media studies. Substantial work must be undertaken by those who are working in the field. Evidence that this is beginning to happen is seen in the efforts of the Centre International de Liaison des Ecoles de Cinema et de Television cited in this writing.

The objectives of film education are unclear.

Grogg notes

The diversity of interest in our field (film/video) has also been an impassable barrier to the pursuit of research and definitive scholarship. With study being conducted in an incredibly mixed array of departments representing nearly every academic discipline imaginable, the chance that a researcher knows his or her area of interest with confident completeness is highly suspect.4

In the same report, Alexander Mackendrick, from the California Institute of the Arts, asks

What's film education—any education—for? Is it part of a liberal arts education? Is it to be training for a career? In which profession? What do we mean by professional?5

The continuous quarrels among the teachers of film studies indicate that film, though it has gained a substantial foothold in the academic world, has yet to mature into a discipline of strength. There is still, after more than ten years of growth and development within universities across North America, no agreement about what should be taught about film, who should teach it, where it
should be taught, when, and to whom. The area remains open to study. Departments remain unsettled.

Obviously if we are going to make significant progress in university education with film and video as they grow out of and affect society, they cannot remain esoteric subjects. Despite signs that the major problems have been recognized and are being addressed, still not enough is being done with film pedagogy to make a telling impression on young people. Scholars and film theorists have yet to accept that hands-on knowledge of film production is essential not only to the professional, but to all who would understand the medium. Teachers are just beginning to be prepared to teach about film.

Professor Wagner suggests, in the report cited earlier, the need for

Design of a variety of teaching/learning models in environments in which films, television, and media study could flourish, including considerations of human, literary, mediated, and technological resources as well as the architecture of the living-learning spaces involved.

The need for additional models on which to structure the teaching of film was a primary reason for the present study. The activities described in the text provide alternative strategies for teachers from those of the traditional classroom.
Behavior of Students in the Film Games

The film games developed not only from the need for new teaching strategies, but also as a means for involving students in all of the medium's processes as an important way of learning about it. The activities were designed to bring every student, no matter how large the class, in front of a movie camera as well as behind it. Students who participated in film games came out of their courses having made images on film and having had their images recorded. Through the activities, film became a vital part of their environment.

Students in film studies courses need to be brought closer to the realities of filmmaking than can be achieved easily through lectures and screenings in a classroom in order to:

1. understand how filmmaking problems affect the finished product;
2. develop an understanding of film as a collaborative art as well as a communications medium and thereby to develop a greater respect for the people who make films than they had before their study;
3. move past the myths which have developed about the commercial narrative filmmaking industry.

Students need to be motivated to know more about film than
they can learn in a ten-week school term in order to:

1. overcome the passivity they exhibit in the traditional classroom and to respond more openly to the entire film experience;

2. learn how film relates to their lives, to understand that film is about them, their environment.

Students in the present study demonstrated that they were meeting its objectives in a number of behaviorally observable ways:

1. Students who participated in the film games started to remark about the contributions made to a film not just by the director or the major cast, but by cinematographers, set designers, and other artisans. These students began to ask questions about the job of a "gaffer" or a "best-boy" on a film. They wanted to know how the various crafts guilds were structured, and how they affected productions.

2. After the first two games (filming oneself/filming others), students often asked if the class could make more movies. Their enthusiasm for doing so was clearly expressed in every class in which games were used. Obviously from any novel experience comes some success, but the repeated experiences with game after game, class after class, indicates that novelty alone was not the cause of the response. One student put it this way:
"It's one thing to read about a subject, but when you're subjected to it, it's appreciated more. I encourage you to expand the film games." (Appendix II).

3. Even students who did not think that they had gained much from the activities made it plain that they preferred the games to standard classroom procedures. Said one:

The game was an interesting concept, but it failed as a learning experience. Perhaps some points could have been made by doing some experiments with just a handful of students rather than a whole class, and perhaps it could be filmed in a class as on a stage. Some sort of game is good. It brings the theoretical world down to earth. (Appendix II)

Another said: "I felt the experience was worthwhile after I had seen the projection of the film." (Appendix II)

4. Students who gamed became much more critical in their discussions of the professional films they saw in their classes. Instead of reacting to the films screened in the classroom as though they were objects apart from their own experience, students often responded as though they had a direct relationship to the images they had seen. They would often react to a film in terms of the things they would have done if they were the director, and they were less forgiving of problems they perceived in the films they viewed. Their perceptions were more acute than those of students who studied under the traditions of the classroom. They were able to define formal structures more easily than those who did not game. This was not a
comparative study, but observations indicated that those who participated in film games were seeing image qualities more quickly and easily than those who did not. This was clear in the fine details which students pointed out in the discussions of films screened for them.

5. Students in introductory courses often became deeply interested in the other courses available to them which would give them experiences similar to the gaming they had done. Students who gamed were interested not only in further film studies, especially those in which there might be film games, but also in film production.

