DIERDRE BOYLE: —audience. But this really isn't an audience, this is actually an extraordinary group of people who come to this event. When I was first asked by Sherry Miller Hocking to put together this program, it was with the understanding that it was an opportunity— would be an opportunity for people who didn't have a lot of background in video to kind of get up to speed, so that they would get the most of the next few days. So I kind of thought about it from that standpoint. But I think more than half the people here could do a bang up job and put me out of business. So I really think the most important thing is for all of us—the three wonderful people here who helped me organize this today, and all of you—to share something about your background in video and your interest in the subject, because we'll all work, I think, collectively as a group to sort of just explore what this video history is all about.

So I will begin the process. My name is Dierdre Boyle. I became interested in video in the early seventies as a graduate student with(?) Gerry O'Grady, who I think is about to walk in the door at any moment. And I realized in the early seventies that I would probably be much better at writing about video than making it. And so that's the choice that I made. And I teach in the graduate Media Studies program at the New School for Social Research, and have been showing video and teaching about it and writing about it for twenty years now.

PAUL RYAN: Paul Ryan. I got involved in video after— I was working directly with McLuhan at the New School— at not the New School, (inaudible)

WOMAN: (inaudible; laughter)

RYAN: (inaudible) I was at Fordham, smitten by McLuhan, got involved working with him. Said to myself, "This guy's either crazy, or it'll work." This stuff worked, so I got ahold of *Video as a Medium*(?) that he had not talked about, starting experimenting with it in terms of "the medium is the message," and so forth. And it spun outta there. I got involved in Raindance, Radical Software; I got involved in State Council on the Arts, Howard Wise's show, lots and lots of books and stuff like that. I'll catch up to you later.

BARBARA LONDON: My name is Barbara London. In 1973, I was in the Museum of Modern Art's print department, working with artist books. And it's around that time that the (inaudible) first equipment. I was very involved in getting (inaudible). In 1974, I was here with some of you in the audience. At that point, Everson had a conference and it all really began kind of in that year. Tony Conrad was behind the camera then. And I met all kinds of amazing people, Lanesville TV folk. It was when I first met (inaudible), many others. It's been a glorious twenty-five years.

PARRY TEASDALE: My name is Parry Teasdale. I'm a recovering Videofreek (laughter) It's kind of fun, some of us— I'm looking around to see some faces; we ought to be wearing little campaign hats, kind of "video of foreign wars," or something. (laughter) And I was a member, a founding member of a group of Videofreex in New

TEASDALE (Cont.): York City back in 1969. And we transmogrified into something called Mediabus, in order to take advantage of money from the state. And we had a TV station that wasn't licensed, in a place called Lanesville, New York, which was hardly big enough to rate on most maps. And I've since freed myself of the video bug, after working with— as a consultant for a little while with the Federal Communications Commission to make stations like Lanesville TV legal. And now I have entered the world of print, and been there for a number of years as a newspaper editor. So I really don't know what's happening in video, and I'm curious to find out what's going on since I left the field.

BOYLE: So now we'll switch to you and ask you only to be brilliantly concise, so that we can get to everybody and then get on with the rest of the program. So… Because I think some people will probably come in and sit in the back, we'll start in the front and move back, and that way I hope to get everyone. Would you mind beginning? (inaudible voice) Yeah.

WOMAN: Hi, my name's Melinda Barlow(?), (inaudible) I did on dissertation on Mary Lucier; (inaudible)

RICHARD SIMMONS: My name's Richard Simmons, I'm the real Richard Simmons. (laughter) I was the curator of video (inaudible) Syracuse from 1974 till about 1981. And I've been living in Syracuse since, both as an interested video person and as a painter.

MAN: I'm (inaudible), I'm co-founder of the Synapse Video Center, which is an experimental center here at Syracuse University. We have visiting artists come from all over (inaudible) and do projects. And I'm also the host of (inaudible) party tomorrow night, and (inaudible)

TONY CONRAD: I'm Tony Conrad. I teach video at the Center for Media Study up in Buffalo, and I'm also working there to try to recompose our public access facility, which has recently melted down. And I've also been involved in music and (inaudible) performance (inaudible)

WOMAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: Hi, my name is Liz Becker(?). I'm from Rensselaer College (inaudible) video documentary (inaudible)

WOMAN: Hi, my name is Laurie Dunn(?). I'm also at Rensselaer College (inaudible)

WOMAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: My name is Gretchen Thomassan(?). I also (inaudible)

WOMAN: Can you talk up a little?

WOMAN: My name is Gretchen. I'm an RPI(?) at(?) (inaudible).

WOMAN: Marion Kearns(?). I have a small gallery (inaudible) Boston area that specializes(?) (inaudible) alternative media(?). I'm also helping to organize the Boston Summer Arts Festival, which will take place next May.

HANK RUDOLPH(sp?): My name is Hank RudolphX(sp?). I'm a programs coordinator at the Experimental Television Center.

WOMAN: I'm Claire(?) (inaudible) I started video (inaudible) Buffalo since 1980. (inaudible) Experimental Television Center (inaudible) And I'm now in Atlanta. I'm the video (inaudible)

MAN: (inaudible) I write about(?) (inaudible) film and more and more (inaudible)

MAN: I'm (inaudible) Morris(?), and I teach video and film at Colgate University.

WOMAN: I'm Rosalie(?) (inaudible), and I (inaudible) education. (inaudible) Television Workshop from '78(?) till (inaudible)

WOMAN: I'm Selena Clommard(?), and I'm working under a year-long grant as an archivist at WGBH archives (inaudible)

TOM SHERMAN: Well, I'm Tom Sherman, and I'm a professor here; I teach video production (inaudible) Syracuse(?) University. And I started (inaudible)

MAN: I'm Darryl(?) (inaudible). I teach (inaudible)

MAN: I'm Lee Grath(?). I teach video and cultural studies at Queens(?) College.

WOMAN: I'm Marion(?) Taylor(?) an art historian at (inaudible) Colgate, where I teach twentieth century art, and video history as part of that. And I've lived in Syracuse for over twenty-five(?) years and my former life was at the university as an art librarian.

WOMAN: I'm Mary Burry(?), I'm the curator of modern and contemporary art (inaudible)

MAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: Speak up.

MAN: Christopher Hamen(?), I've been an independent media arts curator since 1990, and now I'm (inaudible) and the U.S.(?).

WOMAN: I'm Chrissie Isles, I'm the(?) curator for the Whitney Museum. Moved to New York (inaudible) from Oxford (inaudible) history of film and video much more visible(?) (inaudible) shows, including (inaudible)

WOMAN: I'm (inaudible) and I'm an undergraduate in video(?) at Alfred University.

MAN: I'm Ian Epps(?), and I'm also an undergrad at Alfred University.

MAN: (inaudible) And I'm currently with (inaudible)

WOMAN: Can I ask someone in the back maybe (inaudible) We have competition, it seems.

MAN: Oh. I'm Peter Burk(?), and I graduated this May (inaudible)

WOMAN: Thank you.

MAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: I'm Lisa Steele, and I consider myself an independent(?) (inaudible) who's also doing video art(?). (laughter)

WOMAN: (inaudible) And I edit(?) a book (inaudible)

WOMAN: I'm Kathy Kline(?), and I went to the Center for Media Study(?) years ago. I'm a video maker, (inaudible)

WOMAN: (inaudible) and for the last eleven years, I was the associate director of Video Data Bank in Chicago.

WOMAN: I'm Janet(?) (inaudible). I'm an artist who's come to video in the last five(?) years from a sculpture and painting background. So I'm very interested in this seminar. And I have an exhibition up at the Everson Museum, and (inaudible)

WOMAN: I'm Connie Coleman(?). I'm on the faculty of media(?) arts program at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. I'm here with (inaudible), my collaborative partner for the last twenty-three years (inaudible)

ALAN POWELL: I'm Alan Powell, I'm at Temple University. I started with a video group called Electron Movers in the 1970s in Providence. So I've been around for a long time.

WOMAN: (inaudible) I just graduated with my MFA from the University of Iowa. And I'm now teaching (inaudible)

WOMAN: I'm (inaudible) Lind(?), and I also graduated from the University of Iowa. (inaudible) I'm currently (inaudible) faculty of the Irvington(?) College in Washington. And I do video installation (inaudible)

WOMAN: Hi, I'm Fiona(?). I'm currently working as a media educator for the Arts Council for Chautauqua, working with Jamestown High School students (inaudible) And (inaudible) media director at Halliwalls(?) (inaudible)

WOMAN: My name's Meagan Morris(?). I'm just happened to be here from California, so I'm really glad to take this in. I (inaudible; laughter; inaudible)

WOMAN: (inaudible) photography(?)

WOMAN: (inaudible) Herman(?), cinematography in college(?), and I write on experimental and political documentary film and video (inaudible; laughter)

MAN: (inaudible) Western Connecticut State University, and I teach a course in film and video art. (inaudible; laughter) I first got started— I was teaching high school (inaudible) in New York when (inaudible) came down (inaudible) brought in a group called the Videofreex to…

(inaudible voice; laugher)

MAN: Started Community Television in Rochester. And I left shortly after that (inaudible)

MAN: I'm John McCowsky(sp?). I've been (inaudible)

MAN: I'm George(?) (inaudible) I started Zooming(?) Video in Boston, and organization called VideoSpace, which is now (inaudible) video artists who do exhibitions. I'm also the director of VisionSpace, and a curator at the DeCordova Museum in Lincoln, Massachusetts. VisionSpace is putting on next year's (inaudible)

WOMAN: I'm Liz Henner(?). I'm a video activist(?) and a member of VideoSpace—I'm on the board of VideoSpace, which is putting on the Summer Arts Festival in Boston. And I'm also presently working with George to write a script for the DeCordova Museum, which is going to look at the history of video art in the U.S.(?).

WOMAN: Karen (inaudible), video maker and independent curator, and I'll be teaching a course on video history at the New School (inaudible)

MAN: I'm Brendan (inaudible), and I'm doing an MFA (inaudible)

WOMAN: Jackie Pardon(?). I'm a video maker and I program the Video on Video series at the Saratoga Springs Public Library in Saratoga Springs, New York.

WOMAN: Mara(?) (inaudible). I make video art and personal documentaries, and I'm just started teaching at the college, teaching video production. And I'm indebted to the Experimental Television Center; I would not have made this stuff; (inaudible) didn't exist. So thank you (inaudible)

WOMAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: I'm Claudia(?) (inaudible) I'm from New York City. I'm living in Nashville, Tennessee right now, working at Middle Tennessee State University, teaching film and trying to start a video art program.

MAN: I'm Marty Hilden(?), from Philadelphia, teaching at the Hunt(?) School in Princeton, a high school, in the fine arts department, video production. I'm happy to see one of the guys here that we started ten years ago, working at the Franklin Institute science museum.

WOMAN: I'm Meg Knowles, and I'm the equipment manager at the University of Buffalo. I'm also on the board of Squeaky Wheel, and I'm a video documentarian.

WOMAN: And I'm Jay Lafar(?) and I'm a video artist, and I run our youth media(?) program at Hull House(?).

MAN: I'm Alan Mohr(?), I'm ADD(?) at the City University of New York Graduate Center. I'm doing a dissertation on arts organizations; teaching at Bronx Community College; and I'm a retired video artist, (laughter) distributional entrepreneur. I have a company which is the Invisible Distribution(?) (inaudible), which started in 1986 (inaudible). And I'm here to try to unload our archive and our actual cash business. (laughter; inaudible voices) distribution (inaudible) seeking to ally our (inaudible). And I've never seen her spots(?), so (inaudible; laughter)

MAN: Hans Krieg(?), (inaudible) curator of (inaudible; laughter) New York State (inaudible; laughter)

MAN: (inaudible) I teach architecture at Rensselaer Polytechnic. And I'm very interested in media culture and the way that has influenced what we do as architects and planners(?).

WOMAN: I'm Heather Grant(?), I'm finishing my MFA degree in art at (inaudible)

DAVID CALLAWAY(sp?): I'm David Callaway. I'm the film-video librarian at New York Public Library's Donnell Media Center, which holds one of the largest collections of independently produced media in New York.

WOMAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: Sarah(?) (inaudible) distribution of the Kitchen video collection. And I worked at the Kitchen for a long time, years and years(?) (inaudible)

WOMAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: I'm Corrine(?). I'm an artist who uses film and video (inaudible)

DEAN FORTUNATO(sp?): My name is Dean Fortunato(sp?). I'm currently working on my MFA in electronic arts (inaudible)

MAN: My name is Ken Harsch(?). I'm an artist (inaudible) video (inaudible; laughter) co-founder of People's Video Theater. And I'm very— I have not been doing too much video for the last decade or so…

MAN: We're on our video pensions. (laughter)

MAN: (inaudible) conferences (inaudible) video pioneer (laughter; inaudible)

RALPH HOCKING: I'm Ralph Hocking. He took all my lines. (laughter)

MAN: I'm Jeantienne Boyer(?). I am a fellow stranger from Montreal. I have been a video artist since the seventies. I'm still related to (inaudible). And actually, I'm teaching multimedia at the University of Quebec (inaudible).

STEINA VASULKA: I'm Steina Vasulka. (inaudible)

WOMAN: I'm Karen (inaudible), Western Connecticut State University, originally a television news producer(?) (inaudible) into video art (inaudible; laughter). And now I am a video (inaudible)

WOMAN: I'm (inaudible) I teach (inaudible) art in Rochester(?). (inaudible)

BILL ETRA: I'm Bill Etra. A long time ago, I was a filmmaker, who got sidetracked into the dark side (inaudible; laughter) machines. I've done a few since then, the most known probably (inaudible) software(?). I'm currently working on a paradigm for smart cameras, a chip design for smart cameras. After that, I'm writing children's stories about (inaudible; laughter)

WOMAN: (inaudible)

MAN: My name is Tom Piche. I'm a senior curator at the Everson Museum of Art, here in Syracuse. And I'm here representing the museum and our historic collection of (inaudible) video. And as the museum renews its commitment to the video arts, I'm here to learn more about the context and the history of video art.