6. A number of the students at Algoma University College who were also teachers in the local public school systems were interested in adapting film games to their own classrooms. Every year for six years at least one, and usually more, of these persons asked for gaming materials and several, who took more than one summer film course even if they did not get credit for it, reported to me that they had designed and successfully used film games of their own. One showed a film she made with her fourth grade students. Another wrote:

Through participating in the gaming films, I learned several techniques that would be useful to me as a teacher. In order to use film with my students next year, it was valuable for me to learn how to film events, how to achieve an effective shot through careful consideration of camera angles, and how to edit to achieve a desired end product. (Appendix I)
Teachers who participated in the games often showed a special interest in animation even though not much time was given to it as a gaming activity. Animated films had been made with classes only as demonstration of techniques, yet some teacher-students considered animation more viable in their classrooms than other kinds of film games. Animation can be tightly controlled and there is some literature available on its use in the classroom.

7. Another measure of the response to the film games came from students who every term asked if they could use equipment in order to make films themselves. Some of these students asked if they could substitute film productions for assigned papers. They were, in a sense, asking that the film game activities be extended, but this was difficult for the teacher, especially in larger classes. To allow students to make films in lieu of papers was potentially counter-productive since students in all disciplines must develop their verbal skills. Some students made films on their own and screened them in the classroom. Their control of image detail and sense of editing was quite good.

8. The film games demystified the medium for students. They were less in awe of filmmaking than they had been at the onset of their coursework. Once students engaged in the process of film, they became less reverent and at the same time more open to the works they viewed.
It was not unusual to hear vocalizations of pleasure or displeasure during screenings to classes which gained. Those in non-gaming classes seldom reacted as openly or directly.

9. That the film games led students to accumulate factual knowledge about the processes of filmmaking was demonstrated clearly on tests and by the authority with which they would use their critical vocabulary in discussions.

10. Student artists responded with greater enthusiasm for the film games than did non-artists. These people—painters, sculptors, glassmakers, potters, musicians—were frequently interested in working more with film production even though they did not think they would become involved with professional filmmaking. They sometimes invented film games of their own, but more often understood them as performance art, installations, or theatrical experiences. Wrote one art major:

I saw the riverbank game as a piece of conceptual kinetic sculpture, synchronous time, and variably perceived reality being the basic elements. I enjoyed participating in a primitive happening, as such, which existed in its own reality, and then had the audacity to record itself on film. Good. More. (Appendix II)

11. Older students responded with greater interest about the nature of film than did younger students. The oldest students were usually senior citizens, well past retirement, whose interest in education were primarily to
keep themselves intellectually active. Several of these students repeated summer courses at Algoma University College in order to participate in the film games. Della Gardner, a retired high school teacher in her sixties, said that she wished she had been able to take up film studies much earlier in her lifetime, that she expected to travel abroad and was going to purchase a camera in order to record her experiences.

12. Observations in the field indicated that women had a different learning experience than did men. Women more often spoke about the concepts of film and its implications within society; men were usually more concerned with the specifics of the technology.

Observations at almost every screening of film game footage were essentially the same. Students were impatient to see the footage they had taken, and deeply interested in how they looked. Even after viewing unedited footage several times, students waited to see themselves again. They began to anticipate what they were about to see. Not only did seeing themselves on film immediately open discussions of the images recorded, but also it motivated students who did not previously know each other to respond to one another in terms of their shared experience.
Areas for Further Investigation

The present study suggested that to develop critical insight means that students should be required to do more than look at films, and discuss or read about them. They should also be asked to confront directly the activities of filmmaking, for by their participation, they will come to understand film as a system in which to organize perception. A descriptive exploration, the study contains ways in which teachers of film can make this happen. Therefore, the researcher encourages further inquiry into the use of filmmaking activities not only in the teaching of film production, but also in film appreciation, history, criticism, and theory courses. In particular, the following research is recommended:

1. A survey of teaching tactics would produce materials with which to correlate the results of this study. Other scholars like Dennis Lynch at Akron and Vlada Petric at Harvard have published studies containing strategies with elements in them similar to the film games described here. It is reasonable to assume that there are teachers using materials and activities in their teaching of film which are parallel tactics. These should be located, brought together and compared.

2. A study using a split-sampling of film classes would allow a comparative study of both cognitive knowledge and behaviors under controlled conditions. Through
comparisons of students who study film through traditional methods and those who participate in film games, the values of the varying approaches could be identified and clarified.

3. More detailed behavioral observations of the participants in film games, with particular attention to various personality types, would also help determine with whom specific activities succeed. Such study would allow for more accurate planning of the film games to be used with specific classes.

4. Comparative study of the same film games used by different researchers would allow the sorting out of those games which are generally successful from those which fail. Such an interchange could lead to the development of a useful guide for teachers of film. To do this, researchers may replicate the film games described in this study and its appendices. Some Canadian public school teachers who studied with this writer have already used activities included here with their own students and have reported success. The work of these people, however, is not sufficient for the necessary thorough comparison.

5. Finally, this researcher recommends that related technologies be investigated in conjunction with film games. There is a clear potential for the application of electronics to the teaching tactics in this study.
Videotapes and videodiscs already have resolved some of the difficulties of ownership and availability of films for classroom use. In the near future students may be assigned films as they are now assigned textbooks. Not only can students find access to film collections in libraries, but they may purchase their own videotapes or videodiscs at reasonable cost.

Videotape recorders are already widely used in education. It is not difficult to obtain access to them within institutions of higher education. Obviously videotape, used in the context of the film games, can provide instant feedback. This would be highly useful in games requiring shot designations, camera angles, and other compositional matters. Videotape is commonly used in working with actors and directors, not only in education, but in the professions as well. The current disadvantage of videotape is that of editing, but the necessary facilities already exist at most universities and the hardware is increasingly available.

Computers linked to videotape machinery would allow direct interaction between visual materials and individual students. Programs could be developed in which, rather than edit on paper as is described in the present text, students would edit on the computer display unit. Edits made by students could be seen at once, and could be compared with those made by others, professional editors,
perhaps.

Holography, too, has implications for the study of film, and should be investigated as the technology develops.

The rapidly expanding area of electronic technology has much potential in the study of film and television. The present study concerned itself with a descriptive exploration of the uses of film in the teaching of film. As video and computer technology advances and becomes increasingly available to a broad segment of the population, systematic experimental and evaluative investigations of their uses in teaching about film, and all visual media, should be made.
ENDNOTES


2Invitational Conference and Workshop in Film/Video as an Artistic, Professional, and Academic Discipline, Arthur Knight, (ed.), University of Southern California, 1979.


4Grogg, Jr., p. 10.

5Alexander Mackendrick, "Film and Video Education: The Diversity of the Field and the Problem of Standards," Invitational Conference and Workshop on Film/Video as an Artistic, Professional, and Academic Discipline, by Arthur Knight, (ed.), University of Southern California, 1979, p. 17.

6Richard Dyer McCann, "What is Film Study?" Invitational Conference and Workshop on Film/Video as an Artistic, Professional, and Academic Discipline, by Arthur Knight, ed., University of Southern California, 1979, p. 37.

7Wagner, p. 167.
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APPENDIX I

Samples of Student Comments: Algoma College

I thoroughly enjoyed participating in the film project. It gave me a new insight into filmmaking. I had not realized the length of time involved in shooting. I also had not considered that filmmaking could also be tedious and technical, waiting for people to cooperate. My admiration has increased for people who make movies. It is not merely holding the camera.

—Third year Sociology major, grade school teacher

I would have liked to have had the opportunity to be more involved with making a movie. I would have liked to have learned to splice, edit, or at least be present when it is done.

—Second year history major

With the animated film using cut-out pictures, I discovered how to do layouts for the shots, how to move the pictures in order to show a progressive movement, and how to set up the camera and equipment for use in a
classroom project.

The narrative film game outside using the script enabled me to comprehend the sequence of shots necessary to create a film and demonstrated some techniques of shooting to get a variety of shorts. I enjoyed participating in the class effort.

The self-image film made me feel very self-conscious. Maybe this type of gaming should be done later in the course when you are more familiar with your classmates.

—Third year Education major, technical college teacher

The gaming projects emphasized the tremendous exactness, organization and work involved in making a film. The filming of oneself was interesting in that it relaxed the class. It surprised me for I wasn't expecting the whirling motion of the background. It was a good way to begin a film course. The steps in animation were frustrating as there were too many conflicting creative ideas; however, on the positive side, it was fun, and informative of the exact process of one form of animation. Since I was only part of the crowd scenes, the narrative film game only impressed me that filmmaking is an exact process wherein editing plays a major art role. To take a more active role in editing would be far more beneficial to me.

—Third year Education major, high school teacher
I was surprised at the simplicity of the games. I have the tendency to be overawed with things that seem to me to be a technical process. I thought the first game of holding a camera was very worthwhile. I discovered several people in the class were timid and self-conscious beforehand. Gaming is a necessary device in a film course.

—Second year Psychology major

When gaming with film, I found it very interesting to watch the different methods used in filming. It was very interesting to see how a film could be made just by aiming the camera at your face and turning in a 360 degree circle, resulting in a film. The next thing I would attempt would be to ask students to move the camera up and down as they turn because I feel it gives better results.

—Second year Psychology major

I enjoyed the shooting of our own classroom film. Living this experience gave me a better insight into the technological approach of filmmaking.

—Senior citizen

I felt that everything in the gaming with film project succeeded for me. I now have a better comprehen-
sion of editing, a better idea of how to get pupils organized into writing a script, and then having them film their own script. I also learned how to make an animated film and can use it as an interesting facet of my classroom.

—Second year Sociology major, grade school teacher

In gaming with film projects, I appreciated the opportunity to participate in the group activities, but I wished to delve more into the use of the camera. I would have liked to be involved in the directing and producing of my own script.