WOMAN: (inaudible) visual arts student here in Syracuse.

CYNTHIA YOUNG(sp?): I'm Cynthia Young(sp?). I'm a photographer, and I'm managing editor of (inaudible).

MAN: I'm Rich Bruno(?). I'm an artist, and I teach at Ithaca College.

WOMAN: (inaudible) Ithaca College, and I'm last. (laughter)

WOMAN: I think— I think you are. But not really. (inaudible) one more person.

WOMAN: I'm (inaudible; laughter)

WOMAN: And on camera here?

WOMAN: Oh, Deborah(sp?) (inaudible). (inaudible) College of Art.

BOYLE: Great. Well, as you can see, this is an extraordinary group of people. And we really want to involve you all in this process. So just for the sake of the moment, there's, you know, a stage and an audience; but I don't really see that division existing for the rest of the day. (inaudible; laughter)

MAN: Whew!

BOYLE: And just to keep things rolling quickly, because I do want to leave as much time as possible for discussion, the format we're gonna follow is each one of the presenters will take about a half an hour to cover different aspects of this history. My role at the beginning is to show you a taste, to provide a context of collective (inaudible) works(?), some of them excerpts, some of them complete works; to sort of graph this(?) time period and give you a sense of the range of the work. Some of you may be very familiar with this; for others, it may be a new view. Then I'm going to bring up Paul Ryan, then Parry Teasdale. We'll have a little break time somewhere, maybe after my presentation, I'm not quite sure; we'll just keep an eye on the watch. By the way, if you haven't already found out, there is a restroom (laughs) in this building. You need to go down the stairs. And also, lest I forget to tell you, I was asked to announce that the video tools room will be open today at the end of this meeting. So if you're interested in getting a preview of the collection of tools that have been assembled of early video technologies, they're in the basement of the Shine Building, where you went to register, if indeed you did get to register this morning. And it will only be open from four until five o'clock.

BOYLE (Cont.): They'll close at five. So if you're interested in getting a peek before tomorrow, you can do that, ok? We'll break for lunch—that was the thing I forgot to ask Sherry, whether or not it mattered what time; but we'll be breaking for lunch. And then when we come back, Barbara London has a show of her own to present of video history, with a presentation about installation works in particular(?).

And then afternoon is really for us to explore, I think, to lead from(?) your interests, your questions, to involve this group into a larger discussion about video history—how it has already been framed; what needs to be addressed; what some of the confusions, misperceptions, possible directions are; some of the problems you as researchers and artists have faced, or would like to address; maybe some more commercials for interesting possibilities. I, too, would like to unload my archive of notes and interviews that I've composed, because I feel that… Unload is not quite the right word, but I would like to share it with a wider audience than I was able to through my book on seventies video. So I'm sure there's room for a lot more networking (inaudible).

I think I'll just ignore the microphone; it seems too formal. The first tape that I've assembled for… Let me just back up. In your package, you'll find a lot of literature for the conference itself; but the panel collectively got together and we put together some materials specifically for Video Rewind, so let me call your attention to that. There is a list of the tapes that I'm going to be showing you now, with some information about some distribution(?). You'll also find a bibliography that we sort of collectively put

BOYLE (Cont.): together; I asked everyone to give me some titles. And it's by no means exhaustive, but I think for anyone who's looking for departure points, it's there for you. And there's certainly much more to consider.

There are also articles by each one of us, which again, is just the beginning; and a chronology, which is not fully identified. So let me give that now. The video chronology that appears there—it says Courtesy of Barbara London—Barbara prepared that for the circulating video collection from the Museum of Modern Art in 1983; and that too is there as a departure point for further discussion. So you'll find a few other items, but just so that you have some frame of reference or some further readings to consider after you leave here… (inaudible) people entering.

So the first work I'm going to show you is a document of one of the early historic occasions for video to be sort of seen as a discipline (inaudible) a phenomenon in its own right. It was the exhibition in 1969 at Howard Wise Gallery, called TV as a Creative Medium. This tape was edited in the eighties, but it is Ira Schneider's sort of home video of the event, documenting. It will give you a chance to see some of the works as they were presented, and the interactions that were going on among the artists. Paul Ryan, who is here today (inaudible) probably have a chance later to ask him more about the exhibition when we talk later on. TV as a Creative Medium. It should be set.

MAN: Should be set. There ya go.

(VIDEO [inaudible]; applause)

BOYLE: Looking at that tape gives one an opportunity to look at the range of work that was being made. The interest in developing the tools of video, inventing, exploring, playing with video's tools, and the dimensions that video afforded—sort of manipulation of time, which was certainly apparent in *Wipe Cycle*. Last night before I went to bed, I pulled out some photocopies that I made from *Video Art*, Ira Schneider and Beryl Korot's anthology from the early seventies, and was rereading David Antin's *Video: The Distinctive Features of the Media*, a classic essay on early video, attempt to define itself in relationship to television. And I hope we'll talk more about that later today. But moving into this area of exploring the tools of video, the next tape I'm going to show you is by someone in the room here, Steina Vasulka and Woody Vasulka's, *Kaligrams*(?), which was made in 1970. And I'll let the tape speak for itself. Would it be possible to turn up the volume? (inaudible voices) Good.

(VIDEO):

VASULKA: (inaudible) Let me quote from our 1978 catalogue. At first, we looked at video as a singular discipline. We, as well as others, used all expressions, from abstract to documentary, in an aesthetic unity(?), escaping generalization(?) of our media. (inaudible) We were introduced to the alteration(?) of video images through the basic equipment of (inaudible). We could manipulate the scanlines by changing the deflection controls of the

(VIDEO [Cont.): monitors; use the recorder to free space; advance or backtrack tapes manually; and look at the processes within the frame. We learned(?) (inaudible) editing and asynchronous overlays on the first generation happened(?) video equipment CV(?), and practiced all(?) methods of camera-monitor rescan, the only area for us to capture and preserve the violated(?) state of the standard television signal. So what you see is a rescanned image, where the horizontal hold is deliberately maladjusted, causing this repeat image. The camera is at a ninety degree angle to the screen.

BOYLE: Ok, that's fine. This is taken from a compilation that's been put together by the Video Data Bank, so the reference to the illuminating screening(?) is the next tape on that reel. At the time video began, mid- to late-sixties, the notion of video art and activism didn't exist as a distinction. Anybody who had video equipment made video, made video art, if one wanted to call it that, and there was a sense of sort of one-for-all-ness, there was a collegiality or camaraderie that did not draw distinctions. The work that I'm going to show you next, which was produced by Paul Ryan and Raindance, involved tapes from Video Data Bank that was collected by Raindance from artists and activists at that time. The first piece you're going to see—and I hope I'm correct in my assumption here—was shot by the Videofreex. Parry will have to tell me.

TEASDALE: But maybe I won't admit it. (laughter)

BOYLE: It was produced during the Chicago Seven trial in Chicago, and you'll be seeing Abbie Hoffman talking about the trial. This was made for an ill fated CBS production that the Videofreex was involved in—as was just about everybody else making video at that time. And the next part of this sampler (inaudible) primer, you'll see was made by… I don't know that you were ever behind the camera, Paul…

RYAN: I'm not sure.

BOYLE: Yeah. But it is an exploration of the concept of video surveillance, and I think a very good expression of the wrath(?) of the time of media politics.

(VIDEO)

MAN: (inaudible) women's liberation poster in here. (laughter)

MAN: Don't pay any attention to the other shit(?) (inaudible), right

MAN: (inaudible)

ABBIE HOFFMAN: Well, I have a— I have a good seat. (laughter) I'm… It's unbelievable theater, a great show. I think we went every day to the end. I mean, (inaudible) The outcome, though, looked good, but (laughter) the beginning and the middle was— is looking great(?), I mean… (laughter) It's really… I'm writing a book called *Dear Abbie* (inaudible) Federal Building (inaudible). I got several marriage proposals, and people, like, send all kinds of, like, great letters.

(VIDEO [Cont.]): They invited me to come to England to get processed(?). I have all these special (inaudible; laughter) The day of the moratorium, which was probably our most exciting day(?), we were prevented from having a day off; we were prevented from going around the country during the day, speaking about it. So we decided to bring it right into court. So we come in, we saddle up(?) and… We had a National Liberation Front flag, the American flag, and we spread 'em out on the table; and we had black arm bands. And machos(?) immediately wanna fight for the flag, so here we are, you know? The macho(?) and me tuggin' on the NLF flag, right across the table. And that's it, man; that says— that says the whole thing. Ya know? And then… So they win that battle. Well, fuck 'em. We got loads of flags, you know, we'll let 'em have it. You know? And then (laughter; inaudible) does his thing and he says, "We'd like people to rise, because we're gonna read the names of the wa— of Americans killed in Vietnam." And he starts reading. "Joe Abrams," you know? "Winnetka, Illinois." And on and on, down. You know, and every— it was amazing. I think it was our greatest moment. And everybody in the whole room stood up, except the three prosecutors at the government table. Spectators, press, machos(?) was standing. All the defendants were standing and Dave started to read. And the judge comes in. "(inaudible, yelling)." (laughter) "Sit. What's your name, sir?" "David D. Dellinger, sir," and he starts to spell his name, 'cause Dave's mighty proud of what he's doin'. "Sit down. Mr. Hoffman?" And he calls him "Mister." "Mister? I'm a judge. This is the highest court in the land." Well, it ain't too high,

(VIDEO [Cont].): (inaudible, laughter) And then Macho goes up and listens(?) and then the DA(?) tells him what the naughty school kids are doing (inaudible), you know? (laughter) "They have the enemy flag in my courtroom on the government table!" And I get up and say, "We do not sit at the government table, Mr. Hoffman. This is *our* table. We sit at liberated grounds. We decorate it the way we want." (laughter; inaudible) Then (inaudible) gets up, "You're a racist pig!" (inaudible) So… Then David— the jury comes in, and Dave stands up and does it again. "We want a moment of silence." (inaudible) I mean, the prosecutors' faces got totally red. And I never saw such, like, anger. And he starts accusing the lawyers. See, they always go for the lawyers, right? They're not gonna go for us; we're, like, lost already. (laughter) "(inaudible) He's wearing a black arm band, just like the defendants. They're a disgrace to this country," and all that. You know, "rrra-rra-rra." And he gets the jury up. And we (inaudible) prosecutor and Julius Hoffman, the judge. We saw the faces of the enemy that day in court, man, and they were… Rage. Old, senile (inaudible). Fascism in this country is not gonna come as storm troopers in the streets in— in red and black, you know, with the little four-sevens(?) on their arm. It's not gonna be done that way, the way that Hitler done. It's gonna be done the way it's being done to us. It's gonna be in an air-conditioned, neon lit building designed by Mies Van der Rohe, (laughter) where you have all the press around and spectators and an open panel. And (inaudible) wall to wall fascism. That's what we got in this trial. Wall to wall air conditioned fascism. (laughter) And that's the way it is in *1984* and all

(VIDEO [Cont].): this doublespeak. I(?) should remember that ours is the first trial, the first federal trial in history, in which we were being tried under a law which makes it illegal to cross a state mind with a state of mind. And… That's heavy. You know, when the government starts legislating against states of mind…

MAN: You gotta listen to 'em(?).

HOFFMAN: Yeah, you got it. But we're doing ok. We got some people on our side. We got Peter Rabbit(?), (inaudible; laughter) It's the best use of television. I mean, if we can keep people from stealing, if we can watch them as we go(?), won't be able to do anything wrong. And if they don't do anything wrong, then the society will be alright.

MAN: Well, basically, what we're seeing here is (inaudible). Basically, what you're seeing is an indigenous… It's not indigenous. It's— it's not an indigenous (inaudible). It's a control system. (inaudible) This is Big Brother's eyes. This is Big Brother's teeth. This is Big Brother's brain. See, 'cause like, that cat's coming in here to buy this shit. They work their ass off so they can buy this shit, and then sell it to (inaudible) television, right? And they're not gonna sell it to'em over the television. They got this thing set up so that they'll watch you to make sure that you don't steal what they make you wanna buy, because they hype you up(?) as a consumer. It's very sick.

(inaudible)

MAN: (inaudible) and— and take pictures (inaudible) taking pictures of them. Yeah, you got your cameras, like…

(VIDEO [Cont].): (inaudible)

MAN: (inaudible) taking pictures of all these people.

(inaudible)

MAN: Let 'em take it. (inaudible) permission (inaudible)

MAN: (inaudible)

MAN: Well, I was gonna say(?) that (inaudible) walk down the street, (inaudible)

MAN: You know(?), it's all(?) wrong.

MAN: I know, but then there's no reason to focus (inaudible)

(inaudible)

MAN: You don't have any kids. Well, what are you gonna send it(?) out for?

MAN: I don't have time.

MAN: I mean, really, (inaudible)

MAN: (inaudible) weekend off(?). (inaudible) you know, we had our picture in another(?) magazine when we had our grand opening last summer(?).

MAN: Oh.

MAN: (inaudible)

MAN: (inaudible) San Francisco. We went to San Francisco (inaudible).

(inaudible)

MAN: "Where you from?" "We're from New York." (inaudible) long way.

MAN: How long did you work for Safeway? How long did you work for

(inaudible)

MAN: Six years.

(VIDEO [Cont].): MAN: Six years? (inaudible)

(inaudible)

MAN: (inaudible) the reason why is, is that we don't get involved(?) (inaudible) you know, (inaudible) and then you get tired(?).

(inaudible)

MAN: Is it really?

MAN: Yeah.

MAN: (inaudible)

MAN: (inaudible) nudie theaters. (laughter)

BOYLE: Ok. The next work I'm going to show you is the last five minutes of a videotape that was made in the mid-seventies—these tapes more or less follow chronological order—that was produced by Cara DeVito. It was shown in the— I think it was the second Women's Video Festival, and also on Public Television. And I think it's a really find example of early feminist video. This is a climactic revelation and— that comes at the end of the tape. *Always Love Your Man*. (inaudible)

(VIDEO)

WOMAN: When Connie(?) was two years old, I was pregnant again. And he tried to tell me that I had (inaudible) and I had to (inaudible). One night he says, "There's a midwife on Timothy Street. Go and see her." So I (inaudible) and I went. She got (inaudible), she said, "Get that outta here. Whadda you— you think I'm gonna go to jail with you? Get out. (inaudible) six months. Get outta here

(VIDEO [Cont].): fast." I went home and I says, "Honey(?), mm-mm. She don't wanna have anything to do with me." "Oh," he says, "Don't worry. I'll come out there." He says, "(inaudible) And for a hundred-and-fifty dollars, he'll do it." I says, "Benny(?), can we stop this nonsense?" "Do you realize at six months, I'm taking a chance. All my life(?)," he says(?), "I been (inaudible)" He says, "I'm sorry." (inaudible) So there am I. He got up and he says, "Get yourself ready(?), I'm gonna (inaudible), and we need to move to the doctor's office." The doctor was busy. I was sitting in the chair, and I was saying to myself: Maybe I oughtta run away. I was afraid. Maybe I should run away now. (inaudible) open the door and get out. But what about that little boy? What is he gonna do without(?) me? So I went through the (inaudible) Only God knows what I went through. Only God. No human being can go through what I went through when they took (inaudible) no injection(?), no nothing. I remember the pain, it was so hard that I was just screaming, "Ma!" (inaudible) And I says, "Benny(?), I'm gonna go to bed. I don't feel good." He says, "What!? You gotta do the cooking!" I says, "Benny, I don't feel good. I can't stay on my feet. I feel weak, I feel… I don't feel good at all." He says to me, "You know what? You're making so much fuss, and I know girls that they went through, and they went straight to work." Anyhow, he's pissed(?). (inaudible) could not begin to (inaudible). That guy was mean(?)! (inaudible) say to me, "Listen, (inaudible)." (inaudible) hot water(?). I had to (inaudible). (inaudible) in the house. One day, it was about three or four o'clock in the afternoon, he come up for coffee, and I says to Lenny(?), "I don't

(VIDEO [Cont].): feel good, Lenny. I'm sick." He says, "You know what? You better help with this work(?). If you don't feel good, at least you finish your work." So I keep working hard. All of a sudden, I drop to the floor in a pool of blood. And he called a doctor. The doctor came. And he says, "I cannot touch her. (inaudible) I will give her a clinic (inaudible)." And what I went through(?) (inaudible) I used to say, "God, (inaudible) die, please. Please, I can't take it. The pain is unbelievable, God." So they couldn't take me to the hospital because I was bleeding and all of that. They put (inaudible) kitchen table, they (inaudible). And I— I was alright then. I felt better. He says, "She's gotta be away from you (inaudible)." So what do you think he did? He (inaudible)

WOMAN: You know, my father used to say… In Italian, we say, (Italian). (inaudible) And I think (inaudible)

BOYLE: Ok. And we would(?) tell you that Adeline LeJudas was the grandmother to Cara DeVito, which is part of the intimacy of the tape. The last work I'm gonna show you, in its entirety, was made in 1975 by Peter Campus. And it shows the level of studio production being used by artists at this time to explore, in this case, rather interesting perceptual issues. This is, I consider, one of the real classics of video art, and probably is familiar to many people in this room, *Three Transitions*. You have *Three Transitions*? You forgot to bring it. Oh. Well, I guess we're not going to see it then. (laughter) Well, ok. Would you like to take a break, since we can't look at… Another kind of transition. (laughter) Ok.

(inaudible; voices over each other; tape stops, restarts)

RYAN: I'll try and pick up where we left off. Just a few segues. You have in your packet a piece I wrote years ago for *Leonardo,* that uses Michelle Frucot(sp?) to go back to early video history. It's called *A Genealogy of Video.* And it's about the period that a lot of the tape was about, '68 to '71. And as Dierdre mentioned, what I did was take Frucot and Frucot's categories of genealogy and go back and look at how the split happened between video going into art and video going into social change, right?, which is part of the dynamic that Dierdre mentioned that was involved in the early days, when it was just video and there were no clefts, there were no fault lines in it. So you might wanna look at that. But what I wanna do in the half hour I have is look at another issue that, for me at least, postdates that. That's from '71 to '76. So in a certain sense, what I'm offering you here is a kind of sequel to what that paper is, in terms of video history, ok? And the title I'm working with is *Journey Through Video Utopia.* And what I'm trying to do is reactivate an interest in the utopian dimension of video. Generally, it's thought of with a disparaging tone; you know: Oh, the video period. Or, you know, in a kind of dismissive way. But what I wanna do is try and reactive your interest in that. Gillette, Frank Gillette, he was the one who, in my mind, first distinguished between what he called the Fluxus current in video history and the utopian current. Ok. The Fluxus current surfaced in the careers of a host of individual artists that were led by Nam June Paik, right? And that current pretty much overwhelmed and diluted the utopian current, which lived and died with the video collectives that Parry was a part of… I mean, these guys may not want the

RYAN (Cont.): utopian label, Parry and Ken, but I see the collective moment in video, or that collectivity, as holding enormous promise of social change. Naïve, yes, and all that, but holding enormous promise of social change. And that's what I'm referring to. And I think there's a re-interest now in utopia. If you look at Pierre Levy book, just published in English, *Collective Intelligence*, that just came out, there is a renewed interest in utopia and in electronic media. And the interest isn't naïve. Levy sees utopia not as unrealizable dreams of fools and fascists, but as the seeds that can take part in the actualization of a highly differentiated pluralistic society. That's the kind of way it's being thought of now. Right? So what I wanna do is report on a utopian articulation of video history, drawing from my own experience. And again, this is a case history, as it were; it's not purporting to be the whole deal. Obviously, when you listen to people here, the ecology of what happened in terms of connections and synapses is very rich, and highly pluralistic already, ok? So this is a kind of utopian articulation of that.

What I wanna suggest is that the utopian current in video history can be reinterpreted as a very fecund tradition of virtuality. Now, to accept my suggestion does not mean that you have to require a willing suspension of disbelief, alright, with your post-sixties cynicism—although probably very little of that here, (laughter) which is nice. Let's say post-sixties naiveté, ok? (laughter) But what I wanna do is free that utopian aspect of how we think about this to try and understand and reactive the power that's possible. Alright? So it takes a distinction to get to this. And what Levy uses, which he takes from Birdsong(?) and his current (inaudible) conversation, alright?, is a distinction between the

RYAN (Cont.): virtual and the possible. Right? So I wanna make this distinction, because this is pretty much what my case rests on.

For Birdsong, the possible is linked to the real, and the virtual is linked to the actual. Alright? The link between the possible and the real is one of a model and a copy. Ok? According to this way of thinking, the fully formed human being is already modeled in the fertilized egg. Embryological development is just a rendering in reality of the correct model of the possible. Ok? Monsters are failed copies. This is the Platonic way of thinking. By contrast, the link between the virtual and the actual is a link of differentiation. The fertilized egg encodes a virtuality that generates a range of self-differentiating organs, which actualize into a self-organizing, fully formed human. The virtual does not make copies of itself, but creates differences that make differences in the actual world. That's the issue. Failure of the virtual is a failure to create differences, right? Failure of the other idea, possible and real, is failure to create an exact copy. So all the simulacrum stuff—many of you are familiar with this—all the simulacrum stuff that comes out of Baudrillard is jumping on the failed copy and trying to deploy it into the culture in different ways to activate a creativity that in many ways we seem to have lost, ok? So this is something that artists have always understood, alright? Serious artists would share an interest. Take the Impressionists. They don't copy each other, but they form a virtual community—you might call it a mutual differentiation society—that managed to actualize a plurality of work. Alright? Ok, so that's the distinction that I'm

RYAN (Cont.): hanging this on. So before I actually apply that to the utopian current, I wanna go back and report on the case, the case that I'm coming out of.

So after that period in New York, of '68 to '71, I moved from New York City upstate to the Shawangunk Mountains near New Paltz. Many of you know it; it's a beautiful place, alright? Now, at the time, New Paltz was a thriving countercultural center, populated by art students, former art students, of the SUNY campus at New Paltz, which was then known for its artwork and art program. The state has since cut it, and… You know, it was too hot for it. I mean, they diluted the art program. The local movie theater played *King of Hearts* monthly (laughter) to a full house of locals who believed, with Shakespeare, that the poet, the lunatic and the lover are, of imagination, all compacted. This wonderful movie about the eccentric inmates of a mental institution let loose in town in the midst of the follies of World War One, proved the town of New Paltz with a self image during the Vietnam War. It's how the town thought of itself, literally. Ok, you want specifics. Through a conduit organization, I had a twenty-thousand dollar grant from New York State Council on the Arts to figure out how to produce video interpretations of ecological systems. That was the original task. In '72, the Council provided another five-grand to support the effort. By 1973, I'd hit an impasse, and didn't apply to the Council for funds. During a trip to the Southwest that year, where there was a lot of utopian activity, it came to me, this conception for a utopian community of ecological video makers, and I wrote it up in three days, alright? Here's the basic core idea. This is— a lot of it— the texts I'm talking about are in this book I did, alright?, which is *Video Mind Earth Mind*. It's in the

RYAN (Cont.): bibliography. But the text for the utopian community is in that book, alright? So if you wanna track it down, you can find it that way. But the plan was to have an intentional community of thirty-six video makers. Each video maker was to be part of three different triads. The first triad was to care for its members; the second, to take care of the business of supporting a community; and the third was to produce video interpretations of ecological systems. My intuition was that if self-correcting teams of three people could be stabilized, a leaderless, thriving community could be developed. Ok? As you know, most of the utopian conditions is bedeviled by an authoritarianism. Except for certain cases, like News From Nowhere and others, alright? So obviously, I was looking for a non-hierarchic community. But the contradiction of trying to start one, alright?... Try to start a leaderless community sometime. (laughter) Some of you have, (inaudible) you know exactly what's going on. Alright. And remember, this idea was in currency—if you remember Callenbach's widely read book about a breakaway state in the Pacific Northwest called *Ecotopia*—appeared in '75. In my own experience, however, in conceptualizing this utopian community, which I called Earthscore, I didn't rely on readings from the utopian community primarily; my key text was actually *The Rule of Saint Benedict*, ok?, the founder of Western monasticism. And when I was younger, from seventeen to twenty-two, I had lived in a contemplative preaching order of the Roman Catholic Church. So I knew the monastic tradition from experience. And what I wanted to do was use that experience to try and conceptualize a non-celibate, aesthetic—not ascetic—order—(laughter) I'd had enough of that (laughter)—but capable of interpreting ecological systems with video, that would be as sturdy and as long lasting as the monastic

RYAN (Cont.): tradition. Ok? So it's not an ascetic order, it's an aesthetic order. And it takes responsibility for understanding the ecology, was the basic raison d'etre for the community, ok?

In my attempt to recruit members for the community, I passed out over a hundred Xerox copies of the Earthscore utopian doctrine to people I knew in the town of New Paltz, and I got two takers, (laughter) videographer Stephen Colpan and artist Robert Schuler. Schuler had worked with Eide(?) in the art of technology movement that Billy Kruger(?) had been involved with. We started working together in '73; we set up a nonprofit organization, drafted an intricate set of triadic bylaws. We applied for the New York State Council on the Arts monies, submitting the utopian document. This is interesting, yes? We gave them what you're gonna see here, the (inaudible) plan for utopian. They gave us sixty-grand over a course of two years. Ok? And I understand, later, that part of the reason was Gerd Stern was on the panel. Some of you know Gerd's work as a multimedia artist in the early days, right? Originally, we applied for seventy-two-thousand dollars. He convinced the panel to give it all to us, right? But when it went to the higher level of the Council, they cut it in half, they started cutting this back. But that was possible through the State Council on the Arts. I mean, that's a whole trail that we could explore. The State Council on the Arts, as you know, is the only state organization commissioned to make discretionary judgments, right? And a lot of the failure of the council to sustain video art, I think, could be traced to their failure to make discretionary judgments, which can be traced to their failure to generate a discourse about art that was

RYAN (Cont.): really strong and sturdy. I mean, I say that… I was the first video consultant to the State Council on the Arts, so I can tell you that from having been inside the game. Anyway… Ok.

As mentioned, the premise of the utopian document was that the self-balancing groups of three would be the basic unit in this video; there would be no hierarchy. However, since normal interactive patterns usually involve hierarchy and two-against-one dynamics, we had to invent triadic behavior. Alright? That was the premise. Now, we produced—during that period, from ’73 to ’75, I produced over forty-five hours of people running around in threes, right?, trying to invent triadic behavior. (laughter) And part of the history of this is that I had worked with Al(?) Schieffelin, the guy who wrote— all the body language stuff comes out of Al Schieffelin and Birdwhistle(?). And I’d worked very closely with them, in terms of how human behavior actually operates. And these guys had a very grim view of human behavior. I can show you combat, courtship, greeting, parting, territory, and there it ends. The baboons do the same thing, I don’t care what poetry is in your head, right? And he could show that. He could sit in a group and show you: You guys are Irish, you’re bookending the group; you act like you have no neck. (laughter) He had it down. (inaudible; laughter) So the idea I had was: Ok, he’s got it. Perhaps video can be used to invent behavior patterns we haven’t already had. Invent behavior patterns that have more flexibility, right? So that’s what I went after.