—Second year English major

Using the camera at the first part of the course was very good. The whole idea of camera and you quickly confronted the user.

—Second year Sociology major

In the gaming with film projects, I found that taking pictures of myself helped me to realize I was too self-conscious. I am now able to see myself through the eyes of a camera, and because of this I have learned that cameras don't bite. Elizabeth Taylor move over.

—Second year English major
The class film I found interesting to participate in, yet I felt the amount of time spent on it, or maybe the attitude of others unsatisfactory.

—Third year French major, grade school teacher

I enjoyed doing the narrative film, but I wish that some of the women would have had a chance to perform just as the men did.

—Second year French major, grade school teacher

The animated film made after class really worked for me. I was very surprised when I saw the finished product. Probably an eye flashing by would have escaped my interest if I hadn't seen it put there. This was a good idea in preparing us for experimental film.

—Second year English major

I would suggest that more people get their hands on the camera. I was surprised at how few people use a movie camera regularly. The making of the film was very interesting and useful.

—Second year Sociology major

The filmmaking was fun, but it would have been more interesting to develop the script and produce it ourselves. The filming was done too quickly and I didn't understand
why the director chose the shots he did. I would have liked to discuss the reasons for full shots versus close-ups, etc.

—High school senior, in course with a scholarship

I wished there had been fewer of us participating in the games. We learn only by doing. I'm referring to the animation we did. I did enjoy being part of the group, however. I would have enjoyed making a film with two or three people.

—Third year English major, high school principal

The film projects were an essential part of the course. We learned something of the camera as the major factor in film production. The filming of ourselves was a very unnerving experience as I felt very self-conscious. Had you asked us to do the same thing today, I would have been able to do it with great ease. The participating in the float film gave me a sense of worth and usefulness in the production despite the fact that I really just watched. Our narrative film was great fun and I enjoyed it immensely.

—Third year History major

Through participating in the gaming films, I learned several techniques that would be useful to me as a
teacher. In order to use film with my students next year, it was valuable for me to learn how to film events, how to achieve an effective shot through careful consideration of camera angles, and how to edit to achieve a desired end product.

--Third year English major, grade school teacher

I learned from filmmaking myself just what can be done with film to make an interesting and varied film. However, I do not like to be filmed, prefer to watch. The documentary film of the camera parade float was fun to watch. Techniques and methods of making such a film were clearly demonstrated to me.

--Senior citizen

I found the making of the film concerning the damsels and ogre very interesting and entertaining, sufficiently so that I will attempt a simple film with my class this fall. I did not succeed in xeroxing myself, although I tried to with different machines.

--Non-degree student, housewife
APPENDIX II

Samples of Student Comments: Ohio University

The film game was played to show continual motion, but with many people. It worked sometimes. It gave the students a first-hand experience with the camera.

--Sophomore, Radio-TV major

The games, successfully demonstrated the relationship of editing and how the various angles of the camera can be cut together to represent unity. It worked because the class actually participated and saw the creation of material that would be used for the stated purpose. It is a good approach to an interesting question.

--Sophomore, Radio-TV major

I thoroughly enjoyed it. It was a refreshing break from the usual smoke-filled somnolent atmosphere in the auditorium. It taught me about movement for motion pictures. I thought I seemed very jerky when I went through my cheerleader-like motions. Motion for the movie camera must be very smooth, but I seemed to be going
blurry, flapping around like a big bird. The three different shots were informative for I have never realized the differences in an object's appearance when photographed from different distances. Movement seems terribly exaggerated when photographed in a medium shot or close-up. I looked very silly in the medium shot. My motions were so swift I seemed ready to take off. From further away, though, the motions looked more subdued. The actions of all the students looked more interesting when photographed close-up. They seemed more meaningful, like they were almost telling a story in mime. Yet, from far away, they seemed unimportant. The experiment illustrated to us in a personal way what different photographic shots look like.

—Senior, Art Education major

The game on the river I felt was a good change from normal classroom teaching. Being able to participate and then later to view and enjoy what we had accomplished worked well, in my mind. I, like most, enjoy a change, and the game was a nice change. Using cameras, seeing how they were set up, how each camera contributed and captured the subject worked better for me than, say, a more normal classroom approach. Just the fact that we were in the film created a more sincere and powerful interest. Yes, I did like and feel the film game did enhance the learning
process and added more than words in a book.

—Senior, Graphic Design major

The game was successful. No, I learned more about the filmmaking process in one LIVE session than any amount of theory will ever teach me.

—Sophomore, Undecided

I compliment the originality of these games to their inventor. I thought the games were educational and enjoyable. It gave the class first-hand contact with what we had read about in the book. It's one thing to read about a subject, but when you are subjected to it, it's appreciated more. I encourage you to expand the film games. I know others will enjoy it as well as I have. Merry Christmas.