RYAN (Cont.): I wanna show you an excerpt from this tape. I actually came up with a sort of relational practice that's like a tai-chi or yoga relationship. Alright? We don't have time for that. But if you can show it, this is part of the exploration. I was working with a dance troupe—(inaudible), who you may know. She's famous now as a tap dancer. But we would make deals; I'd tape her performances, and her troupe would experiment, these triadic experiments. I just wanna show you a quick cut from these forty-five hours of running around in threes.

(VIDEO)

RYAN: I'm gonna fast-forward a little bit, in the interest of time. This one, I don't wanna take the time, but part of what we did a lot of experiments with was mirrors and the business of mirror images, and how mirroring, in fact, isolates. I can… I should show it, but… This is a false relation to herself. Ok, let this run. Then we went through the…

(VIDEO)

RYAN: I'll let one other one, *Ring(?)* (inaudible). This was from a Saturday night. We spent a weekend trying to invent triadic behavior. So we had this ring…

(VIDEO)

RYAN: Just to try and be specific, what we… At this point, we went away for a weekend, trying to invent triadic behavior. Friday night, Saturday day, we dumped behavior; then Saturday night, we made this thing, about a dozen people. And the deal was, you got in the center and you tried to invent triadic behavior—we didn't know what it was. And then people on the outside, as soon as they thought you were falsifying something, they'd tap you out. Right? So this went on for three hours, this kind of… And you saw. And then we played it back, you know, and everybody watched and laughed their heads off. You know, but… That's a whole thing. Anyway… Here's the…

MAN: (inaudible) sound added, or is the sound…?

RYAN: Sound was added later. It's— that was a Sanyo fast/slow speed deck at the time. So it was recorded so you could do stuff seven times faster than normal speed. Alright? We were doing a lot of studies with motion at the time, but… It had one deck that— it was in the level(?), you could do motion study. Alright? Ok. And there was a show at the Kitchen of all this stuff in '76, alright? After that, Earthscore Foundation went dormant. We had produced shelves of video interpretations of ecological systems, some of it merely exploratory, some quite successful and beautiful. We also did invent a basic repertoire of collaborative behavior for three people, which is written up here. And I can go on about that. But we had used up all our emotional coupons doing so. We did not develop the triadic decision making process, couldn't figure out how to address issues of

RYAN (Cont.): gender—surprise. (laughter) Moreover, the New York State Council on the Arts decided to zero our funding, so it was over.

Here's the point I'm trying to make. If you think of Earthscore strictly as utopian, a possibility that went unrealized, then you can consider this utopian effort a failure. You're post-sixties cynicism is justified, or nostalgia. End of story. What I'm asking, however, to think of Earthscore of a virtuality that has been actualized in many different and divergent ways, none of which are simply executions of the practice of the original utopian document. Only after the effort to realize the possibility of utopia, of Earthscore as a utopia— only when that was abandoned did the virtual power of Earthscore start manifesting itself. I'm talking a little personally now. For me, this meant that rather than be trapped in an isolated effort to realize the utopian concept of the video community, I was released into the actuality of the world. And in the words of the poet Wallace Stevens, "The actual is a deft beneficence."

So since that time, Earthscore has mutated from a utopian plan to a notational system. This is what's happened. And again, this is written up in here. It's called the Earthscore notation system; it's based on three comprehensive categories of knowledge. It's organized for collaborative learning by a relational circuit. The notation includes a formal way of understanding events, and a method of interpreting anything to anybody. The full codification of this, I was only able to make in 1989; published it in *Leonardo*, right? But what I'm saying to you is that the power of Earthscore as a virtuality, in Birdsong's

RYAN (Cont.): understanding, as a notational system for generating differences is evident when you consider the non-utopian actualities that have been generated using the Earthscore notation system. What I wanna do is just list some of the projects that myself and other people have used this notation system to actualize. And if you remember, the original split was between social change and art. And what I've been able to do with this notational system is projects in both terrains, alright?

Here are some of the projects. Design and piloting of a watershed watch program in the Passaic River Watershed in northern New Jersey; a decision making process—finally figured one out—that has been used effectively for organizing the editorial practice of a magazine and the planning committee for an education program; design of a website for sustainable farming in the Hudson Valley; design of a computer program for generating consensus; a two-week intensive program to retrain displaced workers from the defense industry that was successfully enacted for over fifty workers; the design for an environmental television channel; an art of(?) behavior for three people; production of videotapes—the most exemplary one is one called *Nature in New York City*, where I do sites in New York City. A lot of students have taken this notation system and produced a quite strong videotape—I mean, stuff that's really powerful. Also, it's been developed into a teaching methodology for public school teachers in New York City in a host of areas, from science to humanities. It's being used as the basis for a design for an architectural curriculum at Parsons. Those are some of the iterations, alright?, as a notational system for using Earthscore to cultivate differences that make differences. I

RYAN (Cont.): think of it as a kind of engine of differentiation, a virtual code for organizing differences that can be used to actualize rich and healthy pluralism of differences in society. I consider the notation system much more valuable than any videotape I've produced. That's my sense, you know? This stuff goes away, you know? You can see the crummy quality. (laughter) And the problem also is, you know, if you're going to monitor an ecological system over generations, you need some consistency. So, you know, a notation system gives you that. Some of you are familiar with Nelson Goodman's book on *Languages of Art*, where he specifies what a notation system is in art, and what it does, and how you can then act in compliance with it. The fact is, we're out of compliance with the natural systems of the world, you know? Any species destroys its ecosystem destroys itself, and we're doing that. We're out of compliance. So this is a notation system for recognizing the patterns of nature, and translating that perceptually, through video—this s nonverbal—perceptually, recognizing it, and then being able to develop policies and practices that would be in compliance with the way the earth is scored; that's the idea behind it. Ok.

What I'm suggesting is that historians willing to question the current prejudice against utopia could find it useful to revisit the utopian phase of video history. Perhaps, for example, there are… You know, utopia in New York State is not a new deal, right? There was the Shakers, there was the Oneida community. You know, there's a whole utopian history in this country that's been let go of. And what I'm suggesting is that, you know, that strain in video history ought to be looked at again. What I wanna… How's my time?

WOMAN: Almost up.

RYAN: Almost up. I just wanna give you a taste of… Cue this other(?)… I'm showing you a tape that I'm working on now. This is work in progress, there's no soundtrack. But what I'm trying to do is… My preference is to study waterfalls, because waterfalls contain the richest source of diversified pattern in one concentrated place that a videographer can get to, ok? So the idea of studying the waterfall is that there are notes there, and that we can understand those notes. So I just wanna run a little bit of this. Go ahead. It's… I'm shooting the camera in reverse, just for those who are interested. I'm shooting in reverse, partly because I want to avoid the iconography(?) of the nature calendar look. And I also am trained in looking through a lens that's black and white; so you see outline, and you see motion better than you do color with a lens thing. So I just wanna give you, like, a two-minute taste of what this kind of work would be like.

(VIDEO)

RYAN: What I'm doing with this is I'm actually working with Brenda Buffalino, and she's developing— we're developing a soundtrack, where she's trying to interpret these natural rhythms with the urban hard rhythms of tap, alright? So the idea is there are these notes in nature; video can in fact read them, and the we can interpret them to different constituencies of people. People intelligent about tap could understand the natural patterns in that idiom. You could do classical music, you could do jazz, you could do

RYAN (Cont.): anything; but the notes are given. And video offers us an opportunity to be transparent to the intelligence of nature and reconnect ourselves with it. I don't wanna take up too much more time. Why don't we stop there? I think it'll give you the idea, (inaudible). Thank you. (applause)

TEASDALE: So that's what it was all about? (laughter) You know, I can tell you a story. (laughter) Paul wrote a book, one of his many, called *Cybernetics of the Sacred,* back in—what?—'73 maybe?

RYAN: '74.

TEASDALE: '73, '74. And a local magazine, a pacifist magazine, gave me the assignment to review it, 'cause he was local, I was local and… This was in upstate New York. And I never heard anybody use the word cybernetics. And I had not the faintest idea what he was talking about. I couldn't tell ya. So I did, you know, I did the typical; I went to the dictionary, I looked up cybernetics, and I said, "Ok…" And it's between—I don't know—a definition of a flower and a definition of something. I can't even remember what it was. And that was the way I ended it. And little did I know that, like, two weeks later, he shows up with forty-five hours of these tapes to edit. Now, it's great to watch two minutes of this stuff, (laughter) but if you're watching forty-five hours of triadic behavior, boy, I'll tell ya, you really should understand it before you do it, 'cause it's a little difficult. But something really connected with me when you were talking,

TEASDALE (Cont.): using video, what you learned from video. As I said to you before, I'm kind of a recovering video person. I haven't done it for a long time, and I fight the urge to get back in it. My family's grown now, so I don't have to worry about that drawing me back in. We did hours and hours of tape that no one will ever watch, and there are certainly boxes of potentially very valuable plastic holding up the end of one of my kids' beds, who doesn't come home anymore. So it doesn't even have a useful purpose, in that sense.

I really don't have the type of presentation that Paul had. I do think that technology has shaped the way I look at the world, and the technology that I was involved in. It was great to see that surveillance piece that Paul did so many years ago. Because this morning, I was coming out of the hotel, and I came into the little shop that's at the base of the hotel, and there was a cop sitting there. I thought at first it was a security guard, 'cause he was on his cell phone. But no, he was wearing his nine millimeter Glock on his pants. And he was talking in his cell phone, and he was threatening somebody. He said, "I'm gonna arrest you. I'm gonna handcuff you. And furthermore, I'm gonna take you to the district attorney's office, and I'm gonna…" And he was talking to a street vendor who was up the street, on his cell phone, (laughter) about what he was going to do to this street vendor if the street vendor didn't leave. I said: Whoa, that's really… Something strange has happened with technology that went way beyond the technology-in-the-hands-of-people that I thought about years ago.

TEASDALE (Cont.): I would like to correct one thing—and this is not Dierdre's fault—that that tape of Abbie Hoffman was not actually Videofreex tape. We shot one very similar to that with Abbie in Chicago. A lot of tapes that we shot of Abbie over the years. And I knew it— actually, I was telling Dierdre, I knew it wasn't ours—because a lot of these tapes, you don't know, if you haven't been given it by somebody, who shot it—was because their microphone wasn't as long as our microphone. (laughter) And when I said that to Dierdre, she said, "Yeah, you guys were the techies. And it is kinda true. Actually, by the time we interviewed Abbie, it was around what was called the Days of Rage in Chicago, in the trial of the Chicago Eight, which by that time, at that point, had become actually the trial of the Chicago Seven, because Bobby Seale, one of the defendants in that trial, a Black Panther, had been bound and gagged because he refused to adhere to the ridiculous rules that Abbie was describing, of Judge Julius Hoffman. And Abbie… And there were no cameras, of course, in the courtroom then, as in many places now. We saw Abbie much more in… He wasn't in hiding, but he had become more paranoid by then. Still extremely funny. Abbie was a performer of great note, and probably hadn't ever gotten his due notice. He was the guy who came up with the idea—or at least implemented the idea—of throwing dollar bills onto the floor of the stock exchange on Wall Street, the New York Stock Exchange. And that's why there's a Plexiglas window. You know longer… In case you had the idea you might (laughter; inaudible) Abbie and Jerry Rubin, who was kind of an acolyte, really, of Abbie's, they were holed up in a kind of a very dingy space—that's actually one of the reasons I knew right away; it was very dark, and it was more menacing—because they were more threatened. One of the people

TEASDALE (Cont.): who was with us in Chicago when we were shooting was actually threatened, got a death threat from a cop. And it was… I don't know if the death part of it was serious; the threat part certainly was. And the other person that we interviewed in Chicago, of note, was a guy named Fred Hampton, who was the chairman of the party there. And I'm not— I don't think that was actually his title, chairman, but he was the leader of the Chicago branch of the Black Panther Party. I was a terrible interviewer at that time, and I'm embarrassed now to see the way I asked questions. But I did manage to ask him what would happen if he died, and he said the party would go on. He had thought about that prospect. And a little over a month later, he was murdered by the Chicago Police. Now, I use that word advisedly, because although there was a cover-up by the authorities at that time, his family later sued, his heirs sued the Chicago Police and the federal government, and they won a substantial settlement. And part of that settlement was the use of a Videofreex tape of Fred Hampton. And the reason that they used the tape in the trial was because J. Edgar Hoover had a concept that a black messiah would arise in the black community, and he wanted to be sure that that didn't happen. And the family, that had ultimately prevailed in this case, wanted to use the tape to show that Fred Hampton could legitimately have been interpreted by someone seeing the tape and by someone meeting him, as a potential black messiah, so therefore, he was marked for extinction.

TEASDALE (Cont.): And so with all of the fun and crazy stuff that went on, there was a serious side to what people were doing with video at that time. And I don't wanna overplay it, but I also say that people's lives were on the line—not the video people, mostly, by and large, but the people we were talking to, in some cases. And I would, if I had to take a kind of academic position or whatever, and something (inaudible), a book I'm gonna plug to you today, which is not yet— you can't buy it, but… I've written a book about that period, which will be out in the spring. I would argue that the central issue informing the video movement, especially the activist side of it, during the period that we're talking about here was the Vietnam War. Certainly, for me as a young man of draft age, that was essential to our understanding. And I use events of the war in the book a little bit, just to try to put in perspective what we were doing.