—Junior, Music major

The game on the riverbank made me personally uncomfortable because I was required to actually be in front of a camera. Outweighing this discomfort, however, was the impact created by seeing how film was made. Even though in Vertov's "Man With a Movie Camera" you saw the cameraman making a film, it was essentially all a film. It took the experience of the riverbank to illustrate that movies are actually made and created rather than appear
magically from the air.

--Sophomore, Radio-TV major

I feel the experience we had was very valuable. It gave me the knowledge of editing, even though we did it rather informally. The fact that we were able to use the movie camera and see that long, medium and high-angles really are on a one-to-one basis with the cameraman. Just talking about it in class is helpful, but actually being able to perform these was even more valuable. With this knowledge, one can see some advantages and problems a filmmaker has to deal with in making a film. I feel the experience will now make me aware of this when viewing movies.

--Junior, Photography major

The normal classroom atmosphere with a variety of films to watch and lectures to explain concepts is fine as a regular approach, but the opportunity to go out and participate in the actual making of films is a worthwhile addition. Many students have never seen or operated a movie camera before, and this change was enjoyable as well as educational for us.

The set of three different types of shots and the problems of filming and acting were techniques discussed in the book, but the actual involvement in them certainly
clarified them even more. Though I'm sure it takes a lot more time and trouble to see something of this nature done, I think it should be continued.

I, for one, was a little nervous and embarassed to get in front of the camera for the first time, but it was fun. Watching oneself on the screen was a new experience and will be remembered for quite a while.

--Senior, Art major

I was bored and disillusioned during the actual filming which gave all the more impact to the viewing. It was a powerful revelation to see the effect of such idiocy edited together. It was terrific. One of the best films I've seen this quarter. Frighteningly powerful juxtaposition.

--Junior, Theatre major

I enjoyed the camera game that we played because it helped me to understand film editing better. You can read about editing in a book, and discuss it in a class, but you can never understand it as well when you help do it yourself. The screening of the film in class also illustrated the importance of sound to me because the atmosphere of the film was affected so much by the music that as played with it. I also liked getting to use a movie camera, which was something that I had never really
done before.

--Junior, Art Education major

I liked the game, but I felt that the time lag between the shooting of the movie and the screening hampered its educational effects.

--Sophomore, Photography major

The game played actually helped me understand and clearly recognize the aspects of continuity and matching action, what it was and did. In a more normal class approach, you would get only words in a definition, but being there, seeing it actually work, it sticks in the mind more.

--Junior, Radio-TV major

I saw the riverbank game as a piece of conceptual kinetic sculpture, synchronous time, and variably perceived reality being the basic elements. I enjoyed participating in a primitive happening, as such, which existed in its own reality, and then had the audacity to record itself on film. Good. More.

--Senior, Art major

The game that we played on the riverbank worked for me not at the riverbank, but in class, when we saw it. I
suppose it did work in showing me how to set up the cameras, but more importantly it showed me the different angles and views that something can be caught from at the same time. It showed me the beauty of film and the variety at which filming can be done. Also, I was able to see how funny I actually look on film.

--Junior, Art major

I have always believed in the benefit of actually doing experiences when learning. I felt the game was instructive fun and an incentive for me to try my own hand at filmmaking. It certainly got us out of the classroom and was helpful in understanding the difference between shots and lengths and angles. By being part of something, getting involved, you use more of your senses, and can therefore take it in with more ease and better understanding. I definitely prefer such games in place of a more normal conventional classroom approach.

--Senior, Art major

I personally felt the game was a waste of time and did very little in actual teaching. However, it did provide for a departure from normal activities.

--Junior, Radio-TV major
I believe the primary function of this game was to illustrate the use of editing and as an explanation of how films are photographed. I felt it did indeed work for me. It was essentially what would be a lab in another class, and I felt it was extremely helpful to show how things are done through a first-hand experience. (Though I was somewhat embarrassed to stand in front of three cameras and half the class, waving my arms around.)

--Senior, Photography major

The film game did not work for me. I thought that the class for a while was afraid of the camera and having their pictures taken. They also seemed afraid to use the camera, that is, of filming a person for a full ten seconds. That would have brought more unity and continuity into the film. I think that the major problem was that being afraid of being filmed feeling, and for many, it was the first time they used a camera. The idea behind the game was excellent. Maybe in the future you should make students more at ease.

--Senior, Theatre major

The game was an interesting concept, but it failed as a learning experience. Perhaps the same points could have been made by doing some experiments with just a handful of students rather than a whole class, and perhaps
it could be filmed in a class on stage. Some sort of game is good. It brings the theoretical world down to earth.

--Junior, Journalism major

If the game had a specific objective, it was obscured by a lack of explanation or a failure to evaluate the result.

--Sophomore, Undecided

The film game was anything but a game. It was an excellent way of learning about filmmaking. The learning by participation theory worked great, and by employing the students as actors, it made the game stick in their minds.

--Senior, Photography major

I feel it drew us as students into the understanding of a small part of the films we were seeing. It was a worthwhile project and it drew together a very large class.