But there's another thing. Paul touched on it, and I— as I say, I don't have a presentation, but maybe I could just read a few paragraphs from the manuscript that'll be published, because that is probably the most succinct way—and everybody's hungry, and so we'd probably like to wrap this up pretty quick. But before I do that, I wanna promote something that I wrote even earlier than that, back in '73, which you can't buy now 'cause it isn't around, but this is… Because I wanna cite my own prescience as I talk to you about this. It's called *Spaghetti City Video Manual*, by Videofreex, that we used— I used the collective name at that point, for various reasons; one of them not wanting to be known as a techie. But see, here it's 1998, I'm still known as a techie. But here's how prescient I was at this point. At the back of the book… This book, by the way, was a

TEASDALE (Cont.): handbook for the guide to use— repair and maintenance of video at the time, the half-inch PortaPak, which was *the* unit of production, if you will, or the tool of production that people in the late sixties, or actually, starting the early seventies, 'cause that's when this particular devise came out. So this was an explanation of how video worked and what video was, and a lot of practical tips for doing things like changing the tube in the camera—that's when cameras had tubes—and other maintenance, making cables and things like that. So at the back of the book, I took the liberty of talking about what was coming up in terms of hardware, and what was available. And I said this of the three-quarter inch cassette. "Sony started it; everybody markets it. It represents the worst regressive, counterproductive technology. A new format is not necessary. (laughter) Sony is already responsible for six different ones, none of them standard with the others. It eats tapes. You can't edit with it. It's bulky and foolish." (laughter) Just to give you a sense of, you know, how much I… I did put up… But because this kind of foreshadowed my being a journalist, so later on I would just hedge my bets, "Sony's marketing power might make it prevail over the forces of reason." (laughter) So I give you that just to, you know, kind of put me in perspective. (laughter) I just would like to read you just a few paragraphs; again, 'cause I think it's the most efficient way of relaying this information. And, you know, I guess this afternoon we'll talk. Also, just again, before I get to it, I did bring some tapes with me—and you might interpret this, if any of you have taken psychology courses, how you will—I left them in the trunk of my car, some distance away. So I can't show you any of my tapes; I can criticize Paul's, but I can't… (laughter)

TEASDALE (Cont.): Anyway, "For all the excitement about video among Freex and the straight press, it might well have become a short-lived phenomenon, and Videofreex with it, if not for the contribution of one man, who had no noticeable interest in the medium, and who never looked completely comfortable on TV in any of his frequent appearances. What he cared about was his own legacy, and he had some very definite ideas about what that legacy should be. His name was Nelson Aldrich Rockefeller. In 1970, Rockefeller's chances for the presidency had all but vanished. Richard Nixon, busy extending the Vietnam ground war into Cambodia, just as the army brought officers to trial for a massacre at a small village called Mei Lai, would undoubtedly win renomination by the Republicans in 1972. That would leave Rockefeller, in that pre-Ronald Reagan era, too old to run in 1976. So the four term governor of New York sought to leave his imprint in different ways. For one thing, he had decided to build a grand plaza of government office buildings in the center of Albany, a kind of titanic monument to his tenure. But Rockefeller was too sophisticated to believe he could secure a lasting memorial to his accomplishment simply by altering the architecture of the hinterlands. So he took another bold step, and in the guns and butter economy of that time, he reinvented a small bureaucracy he had created and made it into a major state agency with far reaching cultural power. The New York State Council on the Arts budget grew from a total of 2.2 million dollars in 1969 to 20.2 million dollars in 1970. The 1970 Council budget earmarked over a million-and-a-half dollars for the film, literature and TV media program, an unheard of sum for a government to dispense on the arts in those days. Rockefeller resisted the philistine impulse to meddle, and left key decisions about what

TEASDALE (Cont.): art to fund up to artists. The Council dispensed it largesse with the aid of recommendations from panels of artists in each field. And at that time, video had become the hot new medium for artists of all kinds.

"The governor also made some astute calculations to assure passage of his plan. New York City might claim its place as the hub of the cultural universe, but if all the money went there, he couldn't win the support of upstate legislators, many of whom harbored misgivings about the notion of subsidizing the arts with taxpayers' money. So the word went out that the Council would spend a sizeable chunk of its funds throughout that netherworld known as upstate. David"—and this is one of my partners who was starting Videofreex, David Cort—"got tipped off about this policy, and we immediately set out to play the game to our advantage. Videofreex officially transmogrified into a nonprofit organization called Mediabus. Originally, we intended to equip a bus with video equipment and travel all over the state in it. That idea owed a lot to a New York filmmaker and film teacher named Roger Larsen, who had developed the Filmbus with Council funds a few years before, and had traveled to neighborhoods around the city, showing all kinds of movies. The concept of a bus of any kind had a certain mystique, too, a la Kesey and his adventures. But before long, we concluded that a heavily equipped bus mimicked the networks. PortaPaks, our portable VTRs, symbolized the free-spirited approach to video we planned to promote. So we ditched the bus concept in favor of a van. 'Stay nimble,' we said, 'Ready to shoot tape at a moment's notice.' We worked it out that money for Mediabus would come through the Rochester Museum and Science

TEASDALE (Cont.): Center, all forty-thousand dollars of it. After months on end, when it looked as if the group could not stay together for lack of funds, we could hardly imagine how to spend that much money in a year. Even as the announcement of the money came, ConEd had cut off our electricity at the loft, and we could only work now and then, by running an extension cord to the neighbors below, hoping it wouldn't blow their fuse. Several months behind on the rent, we had to flee New York City."

So kind of— I just wanna set that. I understand that I'm glossing over a lot, in terms of the Council and its role, but I believe that to be the case; I believe that this was a movement that was allowed to grow in an unprecedented way because of the largesse of the State Council on the Arts. So, you know, I can go on ad nauseum about this, you know, kind of war story type of stuff. I'll just give you a kind of thumbnail sketch and get you to where we ended up.

We ended up in a place called Lanesville, New York—basically, because there was a house big enough and cheap enough to house ten adults, and because it was upstate. It wasn't anywhere near Rochester, but that didn't matter to us. Didn't seem to matter, fortunately, to people in Rochester, 'cause we were out of their hair a lot of the time, so they could develop on their own, which was great, and really produced a marvelous group of people—Portable Channel, who did a lot of good work in that city and around the area. We had money from the Council. We were ten adults; we'd gotten together, actually, around… David and I had met at the Woodstock festival and shot some tape

TEASDALE (Cont.): there, and then connected with a guy who was handing out money to try to get his share of the sixties, 'cause he worked for CBS. And he's an interesting man named Don West(sp?). He was spending money on a lot of people; he spent a lot of money on us. We accrued a lot of equipment. And then the program, when the network people saw it—I could read you that section, but I'll spare you—they basically freaked out. What was interesting was that it was Mike Dann, who was responsible for things like *Beverly Hillbillies*, so you can imagine how he reacted to a bunch of video people in New York City showing the tape. And a guy named Fred Silverman, who was Dann's kind of acolyte, who went on to ruin the programming of all three networks—not that it was a hard job to do. (laughter)

So you had those people. We got a lot of experience, a lot of money. We kind of built a reputation. We were sure we were rock stars, really, rather than video people, we just happened to be in a different incarnation. (laughter) And we… Then all of a sudden there wasn't any money anymore. The gravy train kind of disappeared. So we had to scramble a lot. And the Council was a lifesaver. It was about at the time when our tether had run out, quite literally. We were borrowing electricity from people downstairs. We borrowed— we tapped out our families about as much as we could. But we had developed a relatively high level of technical expertise at that time. So we were able to edit, which was an exciting process, 'cause we'd actually gotten a one-inch machine. But besides the technology, we couldn't support it in the city. We moved to the country. And there… We have a piece of equipment that Abbie had actually financed, but he financed

TEASDALE (Cont.): it—Abbie Hoffman—he financed it 'cause I wrote a chapter in his book called *Steal This Book*—or part of a chapter—on illegal television broadcasting. We set up a TV station. And weekly, we broadcast to our little, tiny community—and I do mean tiny, only a few hundred homes—up in this area of the Catskills. And if you want, or if you'll indulge me, I'll read you just a couple more paragraphs. Have I got the time to do that? Ok. Just a couple more paragraphs, to give you a little sense of Lanesville TV. And there may be some references to you(?), 'cause this is later on in the manuscript.

"The conventional model for a TV show production lies on rigid hierarchy. A producer sits in an isolated control room, looking over the shoulder of a director, who tells a technical director to switch between cameras, located out on the studio floor. The camera operators much train their lenses on precisely what the producer wants. We had long ago rejected this system as creatively stifling. But our initial experiences with Lanesville TV shows, originating from the control room, led me to believe the idea of a separate technical space might have some merit after all. The isolation allows the people handling the mechanical aspects of the show"—here we go, right here—"to concentrate on their jobs, rather than dividing their attention between the technical work and the need to remember not to stare off into space or draw on(?) the camera. Likewise, the people in front of the camera can concentrate on connecting with the audience, without the distractions of panic dialogue that kept the shows on the air. 'Why is this picture so crappy?' 'Oh, no, Sam says there's a buzz in the audio.' We compromised on this point. Rather than surrendering entirely to tradition, we set up the control room with all its

TEASDALE (Cont.): VTRs and monitors and other production paraphernalia, in the front dining room. We designated the adjacent middle dining room as the studio." We were in an old boarding house, that's why these rooms have names. "Occasionally, we moved the furniture and reversed this configuration. The rooms were separated by sliding doors with French windows. So in theory, we could isolate them from each other. In practice however, that seldom happened. The shows went on the air, and the people in front of the camera called out questions and instructions to the folks in the control room, just as you'd speak to anyone in the next room. And the folks in the control room would answer. Crises in the control room—and we had plenty of them, as VTRs gobbled up tapes, lights went dead, or the transmitter begged for someone to kick it—became part of the show. We thought this demystified the process of television, a political goal of ours. To produce a show without the hierarchy amounted to a revolutionary act directed at the oppressive mediocrity of conventional TV. More important, it would point the way to a new form of television. Perhaps if we'd made money at it, our approach might have had some more immediate and noticeable impact. I'm no longer so sure anymore people want their entertainment demystified. And in any case, the ubiquitous portable VCR has put video quite literally in the hands of the masses. CNN and some of the TV networks have made a big deal of showing off their control rooms as a visual element of their news broadcasts. But these images, which portray hushed, dimly lit and thoroughly isolated control rooms, just underscore how strong the barrier between technology and talent has remained in most studios. The chit-chat between the host and the control room made our broadcasts homier, a characteristic parodied now by network shows like *Saturday Night*

TEASDALE (Cont.): as a mark of cable TV ineptitude. When corporate TV figures out how to make a homey style fabulously profitable, every show will adopt it."

And I'll just leave you with this notion. I was reading in the *Times*—this Monday, I guess—how the networks are cutting back on their news staff. And I thought it was really interesting that they had discovered that they could actually do news with a camera operator and a reporter. And sometimes just with a camera operator. Which is a revelation to them, because they could… I mean, these network people literally couldn't go across town without a limousine, they had to have it. That was the mindset. And there was, you know, the producer, the assistant producer, the go-fer and all these people they had to do this thing. And then… And the other thing is that they can't compete now with twenty-four news—which as a concept, I really love—that NBC cannot compete with MSNBC. What does that mean? I don't know. But at the end of this story, they have Richard Wald, who's head of NBC news saying they're no longer gonna do news; they're going to do value added news. (laughter) And I thought: Wow! That's what we did. We did value added television, you know? (laughter) And I think as much as I could describe it in current terms, that's probably what it was. I don't know how to go into it in greater detail. I certainly can't apply the academic analysis to what we did. It was a lot of fun. I would just leave you with a thought that I was able to use it later on, as I think I mentioned earlier, to work with the Federal Communications Commission as a consultant, to make small television stations like Lanesville TV legal, in the sense that you could actually get a license, which we couldn't do back then. That was very exciting;

TEASDALE (Cont.): it didn't amount to much, although there are about fifteen-hundred, apparently, low power television stations on the air now. And I certainly wouldn't want to portray Lanesville TV as the only thing that Videofreex did. We did— the people who were involved—and there were nine, really, individuals who stayed for a number of years—were a diverse group of people with eclectic tastes, and I think a very talented group of people. And I feel very fortunate and blessed to have been a part of them and a part of the moment. And it's great to see faces of friends from that time, and who continue to be friends, out in this audience. So thank you very much. (applause)

WOMAN: (inaudible) lunch and…

WOMAN: It's here.

WOMAN: Oh, good. Perfect timing.

WOMAN: So should we just go out and come back?

(inaudible voice)

WOMAN: Ok. I think we'll take about forty minutes for lunch and then come back.

END OF TAPE ONE.

(brief comments)

BARBARA LONDON: Ok. I will start with a slide, which I what I like to do. This is where I work. (laughter) And we've already had the name Nelson Rockefeller invoked. Abby Aldrich Rockefeller was one of the founders of the museum. And in her infinite wisdom, and her colleagues', Alfred Barr was hired as the first director. And Alfred Barr was very interested in the art of today. And in 1929, that meant painting and sculpture; in 1935 in included film; we had photography from the beginning; architecture and design; of course, drawings, prints. On our façade, we even used to have "Art of Our Time" right there. Representing the art of our time became more and more problematic as art changed. But some of us have been working very hard over the last couple of decades to be flexible in all of that.

So back in 1940, around the time of this renovation, contemporary art really wasn't shown much. There was the Whitney Museum; MOMA was one of the first, of course, in '29. Film, I said, came into MOMA in 1935. Video, we first showed it in 1968, with The Machine as Seen at the End of the Mechanical Age. And there was a piece by Nam June Paik in that show, among a couple of other—in quotes—"kinetic artists." Then in, of course '69, you've already seen—Dierdre showed the tape TV as a Creative Medium. That exhibition was on 57th Street. MOMA is 53rd, just a hop-skip. In 1971, we launched our Projects, ongoing contemporary series, in small galleries on the first floor. Some people forget the very first Projects exhibition was an installation by Keith Sonnier,

LONDON (Cont.): which had a camera, live camera. And it was a very interesting situation between two galleries. So viewers would walk into the first space—the ceiling was lowered; you had to sort of scrunch to get down and in—you emerged in the middle, and you saw there was a camera. Around the corner, your face was being projected. So it was about, of course, real time, perception, perception of space, physical space.

I came up here in 1974, I think ear… '74, MOMA had Open Circuits, a conference. Syracuse had a conference, also. Then the ongoing video exhibition began in 1974. We started our collection in 1975. I just did a little article for the MOMA magazine about how those first tapes entered the collection. I was then in the print department, and video came in through the print department—a(?) multiple. Ultimately, video entered the film department and the department was renamed.

When we expanded in 1984, we opened a video study center. By that point, we probably had about five-hundred tapes in the collection. I'm a word junkie; I've saved every shred of paper any artist has ever given me. And photos. So we have incredible archives, which a lot of writers, curators, artists have come to use. I worry about crummy quality of tapes, also, like some of you have mentioned. And I know many artists in the audience worry about it. I know Steina is involved with preserving some of the tapes that they've done. I know Ralph and lots of people here are involved with preservation. So…

LONDON (Cont.): We'll go on to the next slide. So you know where I work. We… (laughs) I like to show this slide of Nam June's *TV With Candle*, from 1963. It's before we had the PortaPak. It's when artists like Paik were dealing with the box, that boob tube that people were watching. And of course, here it is; it's a Zen simplification of television. TV was relatively new; some of us went to the neighbors' to watch *Howdy Doodie*. But Nam June stripped the interior out and suggested a different kind of programming. Next slide.

In a Projects show we did with Paik in the early seventies, we presented this piece, *TV With Magnet*. Next one. Paik transformed a TV set. He invited you, the viewer, really to move the magnet across the top of this set to create synthetic patterns. So interactivity, as it's hyped in the media in the nineties as a current phenomenon, actually was very popular back then, in '63, when he did this piece, when it was called audience participation. (laughter) Some of you actually were in the theater when the Living Theater performed in New York and traveled around the world, and imposed upon audience members to also become performers. Can I have the next one? So this is what the imagery looked like when a viewer changed the magnet on the top of the TV set in Paik's piece. Next one.

This I copped from your book. Ann Woodward did the drawings. And this is a PortaPak, as it was called. It allowed ordinary mortals like you and me, and the artists, and anybody who would have a couple thousand dollars to buy one. You could go out on the street.

LONDON (Cont.): And of course, up until that point, cameras were very heavy and were only in the TV studio. (inaudible) So the PortaPak was relatively affordable. And it was very clunky, cumbersome, you know, to take that apparatus out on the street. And of course, the big difference between video and super 8 film at that time was the immediacy; you could see a live image, and you could have access to it; you could immediately replay it. Next slide.

So Paik, with Shuya Abe, then made what's called a synthesizer. And is Bill Etra still in the audience? He's, of course, a pioneer in making a synthesizer, also. So a lot of artists, a lot of people were frustrated being relegated to the black and white image; and working with a synthesizer meant you could put color to the different light levels in the black and white image. I'm being very simple. I'm not an engineer. Ralph could explain it better.

I'm gonna go to one of the first videotapes, which was made by Nam June in 1967. It was actually shown in the Machine show in 1968. And Paik took two of those open-reel decks. He Scotch taped together a piece of tape, and played it, but we didn't have three-quarter-inch decks at that point. And for museums, that was really very, very awkward. How do you show video when you've gotta thread the machine every time you wanna play a tape? You couldn't go automatic rewind. So Paik threaded up this tape, and… I'll run it and then I'll mention something after.

(VIDEO)

JOHN LINDSAY: I wonder if the photographers would mind— I wonder if the photographers would mind coming down for a minute? (applause; inaudible)

LONDON: So for those of you who are young enough not to know, that was the then mayor of New York City, John Lindsay. And John Lindsay was a very popular politician. And of course, Paik just appropriated that clip off the TV. And for me, it's kind of a very parallel kind of appropriation that artists like Andy Warhol were doing at the same time. Warhol would take Elvis Presley or Marilyn Monroe and silkscreen them and do, I think, something kind of similar; although Paik's, of course, is temporal, is a different kind of portrait. But Lindsay was a very iconic figure. He was on the cover of the *Times* almost every day.

I think those of us involved with video, you have to be very fast-footed, whether you're artist or curator or writer. The late sixties was a very active time, as you've already heard from Paul, Dierdre and Parry. Of course, people were coming to video from many different disciplines—music, performance, sculpture. So it was a time of real experimentation and a time of change. Let's see. I'm gonna show… I'm going back and forth with media; sorry if it's complicated. I just wanna show this next slide, which is actually of a tape by Richard Serra. And I think Carlotta Schoolman's coming this afternoon, but Carlotta was very involved with producing tapes with artists. So Richard Serra, the sculptor, in this tape called *Surprise Attack*, holds a lead rod in his hand, which

LONDON (Cont.): he slams from one hand to the other over and over again. And he becomes more violent as he speaks this text, which is about power. So Serra was working in this video with a similar way that painters at that time were very involved with the frame of the canvas. So here, you just have Serra with only his hands visible.

So I'm next gonna show you a tape by John Baldessari. And Baldessari, as many of you know, is a conceptual artist, artist very involved with the meaning of visual images and how context affects interpretation. So you're gonna see just a snip of the beginning of *Baldessari Sings Sol LeWitt*. Three-quarter(?).

(VIDEO)

BALDESSARI: I'd like to sing for you some of these sentences that Sol LeWitt has written on conceptual art. I feel this as a tribute to him, in that I think that these sentences have been hidden too long in the pages of exhibition catalogues, and that perhaps that by my singing them for you, it will bring these sentences to a much larger public. I'll use the same ordering and numbering that he has. I'll try to pause between each statement for clarity. It may be that occasionally, I will have to sing one sentence over more than once, in that I might not get the phrasing correct.

(SINGS) *Conceptual artists (inaudible); they lead to conclusions that logic cannot reach.*

Number two. (laughter; SINGS) *Rational judgments repeat rational judgments.*

(VIDEO [Cont.])

BALDESSARI: Number three. (laughter)

LONDON: So I don't like to do excerpts but… So… I'm gonna show another short clip, and this is by Bill Wegman.

(VIDEO)

MAN: (inaudible) Then we came to this beach(?). (inaudible; laughter) in that beach, on the sand. So it should've been (inaudible) B-E-A-C-H. (laughter) And that's the difference.

MAN: (inaudible)

LONDON: So… Wegman was able to make this kind of a personal document because the PortaPak allowed him to work very much alone in his studio. So he was able to do these actions, do these situations, see the results, and shape it accordingly. So we'll go on to the next one, another snip. And it's by Joan Jonas. And this piece is from 1972. And it's called *Vertical Roll*. I'm sure most of you have seen it, but we'll just look at a little bit.

(VIDEO)

LONDON: So there's the Preservation Panel going on parallel to this, but as institution, it's very important that we all work together. I work with colleagues here who are distributors, who are other curators. When it comes to having a work of art like *Vertical Roll* in the museum's collection, it means that we have a contract which says we can have up to three copies at any one time. That means an exhibition copy, the preservation submaster, and a study center copy. So you could come in, make an appointment and see that work. I think context is very important for a lot of this work. Of course, we might have down in our theater, the time you're there to see this piece, Alfred Hitchcock; we might have Kurosawa; we might have who knows. We might have Picasso. But that context is important. And I think as we all move into the next millennium, we're all trying to figure out preservation issues, formats, sharing, submaster materials, when we're a collector who has already paid a fee to have the rights to have an archival copy at the museum. So…

Moving along… I think I'll just mention—'cause of course, Steina is here—that in '74, when I first really got very, very involved with video—as I say, I cut my teeth down at the Kitchen. Most Saturday afternoons, you'd find me at the Anthology Film Archives or at the Kitchen. And of course, we all know that the Kitchen was co-founded by Woody and Steina, and was one of the first alternative art centers in the States. And it was a very dynamic place—after, of course, Woody and Steina got frustrated with having people come to their own loft. But in this rundown hotel on the edge of NYU, what later became SoHo, was a scene were artists would come with their latest tape, you know, tucked

LONDON (Cont.): under their arm. And it was quite a lively situation, when we all were exploring, discovering what this medium is about. So I would have coffee with people like Nam June or Steina, Al Robbins(sp?), Ed Emshwiller, Joan Jonas, all kinds of people. Documentary folk, as well.

(inaudible voice)

LONDON: Ok. Sorry.

(inaudible voice)

LONDON: So I think what I'll do is go get number two (inaudible, off mic) So we've already talked a little bit about the politics so far; but video, like the other arts, didn't escape the embrace of politics. Feminism, sexual orientation, multiculturalism, these were very important issues. And women in particular were attracted to video because it was new, the field was wide open, it was without hierarchy or rules, and there was no old boy's network in place to keep women out. So I'm now gonna play a very short snip of Martha Rosler's *Semiotics of the Kitchen.*

(VIDEO)

ROSLER: Apron. Bowl(?). Chopper. Dish. Egg beater.

LONDON: So… So this is ’75. I’m now gonna go back to slides. And I just wanna say as institution, where… To show an installation, artists need a public space, they need a space. I mean, you can do an installation out in a very public environment. If it’s video, of course, you need night, you need a projector. But in a museum, then, exhibiting and then collecting, how do you deal with something that’s, of course, very variable? When it’s an installation like the one I’m gonna show you, by Peter Campus, his piece called *Ain*(?), it’s very intransient, it’s very immaterial. And the documentation becomes unbelievable important. What the artist writes, what you as curators see when the artist puts it up. And what happens if the artist wanders off into the sunset, and…? Then you the curator have the responsibility, with your registrar, as to how to reproduce this. Now, with a case like Peter Campus, he likes a very particular projector; what if that projector becomes obsolete, the bulbs aren’t to be found anymore? You the curator have to make an aesthetic decision as to what projector to use. And if the light isn’t exactly in the right way, or the throw isn’t just so, it’s not the artist’s piece. So we’ll have the next slide.

So this is right side up; it’s a piece called *Ain*. And it’s from ’74. We showed it in our Projects galleries. And I think it’s a very important work from that time, because of the way Peter was dealing with light. So we all know that video is made of light. And the image is created by variations in this light. So this piece was shown in a very dark room. You maybe saw it at the Whitney; I forget if it was— I forget which show it was, within the last couple years. But as you were entering into this very dark room, there was a very tiny spotlight at the base of the far wall. And as you went to investigate what that

LONDON (Cont.): spotlight was, all of a sudden your image was picked up, and you were then upside down on the wall, and you could see yourself as if you were a deer caught in the headlights. So this very unobtrusive camera was in the corner. So I as a viewer, when I first saw it, of course, wanted to soften up my image; it looked very melancholic, very harsh, very brutal. And it was like I'd come upon a bad dream. And I couldn't change it, no matter what. But that's Peter's piece. And you as a viewer prod and poke your own image. And for me, it's a very effective example of interactivity. So there were no buttons to push. Interactivity today, of course, one of the obvious ways is you click your computer mouse and you go from point A to B to C. And of course there are all kinds of internet art example. Next slide.

This is Bruce Nauman's *Corridor*, from '69-70, which we showed at MOMA in our Nauman retrospective kind of recently. When I first saw this piece, I was struck. When I tried to walk down that corridor, it's very tight, very constraining, and your elbow's kind of tight against your body. So you walk along the corridor, and all of a sudden there are the two monitors at the end of the corridor, and you are shot from behind, and the back of your head appears on one of the monitors in front of you. So this is live, this is the present. This is now. When you turn around to look for where the camera is, which is right above the entrance, you realize that at that very moment your face is appearing on the monitor; but of course you can't see it, 'cause your head is turned around. So if you're a narcissist, you're stuck. (laughter) You go between the camera and the monitor, and there's no way you'll see your face. So there you are. You're looking at the monitor,

LONDON (Cont.): which is the present. And you're turning around. Of course, that becomes the past. The other monitor shows the empty corridor; and that's a prerecorded image of the empty corridor. And of course, that is really the past. And that image is, of course, unchanging.

So I think what a lot of artists were really exploring at that very beginning in the late sixties, early seventies was they were examining the complexities of time that resulted from the interplay between the viewer, the live camera, and the prerecorded video material. And that's the gist of the article that's in your packet that I wrote in *Leonardo* a couple years ago. So with video, time could be speeded up, slowed down, frozen, mangled—all within this context of active viewer participation. In the installation form, video extends both time and space. Film, of course cannot do this. Film is always the past. The film has to be sent out to be developed. And it's the video installation where we can have the live camera and the image can be output onto either a monitor or a projector to show what's happening right now.

How we doing on time? I can show a little tape by Gary Hill to deal with time, and I think many of you have seen it, but it's very short. It's this piece called *Site, Recite*. S-I-T-E-slash-recite. And Gary, even though he was born in California, lives in Seattle, I'd call him an upstate boy because he really was around Woodstock and was with that group of poets called Deep Imagists. So when he made this piece, around '89, it's when video had become more common in a museum; very much part of the Whitney Biennial, very

LONDON (Cont.): much part of, like, Documenta. At that point, artists who were very technically proficient, maybe some of them got skimmed off and pulled into MTV. But some stayed. So we'll look at this short tape.