--Junior, Art major

I thought the game was fun, but what was the purpose? Why didn't we discuss what we were trying to accomplish? It seemed to me that this was George Semsel's game, and we were just puppets. Why didn't we get to see
how you edited it? What technique did you use, and why?

   --Senior, English major

Truthfully, I did not understand the game on the riverbank at the time we played it. However, when we viewed it, I found out that some people react very much the same to the camera. Most of the students were unimaginative and pretty much did the same thing when it was their time to perform. When the two views of the students were projected at the same time, I realized what an effect different angles, shots, and distances have on the performer. I also could understand how music enhances a film. I felt the experience was worthwhile after I had seen the projection of the film.

   --Junior, Music major
APPENDIX III

Summary of Students in the Film Games Studied
(1974-1979)

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<td>B. The Director's Cinema</td>
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APPENDIX IV

Sample Film Games

This appendix contains some of the games as presented to classes. Still photographs taken of frames in films made in games are also included here.
FILM GAME NUMBER THREE:
MATCHING ACTION WITH THREE CAMERAS

Aspects of Film: Game with Matching Action

This game is designed to illustrate the concept of matching action.

To achieve a sense of flow, of continuity, the action or movement in one shot is matched carefully with the action in a second, so closely that the action looks like one, single movement. Understanding this concept is basic to an understanding of the structure of film.

The game will be conducted on the riverbank at the end of Mill Street, near the women's athletic field, 3:10 p.m., Thursday, November 14. Please be on time and dress appropriately for the weather conditions. If you have the courage and interest, make a mask of yourself to wear in front of the cameras.

There will be three cameras set at varying angles and distances from a given point. Cameras will be designated 1, 2, and 3. You are to line up behind camera 1.

When you reach camera 1, you will press the shutter release for a count of 5. Then go to camera 2. Again press the shutter for a count of 5 and go to camera 3. After you
have shot with camera 3, go to the central point at which all cameras are facing. Standing at this point, perform one of two actions: a. rotate your arms in a circle, or b. turn yourself around two or three times. When you have shot with all three cameras, and have performed in front of them, you are free to leave. Be sure to give your name to the person taking attendance.

Michael and George will be shooting the game with other cameras.

When all footage has been processed, we will screen the rushes. Then Michael and George will edit the rushes into a single unit in which action is matched from the first shot to the last.

We will discuss this project as it progresses.
ON CUE: MAKE A SLOW
ROTATION AND PUT YOUR ARMS OUT STRAIGHT.
THEN GIVE YOUR
NAME TO INSTRUCTOR.

ON CUE:
SHOOT FOR 5
SECONDS.
GO TO +

LOW ANGLE
CLOSE-UP

EYE LEVEL
MEDIUM SHOT

START
HERE.
ON CUE:
SHOOT
FOR 5
SECONDS.
GO TO 2.

HIGH ANGLE
FULL SHOT

ON CUE:
SHOOT FOR 5
SECONDS.
GO TO CAMERA 3

SET ORGANIZATION FOR MATCHING
ACTION GAME, SHOT DESIGNATIONS,
CAMERA ANGLES.
C. ON CUE: SHOOT WITH CAMERA #3.
    THEN SIT IN CENTER.

D. ON CUE: SHOOT WITH
    CAMERA #4.
    THEN SIT IN CENTER.

A. ON CUE: SHOOT WITH
    CAMERA #1.
    THEN SIT IN CENTER.

See the instructor before leaving the location.

GAME PATTERN FOR MULTIPLE CAMERA SHOOT.
Continuity Game: Algoma College. The Director's Cinema

In the following script, the cast changes in every shot, but the continuity is maintained throughout.

1. Far Shot. Two women walking along a path towards the camera.

2. Medium Shot. The two women walking towards camera.

3. Close-up. Ogre spying on the women from behind a telephone pole. This shot is a cutaway.

4. Far Shot. The women are seen from behind as they continue up the path.

5. Far Shot. The Ogre starts to stalk the women.

6. Extreme Far Shot. The women turn to the left and disappear behind a building.

7. Far Shot. The Ogre starts to run alongside the building.

8. Medium Shot. The women pass through a doorway towards camera and past.

9. Far Shot. The Ogre approaches the building.


11. Close-up. The Ogre looking into the window.

14. Two-shot. The two women reacting as though they've heard something.
15. Close-up. The Ogre's feet skulk through a doorway.
19. Far Shot. The game-players react to the scream.
20. Close-up. A single game-player reacting to the scream, hand cupped to ear.
21. Far Shot. The game-players rushing across a field.
22. Point-of-View. Moving Camera. Hand-held Shot. The camera runs along with the crowd of players.
24. Full Shot. The crowd of players crammed into a doorway, staring.
25. Medium Shot. The Ogre is sitting on a couch between two women, staring.
26. Point-of-View. A projector is showing a film. On the screen is the first shot of this movie (Two women walking towards camera).

There are several elements to this game. The cast and crew will change in every set-up. The success of the film
will depend upon how well the shots can be matched. If the continuity is effective, then the changes in characters, though it will be noticed, will not heavily disrupt the flow of the film. To help, there are several shots from a sufficient distance to make the changes less obtrusive, and a few cutaways as well.

The film is designed around the idea of a circle. The games-players are also engaging in the "Film Game." They are moving in a circle. Later they see the first shots of the "Film Game" being projected in the last shot of the game itself. The game, then, has completed a circle.

In addition to the changes in cast, there are changes in the locations. The door through which the women pass is not a door to the building they apparently enter. The window the Ogre looks into is not part of that building either. The room he apparently sees is not in any way related to the campus or the class except where it is used in the film. It was taken by a different cameraman in a different place and at a different time. The place to which the games players rush is not the doorway seen in the subsequent shot. Through careful editing, a new space is created.
Far Shot. Two women walking towards camera.

Medium Shot. Two women walking towards camera.

Far Shot. Women walking away from camera.
Far Shot. Ogre skulking after the women.

Extreme Far Shot. Women turn corner behind building.
Far Shot. Ogre sneaking up behind women.

Medium Shot. The women go through a doorway and past camera.
Far Shot. Ogre approaches building.

Close-up. Cutaway. A window from outside.
Close-up. Ogre looking into window.

Extreme Close-up. Ogre looking into window. Matches with above.
Ogre's Point-of-View. A living-dining room.

Two Shot. The two women reacting as though they've heard something.
Close-up. Ogre's feet sneak through a doorway.

Extreme Close-up. Doorknob turning.
Far Shot. Cutaway. A group of people playing a circle game.

Close-up. Woman inside, screaming and reacting as in fear.
Far Shot. Circle-game players reacting to the scream.

Close-up. A single player reacting to the scream.
Far Shot. Game-players rushing across a field.

Point-of-view. Hand-held camera. Camera runs along with players.
Far Shot. Reverse angle. Players running towards the camera.

Full Shot. Players crowding into doorway, staring.
Medium Shot. Ogre sitting between the two women, staring.

Point-of-view. A projector, seen from behind, is screening the first shot of the movie (Two women walking towards camera).
FILM GAME NUMBER 7: THE MIRROR

1. FS A landscape reflected in an unseen mirror - title over - the mirror breaks to reveal a princess-like girl dancing on a landscape. Two weird figures carrying a large mirror pass in front of her. The girl stops her dance and watches them.

2. CU The girl watching the figures with the mirror.

3. MS From behind the girl, we see two figures moving by in the background.

4. FS The girl following the figures - from behind her.

5. MS The mirror and figures passing by from slightly behind so they move away from camera in a diagonal.

6. FS The figures disappear into a garage or barn.

7. MS In a garage or barn, an old hag is helping the girl dress her hair. The shot is taken in a mirror which swings slowly to reveal the camera and crew. The crew is composed of several weird figures, mute and expressionless, perhaps
motionless or minimally moving, but paying no attention to the girl.

8. CU The girl, astonished, turns away, gets up and moves off.

9. MS The girl running from room - match action with 8.

10. MFS Girl running out of garage and off screen.

11. FS Girl running down a country lane. She ducks behind a tree or fence.

12. MS The girl catches her breath and then shows great surprise.

13. MS From behind the girl. The girl sees the two figures holding the mirror as though for her. She starts to approach them very slowly. They run off.

14. MS The figures with the mirror run by and down the lane. The girl appears chasing them. They go off screen.

15. FS The mirror propped up in a field. The girl approaches the mirror and kneels to look at her reflection. Shot from behind her.

16. MCU The girl moves in close to kiss her reflection. The mirror breaks (or suddenly moves away) and the
The girl almost kisses the hag. The girl screams.

17. CU The girl screaming.

18. CU The hag laughing.

19. MS From behind the hag, the girl is seen running away and off screen.

20. MFS Girl turns behind tree. As she turns, two or three weird figures pop out at her, laughing. She turns and runs again.

21. MFS From position of 20, girl tries to hide again. Again weird figures pop out at her.

22. FS The girl runs to a pond in foreground of shot.

23. MS Girl kneeling by pond to look at her reflection.

24. CU Reflection is that of the hag and other weirdos laughing at the girl.

25. MS Girl gets up and runs away.

26. FS The mirror propped up in a field. The girl approaches it and kneels.

27. MS The girl looking into the mirror.

28. CU Mirror reflection of laughing hag.
29. CU Girl's eyes.

30. CU Hag's eyes.

31. MS From behind, we see the girl pick up a hammer which lies beside her.

32. CU Arm raising hammer.

33. CU Hag's reflection, frightened.

34. CU Arm striking with hammer.

35. MS From behind, the girl smashes the mirror to reveal behind it another mirror reflecting herself.

36. MFS Girl admiring herself in mirror. The mirror shatters to reveal the same or a similar landscape to that of the first shot of the film.