(VIDEO)

MAN: Nothing seems to ever have been moved. There's something in the artist's notion(?) which can only be a trap(?). (inaudible) Hence, we are changed in the estrangement(?) of judging. No. (inaudible) Happening all at once. I'm just a (inaudible) wrapped up in myself. (inaudible) through the trees. (inaudible) language drapes(?) everything on the walls, what walls. On the very walls that never vary. (inaudible) distant sands, and then we have nothing, like a four-legged table. What is in it(?)? And now, with a never ending approach, (inaudible) something to (inaudible) like trestles without tracks. Basically, we're just gathering(?) evidence of unsolved crimes. The overall-ness of it all(?) soaks through, runs through the holes in my hands and continues from (inaudible) overturning rocks that should not be overturned, breaking bread that should not be broken. The sun will rise. And I won't know what to do with it. Its feet(?) will torture me (inaudible) invented, but I can only reiterate what is sure to come—the livelier everything else seems to get, the longer I wait, the more the little deaths pile up. Bodily sustenance is no longer an excuse; too much time goes by to take it by surprise. So much remains. No doubt it can all be countered. Starting with any one, continuing on with any other one, until all is counted for, a consensus is

(VIDEO)

MAN (Cont.): reached. Then it can all be shoved, in all its (inaudible) splendor(?). This, then, is the turf. These sightings(?) I see(?) before me, made up of just so many just views(?), nature's constituency. (inaudible) difference to the centrifugal vanishing point that mentality (inaudible) so falsely. (inaudible) incessantly instructs (inaudible) series of makeshifts designed to perpetuate (inaudible). And when, like all others that holded(?) breath for a thousand words, conversely exhales point-zero-zero-one pictures(?). This insidious wraparound(?) tied to the notion I have eyes in the back of my head binds me to my middle, and cloves my being to a new word, as it winds the world around my mouth. (inaudible) leaves my (inaudible) back to back with itself. Boomerang effect. A (inaudible) all hallucinations, leaving all to hold the naked eye saw him each and every utterance that breaks and enters the dormitories of perception. I must become boring(?) self-consciousness. Move my body to move my mind to move the words to move my mouth. Spin, spur of the moment. Imagining the brain closer than the eyes.

LONDON: Now I'll just run through a couple of slides, and then we'll open it up. Over the years, we've shown a lot of different kinds of installations. This is a piece by Luke Corsham(sp?) called *Portrait*, where you the viewer could interact with a figure on this glass. So you would ask questions and, in effect, have a kind of conversation. If the person was bored with you, that video figure would turn and talk to the figure. There

LONDON (Cont.): were four of these kiosks. That figure would then engage in a conversation with another video character. Next one. I'm just gonna go quickly through these.

This is the Montreal artist Barbara Steinman, a piece we did called *Icon*, which is like a Pierre(?) Della Robbia sculpture that was in the conservation lab, which then she did this blow up of… You wanna go quick? Like, one… Then— so she's got actually test tubes with, one, a vial of blood getting filled, an empty one. On the far wall, then, is this madonna figure which has been processed through video and photographed again, so this very veil like almost rolling image. So that it's really, really very abstract. Next one.

Some of you saw Video Spaces, the exhibition a couple of years ago. This is Judith Barry/Brad Miskell piece called *Ha®d Sell*. It's as if a dumpster had crash landed a cyborg was crawling out. That's the way I'd define it. Next one.

This is a piece which just entered the museum's collection. It was also in that exhibition. It's called *Lovers*, by Teiji Furuhashi, I think a very important artist, born in Kyoto. And I use this as an example. Curators, we tend to work over a period of time with artists and, you know, slowly work is exhibited, it enters the collection. This artist, I met in Japan in '83. But I think Teiji was an incredible artist who was very involved with performance and media. And for those of you who haven't seen it, I hope you see it when we put it up again. These figures are projected life size onto black walls, so they're very ghost-like.

LONDON (Cont.): And they move and dance. And one of them, through a motion detector, will find you, and it will pause and it will fall back into the void, as if into death.

A piece by Tony Oursler called *System for Dramatic Feedback*. This little doll screams at you as you walk into the gallery. It's quiet for a little bit, and then it goes, "OH, NO!" And you think: Oh, no, what's gonna happen? Next one. And inside is his mutation pile. Figures scrunched at the bottom, caught in a trauma, among other things.

This is Stan Douglas' amazing piece called *Evening*. And when Parry was talking about Chicago Seven, this piece Stan did going back to Chicago, going through lots and lots and lots of footage, at that moment when television news changed from the Edward R. Murrow style to happy talk news. So the piece is called Evening, and you could take it in a lot of ways—evening news, or evening out. And let's make it all nice and pretty.

Bill Viola's piece *Slowly Turning Narrative*, where you're in an environment. Bill calls a lot of his work finely tuned environments. And you've got two video projections going at this wall, which is matte on one side, mirrored on the other, revolving two times a minute. So when the mirror side is there, you become another element. of course, it's like a mind full of, you know, all the extraneous thoughts. And of course, the best way to look at it would be right at the pole where it's turning, but you can't get there.

LONDON (Cont.): This is Steve McQueen's piece, which we showed in January. Very, very, very haunting, beautiful piece. The floor was white. This projection filled a wall. And he's standing in front of this building. And you get various shots of his body. And this is actually when the wall is falling down upon him. And it's planned so carefully that where that where that window was is right where he stands.

And the end of this month, you'll be able to see this piece by Chong Pei Li(sp?) called *Eating*. A year ago I was lucky, had a travel grant to go to China. And as a curator, often we're assembling information, and it takes a while for it to enter into the program. So I got the idea that I would do an internet kind of dispatch; I'd be Charles Kuralt on the road. And MOMA went along with it, and I spent five weeks in China, meeting with media artists, installation artists in Beijing, Shanghai, Hongzhou, which is where this artist comes from, Chong Pei Li. And I was very struck by Pei Li. He's in his forties. He, around 1988, had access to a Chinese art magazine, and there was a reference to this artist from Korea who was working in video. Artists in China have never seen any of the work that we're all talking about, for the most part. So Pei Li heard about, just from that one sentence about Nam June Paik—I think maybe he had had a show in Seoul. And Pei Li thought: video art. He had done painting, he had done printmaking. He had lived through the cultural revolution. And just started to work with video. I was quite blown away, and came back from this trip, which you can read online; it's called Stir Fry, and AdaWeb's Vivian Selbo did the designing of the web site. But I came back, and we've purchased the installation, which you can see the end of the month. And we purchased a piece called

LONDON (Cont.): *Document on Hygiene*. And for forty minutes, Chong Pei Li washes a chicken with soap and water. And the chicken, of course, initially is very uncomfortable and squawking and whatever. And after many washings, it becomes calm. (laughter)

This piece, there are three monitors stacked. The top one— It's called *Eating*. Top one shows a man's cheek, and he's chewing. Next monitor shows a black and white image. His camera was— he attached a camera to a man's arm, and the arm goes holding a fork from, of course plate to mouth. And then the bottom image shows the plate. And actually, they're all synched, so the man is going from eating a gooey piece of cake to eating two luscious, ripe, red tomatoes. And then he eats a cucumber and a hard boiled egg. So… I hope we have fuel for conversation. So this— Thanks, Sean(sp?), for helping me put this together. (applause)

DIERDRE BOYLE: What the plan is now is we're going to turn this into discussion time. So I'm gonna invite Parry and Paul and Barbara back. And I thought what we'd do is sort of divide the afternoon that remains into two parts, and have some discussion, questions, comments, arguments, controversies related to what you've heard and seen thus far; take a break; and then really open it up to a much wider discussion—anything, any topics that haven't been considered or are, you know, relative to video's history, beyond the scope of what's been presented here. So... I just wanted to begin by saying one thing of a personal nature. I realized this morning, as I felt my heart pounding, standing here, realizing the incredible number of people here, many of whom I've never

BOYLE (Cont.): met before, but only read about or seen their work; the anxiety that I felt all the years that I've been not writing my history of video—emphasis on the not writing, because there is a real terror, I think, in tackling something as complex and diverse and contentious as video history.

MAN: Who says it's contentious? (laughter)

BOYLE: And this was… I mean, I was feeling it. I wasn't processing it, even intellectually; I was just feeling it. I felt short of breath, and thinking: I'm very incoherent, I'm not making a whole lot of sense. And when I went out at the lunch break, Steina gently reminded me that I had a date wrong, and I thought to myself: Oh, my God! You know, it's all coming back to me. But the other thing that I was reminded, you know, the other side of this is that in my answer to her, saying, "Well, I think Cara Devito's tape was made in 1975," I realized that for anyone who is attempting to do a history of this heretofore, you know, complex arena, when you go and you do the careful research to unearth the person and the artifact and the details that allow you to determine when something was made, for example, it's very hard, I think, to maintain that sort of clarity and confidence in oneself, because a distributor catalogue tells you something else, and twelve articles that you've read, or somebody else speaking at a conference conflicts with that. So there is a tremendous amount of work one has to do to peel away all the layers, the confusions, the, you know, misinformation, you know, the misprint that appeared in 1973 in *Avalanche*. You know, and then to feel confident enough that what

BOYLE (Cont.): you found is correct—and then to remember it, (laughter) that's the other thing, as well. So, you know, what I'm sort of invoking here for myself is that a history is a collective process in the making, and also in the retelling. And there are so many different points of view in terms of telling a history of video—I try to refrain from that particular particle, "the," because there are certainly many histories—that, you know, I hope that in this larger discussion, we can speak with a real collective sense of the multiple histories here, and not feel terrified to try to do that, as I sometimes do. So I'd really like to open to questions and comments for any of the presenters here.

PARRY TEASDALE: Can I say that I think Joan Jonas still owes us forty-nine dollars for an editing session. (laughter; inaudible) Videofreex is looking for (inaudible).

(inaudible voices)

WOMAN: And it's not very serious, but it was just a question I had when you brought up Joan Jonas' piece. Maybe before we get into anything very… That one looked like it was restored; it looked like it had been somehow processed digitally, compared to some of the other stuff. Is that true?

WOMAN: (inaudible), could answer that question…

WOMAN: Could you repeat the question so (inaudible, voices over each other)

WOMAN: I said it looked like it had been restored, *Vertical Roll*, let's say compared to maybe the Wegman and some of the others.

(inaudible voice)

WOMAN: *Vertical Roll*. Looked very good, it looked like it had been restored, and even better than I've seen before.

LONDON: 'cause it's… Actually, I don't know that— I don't remember the status of Joan's. I know that, you know, a lot of Wegman has been restored, like Nauman is in the process. And I can't remember— I pulled that dub for lectures a few years ago, so… I can't answer.

WOMAN: Yeah.

LONDON: But there (inaudible voice) are efforts, and BAVC, the Bay Area Video Coalition, (inaudible) is doing representation(?) now.

WOMAN: (inaudible) include the (inaudible) that made(?) *Vertical Roll* in 1986, (Woman: Good, ok) actually, at Matrix, in New York City at the time(?) (inaudible)

MAN: (inaudible) out of anybody here—and maybe I shouldn't jump the question, but—that makes videotapes expects their videotapes to be around in twenty years? And if so, what are you doing about it? Because I didn't think that videotapes would… I didn't think about whether they'd be around in twenty years, let alone twenty days, actually, when we made them, so… And I think that is responsible for some of the bad quality. I'd like to blame that for most of the problems. It really is the case. But the tape (inaudible) so I would be curious; at some point, I think it's everyone's responsibility, and I think some of you(?) (inaudible).

WOMAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: I'm just saying, you know, personally, I'm just waiting for DVD. I mean, I… it's not very far away, so hopefully, it will, you know…

WOMAN: But is DVD really the answer, because DVD will give your analog work a pixel-y look.

WOMAN: I don't know. I mean… Is it gonna give the movies a pixel-y look? You know what I'm saying? It depends on, you know, (inaudible) But I mean, we should be able to at least be able to play it and be able to enhance some of the (inaudible) and things like that. Maybe it's not perfect, but at least it is some kind of answer. And if we could write

WOMAN (Cont.): to this disk ourselves, we could digitize stuff, make our own restorations, (inaudible) Not here yet; (inaudible) a year-and-a-half.

WOMAN: (inaudible)

MAN: I was just gonna say that it strikes me there are two forms of video history. One's, in fact, that Dierdre endorsed, which is to write books and to dig up these facts; the other, more the type Barbara does, where you're putting on exhibitions that reach back. And they both have their own issues. And doing exhibitions of history, like I've done, you get into questions of whether or not to excerpt; more complication questions like… I once showed a Stan Vanderbeek that was originally a two-channel video, and I ended up putting it on a single-channel. And I've never thought about that without feeling guilty. (laughter) So I just wanted to sort of bring those both into the conversation.

MAN: Parry(?), it seems to me that the idea was to recycle the tapes. Don't you remember that?

TEASDALE(?): Oh, yeah, yeah, absolutely.

MAN: To use a videotape over and over again, 'cause you've got this medium that's reusable. And it's not like this damn paper where, once you get the words on it, it's all messed up. (laughter; inaudible voices) You can record over it again.

WOMAN: For artist(?) Nam June, he appropriates his own work.

MAN: Well, I'm not even talking about that; I'm talking about just using the tape over.

MAN: Yeah. I remember when I first started in video, as an—I guess I would call it an itinerant video bum—and I was in a— I had a surveillance camera and a Panasonic deck that wasn't standard with anything. And I had one tape. So I would… And I had a way to run it off the battery of my Volkswagen bus. So, you know, I'm traveling around, and by having only one tape, I would have to tape over parts of it. So the final product, my reel, was constantly changing. And I know we taped over a lot of stuff, year in and year out. Sometimes intentionally, often not. But you're right, the original concept was that you used the tape, you shot the tape, and then you re-used the tape, because that's what it was good for.

MAN: I remember having this conversation about that various times. (inaudible)

MAN: And why would you wanna preserve it? It was very of the moment. What was the point?

WOMAN: Process, not product.