Fade out
FILM GAME NUMBER 8: PAPER EDIT

Final Examination: Aspects of Film

Here is a list of twenty-nine shots which could be edited into a single, coherent scene. Not all of the shots must be used. There is no "correct" version, but a multiplicity of possibilities. In the string-out of the actual shots, which you will see three times, the shots have been separated with black leader. After the screening, you are to "edit" a version of the scene on paper. Once you have completed your version of the scene, write a brief prose summary of the story it tells.

1. Hand-held camera walks up a flight of stairs and through the front door of a white house. As the camera approaches the door, the reflection of the filmmaker can be seen in the glass.

2. Hand-held camera runs down a flight of stairs outdoors and along a residential street.

3. Far Shot. A man runs up a flight of stairs and into a house.

4. Far Shot. A man races down a flight of stairs and along a street.

5. Far Shot. A young woman races down a cement stairway
and along a street.

6. Medium Shot. A "priestess" bows at an altar and lights two candles.


9. Close-up. Priestess raises banana to her forehead and performs a ritualistic blessing.


11. Close-up. A half-eaten banana stands upright on a table. It slowly collapses.


13. Medium Shot. Profile. Man eating banana. While he eats, a woman's head rises in foreground as though she is spying on him.


15. Close-up. Man's apparently lifeless head rests on table, eyes unblinking.


17. Extreme Close-up. Woman's eyes.


20. Close-up. Floor level. Woman's face, eyes unblinking.
FILM GAME: THREE WAYS OF SHOOTING A SCRIPT
(Not in text)

A. The single take. All action taken from a single camera position. Real time. Like a documentary of a stage play. The camera has not much to offer as interpreter. The nature of the activity will rest with the performance.

B. The single take using a mobile camera. The camera begins to operate as a participant-observer. It can become interpretive. Film is in real time.

C. The fragmented scene. Here the camera will become the controlling element. It becomes flexible, moving close when necessary to give detail. Because the scene is taken from various viewpoints, the possibility of controlling time materializes. The length of the scene will not be determined by the activity or performance filmed, but by the length of the component shots after they have been selected and edited.

The simple scene is two people arm-wrestling, a third watching. Eventually one person wins.
1. Far shot – two persons arm-wrestling, a third watching.
2. Medium shot – person 1
3. Medium shot – person 2
4. Close-up – arms wrestling
5. Close-up – reaction of person 3
6. Medium-shot – Person 1
7. Medium-shot – Person 2
8. Far shot – the entire cast
9. Medium-shot – 3 reacting
10. CU – person 1, straining
11. CU – person 2, grinning
12. FS – entire scene, person 2 wins

(In addition to these shots, several short "inserts" or "cutaways" should be taken to provide editing flexibility.)
FILM GAME: DEMONSTRATION SCRIPT FOR
FILM TECHNIQUES
(Not in text)

I 1. FS - Two people arm-wrestling, a third person watching.

II 2. MS - Two people arm-wrestling.

IV 3. CU - Arms wrestling.

V 4. CU - Person one's face.

VI 5. CU - Person two's face.

II 6. MS - Two people arm-wrestling.

IV 7. CU - Arms wrestling.

III 8. FS - Two persons arm-wrestling, third person watching.

VII 9. CU - Person three.

VIII 10. MS - Point of view - Two persons arm-wrestling.

VI 11. CU - Person two.

IV 12. CU - Arms.

VII 13. CU - Person three.

V 14. CU - Person one.

VI 15. CU - Arms, one starting to win.

VII 16. CU - Person three reacting.

V,VI 17. CU - Losing person in anguish.

III 18. MS - Two persons arm-wrestling, third behind
them. Match is won.

V,VI 19. CU - Happy winner.
V,VI 20. CU - Unhappy loser.
VII 21. CU - Person three reacting.
I 22. FS - Two persons after the match, third person responding.

Cast: Person One; Person Two; Person Three.
Crew: Director (handles action); Assistant Director (Records & slates); Cameraperson (sets actual shots); Assistant Cameraperson (focus, lights).
Location: One scene
Properties: Two chairs, a table, a prop the third person can hold (all are optional)
Costumes: Distinctive hats.
Kit: Camera, film, tripod, light kit, tape, reflector, screwdriver, wrench, lens tissue, gate cleaner, filters, slate, pen, paper.
APPENDIX V

A Basic Equipment Checklist for Super-8 Productions

Camera _____________________________________________
Filters ____________________________________________
Close-up Lenses _____________________________________
Filter Key __________________________________________
Dust Blower _________________________________________
Lens Tissue _________________________________________
Cable release ________________________________________
Batteries __________________________________________
Film Stock _________________________________________
Tripod _____________________________________________

Lights ______________________________________________
Reflectors __________________________________________
Barndoors/Diffusers __________________________________
Extension Cables _____________________________________
Extra Bulbs/Extra Fuses ________________________________
3-Prong Adaptor _____________________________________

Tape Recorder _______________________________________
Tape Stock _________________________________________

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