WOMAN: (inaudible)

MAN: (inaudible)

MAN: And I'd just like to share with you that these utopian notions that… Well, Paul brought up so eloquently. I was just curious how Paul, and perhaps many of the people in this room, read the problem of talking about utopian sort of visions or concepts, given that the only contemporary thing you see is usually in the Western United States, and it's usually kind of a post-human utopia; it's very cultish, (inaudible) leader thing. And I think that every time utopian issues—although I'm certainly fascinated with what you're saying—I feel like I'm always stamped as a neo-sixties person. And I wonder how you overcome that, how you gently guide conversations with younger people, who have a higher measure of cynicism. I'm just curious about that, because I was refreshed by your boldness in talking about it, 'cause I guess the thought(?) that they were pretty dysfunctional sometimes in dialogues (inaudible).

PAUL RYAN: Yeah, I mean, I don't have any easy answer to that, I… I don't know what other people's experience is. You know, to me, when I picked up this copy(?), frankly(?), was we had lunch together, (laughs) alright? And he told me (inaudible) he said to dismiss that. I said, "Wait a minute, that's what I want to talk about." Because to me, when you abandon that… I don't know… He said(?), "How would you make…" You abandon a whole tradition, ask people to imagine a different social order. You abandon a whole tradition of that least preserves desire, beyond which we've been able to cultivate, alright? The problem is, or at least, you know, what I've tried to do in this talk,

RYAN (Cont.): which is to say that, ok, I was wrapped up in a utopian project; a lot of people were. And there, the map and the territory overlap; they're the same thing. You know what I mean? You have to do it. With young people, I really don't know. I mean, I teach at the New School, and I try and engender… Or I'm teaching this notational system; I'm not teaching utopia, you know? But I think that a critical history of video would have to look at the utopian issues, is my complaint. I mean, in the Soviet Union, for example, electricity—and there's been some good research on this—when the Soviet Union came in, they projected a lot of utopia's behind(?) electricity. The Soviet Union and electricity went hand in hand. And *Wired* magazine has created this sort of pseudo-utopia, techno-utopia, you know? So it's difficult to get it right; but I don't know how else you try and imagine other social configurations, you know? Have other people…? I mean, is there somebody here who's uttered the word in the last five years? (laughter) Besides myself?

WOMAN: (inaudible) embarrassed. You know, I really felt embarrassed (inaudible)

RYAN: Yeah. I mean, maybe it's not the time to. I just feel that at least if we're considering this history, you know, that was an important dimension of it.

WOMAN: Well, I don't…

MAN: By the way, I (inaudible) video (inaudible) Video came out of a time of conflict with (inaudible) established (inaudible). So a lot of what we were doing (inaudible) Our daughter is quite poor. She's a very bright girl. She lives in the Bronx(?), New York and she's working for Woodhouse(?). And we talked to her about (inaudible) get on your own path. But she doesn't see it that way. She doesn't need... She doesn't see the establishment as something to overcome. You know, a think a lot of utopia comes out of, you know, discontent with what's prevailing(?). I mean, you seek out something new.

WOMAN: But I think utopia has migrated to another median. I think the hype that we all experienced over the "information superhighway" is the latest sort of permutation or appropriation of utopia, for very different ends. But when Al Gore was out there selling, you know, America on the information superhighway, it was a utopic vision; but I don't think it was serving the kind of ends that Paul is describing. So the people who are wild about the web, and really wanna chart that territory, are not thinking about the same set of issues. So it may be that utopia as a concept doesn't really apply, but the energy and the visionary qualities comes from that other language, in my view.

WOMAN: The utopianism of the sixties or the late sixties surely came out of that complete disillusionment with authority, which came about at the end of the Second World War. And what Jonas Mekas said recently of the conference in 1968, was that 1968 was really about 1958 and before. It was about the Second World War. It was about that trauma, which Jeff Nuttall writes so brilliantly about in his book *Bomb Culture*,

WOMAN (Cont.): about the total shattering of a belief in the fact that basically, there is a sense of good that the end of the war in Hiroshima brought. '68 has so much to do with that. And now, there is such a different political and social climate that it's interesting to me that so many young artists are coming back to video of the sixties and early seventies, and finding it of such interest, and being so influenced by it. Because in a way, it's dealing with a kind of utopianism which is a desire for a better, another kind of way of life, a sort of reestablishment of something which was felt to have become— to have been lost on a number of levels. I mean, that led to(?) a utopianism that people are searching for, the connection which is actually very sort of isolating, like mirrors are. And the internet is very tied into that. But it's of a very different kind, and actually the internet came right out of the experiments of the sixties, with interactivity. And I'm thinking of Allan Kaprow's experiment with the television sets, that the WGBH tape shows.

RYAN(?): And I think— just on this (inaudible) point, I think, you know, in terms of the Second World War and the bomb, that was it, you know? (inaudible) I have a line I took from a rock musician friend of mine. "Psychedelic, my ass; joker le(?) bomb." You know? I mean, it was a total… There's an attempt to think in a total way. Yes, it had all its errors, it had all its mistakes. I think in certain ways, we still need to… We haven't figured out how to think our way through the mess we're in. You know? And, you know, there are a lot of ways to try and deal with it; that's one.

WOMAN: Yeah, you know, but Karen(?) had, I think a critical(?) view of this; and that is we were funded to be radical.

MAN: Yeah.

WOMAN: And I think that the whole funding that came out from under my students for years and years robbed them of (inaudible) it robbed everybody. They don't need to be radical. They were told, and sold a bill of goods, that they had to get a job and be real, you know, and all this stuff. And you know, the goths and the punks dropped out, and everybody else stayed in. In that sense. I mean, for a period of time, certainly for a good decade. And I think the kids who are coming in now are as much economically influenced by the low-cost technology. You know? I think there an autonomy to this that (inaudible) which I appreciate. (Man: Yeah) 'Cause you know, I think we've blamed the kids for such a long time for not being radical. My God, how can you not be radical? Well…

MAN: You know, we've got kids (inaudible)—I mean, I agree entirely—we were funded to be radical. I mean, here we had this New York State Council on the Arts, set up of like Nelson Rockefeller; and we had eventually, NEA, the National Endowment for the Arts, funding us, funding Lanesville TV, an illegal transmitter. I mean, this was really— it was the real— it was what is being reacted to today, really. I mean, a lot of angry people from the right saying, "You got too much, and we don't want you to have

MAN (Cont.): that; we wanna punish you now for having it." You know, as somebody who lived in a determinedly leaderless, allegedly utopian community, really, what was grafted on us was this utopian notion. I mean, we were living in a big house, we were all together. And what the IRS wanted to know before they would grant us our nonprofit status was: Do they mix it up up there? That's what they really wanted to know, was: Were there sexual liaisons between various (inaudible) people monogamous (inaudible) where there is free love and… Because in that case, then I think they wanted to do additional investigation.

(inaudible voice)

MAN: Yeah, exactly.

MAN: And that was also part and parcel of this FBI investigation. I think there were forces that were arrayed… There wasn't (inaudible); they were arrayed against people who were in what was generally classified, for better or worse, as the counter culture. And that made groups come together. And video, I think was, at that time, very easily—more so than other media that were out there—a collective operation. It lent itself to collective activity. And so that really kind of led to the funding(?). If you wanted to do technological, you kinda needed somebody who was technical; but you needed somebody who was not technical to go out and, you know, sweep the floor, the cigarette butts, away from the people who were technical; and you needed somebody else to get the grants; and

MAN (Cont.): you needed other people to do other things. And so there was a kind of movement that was created by an art(?) necessity, I think, as much as anything else. And then when the groups came together, everybody was kind of looking for the cult thing, where it often didn't exist. I mean, there were genuinely some cults; but the video people were, you know, the kind of cult of production, if you wanna look at it that way. But they weren't cultish, in that no one wanted to have a leader, because everyone's ego was so large that if there was gonna be a leader, it was gonna be me. (laughter) And so, in a sense, it wasn't gonna be me, because I couldn't get access to the equipment. If I or anyone else set myself up as a leader, you kind of had to cooperate. So there were those kind of forces, then, that made it happen in a way that it would be difficult to envision now, just because the technologies that we're dealing with are different, and the outlets that we're dealing with are very different. You know, society has changed. Also, just one last thought about the economy. The world changed radically with the oil boycotts of the seventies, and the whole change. And yes, there are very different pressures on kids now. Certainly, my kids have a very different attitude about society from the one I had. And I think that has to do with those pressures. Without going into them in great detail, how the economy has changed, how it's… We were moving, up until 1972, to a more egalitarian society. And 1973, 1974. And we have moved very decisively away from that in the intervening time. (inaudible)

MAN: (inaudible)

RYAN: In terms of the IRS checking out, you know, what was going on out there, I mean, we should remember that in the last century, in the 1800s, for thirty years, the Oneida community thrived without monogamy. And it did that in the public eye. People would visit regularly, Oneida, New York, to see how their experimental community, without monogamy and children, was going. There's a brilliant book by a man named Claw(?), (inaudible)—I forget what it is—called *Without Sin*. And it's a record of this community that, you know, survived for thirty-one years without copping to monogamy. They figured out how to do it, right? But the point I'm making, that it was public. The only thing that surfaces now about sexuality is ten hours Clinton had with Monica Lewinsky. And the right is over there beating the shit out of him. You know? So in a certain sense, the fact that utopia's not considered is, in some way, an index of how constrained we are—it seems to be. I don't know, you know, strategically…

MAN: But Paul, (inaudible) communities. They don't all have to be utopian to be collective. We weren't utopian, and we were collective. (Man: Yeah) And that's a tradition in the Catskills. And it goes back to—not Juris MacInty(?), but one of the Hudson River school paintings(?). There was an artists collective in (inaudible) in the 1840s. These were painters. They were coming together as a group of people who could live together cheaply in a boarding house, and paint the Catskills, which was very lucrative at that time; it was where the money was, where the funding was. They could paint. This is not… We thought we had sprung whole out of the ground. We'd been transplanted from New York City and we'd done this. But this wasn't new. There had

MAN (Cont.): been collectives in the Catskills, in this particular area—probably other areas of the country; I just happen to be familiar with that area—prior to that. So you know… And they were created for reasons other than utopianism. So I don't think— I think you have to be careful. There was a lot of collective activity in video when it started out; but it wasn't all motivated by utopian vision at all.

MAN: I would agree. I think it's an important distinction.

WOMAN: Yes.

WOMAN: This is changing the subject somewhat (inaudible; inaudible voice) It struck me, being in this context of video history and seeing all these wonderful older things, some that I have a great affection for, you know, (inaudible). And then also hearing Barbara talk about this artist Pei Li, who had not seen video art at all. And I guess I'm curious to hear just sort of what you see in his work. You know, was it completely different, you know, because he has not seen other things? And it certainly affected(?) history or the lack of history on somebody's work.

LONDON: Well, what was interesting for me in his work is that he's coming out of China; it's another culture. And I've been interested in Asian art. I've spent a lot of time in Japan. So it's… What I look for in any work of art is that I look for a vision. I look for a worldview. You know, you look for content, aside from the technology. So I saw in this

LONDON (Cont.): artist something very provocative. And I was very moved. So… You know, there isn't a history of video there. But there's certainly contemporary art. Underground. So it could've been(?) just to sort of throw a curve…

WOMAN: Susan(?)?

WOMAN: What (inaudible) makes me think about that piece is it had very much to do with a lot of early video art. And it had something to do with the nature of the equipment, that you can look at yourself. And that kind of imagery is, like, the first instinct many of us had with the video camera(?). And so I think, you know, that relates enough(?) that see in video. The other thing that makes me— what I'm interested in working with artists today, working with new technology, dissonant(?), and trying to (inaudible) working on something to facilitate, you know, their video art(?). Now I find that so much— the technology is so much more complicated, that at least my goal of trying to be that facilitator between artists working in a new medium or a new technology and so forth (inaudible) You know, we get into the internet and all the digital interactive kinds of things. You know, I feel artists are the— would be the people who break ground in this whole new area. But it's not as simple as it was (inaudible)

WOMAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: There are things to think about in that. (inaudible voice) Well, looking a video as a… Well, paradigm isn't the right word, but there is a history. "A" history, as Dierdre used the A. There are many histories. But there is this culture that we've got of art made with the video tools. And we all could write a different one, but we know that there's this body of truth(?) that we're addressing here. With the new technologies right now, there's a chat going on, coming out of the Walker Art Center. And if you read… I get a hundred of these things a day, I tell you. And I don't know if anybody else in here is getting this, but a lot of the discourse is exactly like what was going on with video. I could get Radical Software out and tell you. People are talking about uniqueness, you know, changeability… You know, if you put it up in the Howard Wise Gallery and the format(?) looks different. That kind of thing. Or how you collect, what's in the collecting, what's the context? And nobody's thinking about preservation; nobody's thinking about that the computer tools change faster than you can blink. The hardware and the software. I mean, I know all of the artists, I think, who use computers, you know, you've got work sitting on a shelf from ten years ago that you can't do anything with because the floppies… You can't put it in a newer computer. So we've video that you think we know what we don't know; we do know what we don't know. You know? (inaudible) reuses tape, as Ralph did or… You know, (inaudible)

MAN: (Over Woman) And it was great. It was a great tape. (laughter) Brilliant.

MAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: One of the things that has occurred to me— I've had an opportunity to do some traveling in the last few years. And when you go to a culture that does not have a history with video—I was in Russia in the early nineties, and video was really about four or five years old. And I probably met everybody at that point who was working in video. And the temptation, whether you're there in China or in Korea—I was in Korea recently, and the video history there is relatively— you know, in the last ten years—is that you see people doing things that resemble what you think of from the earlier time. I remember in Korea thinking: Oh, it's just like going back to the seventies; there's the same kind of, you know, excitement; the shambles, in terms of, you know, the creative space that people, you know, had to work in; the equipment borrowed. And I had the sense of: Oh, I'm re-experiencing the past. It's only true up to a point. And it's, I think, a serious stumbling block, if you get too caught in that, because one, it is another culture. And it's another generation of technology. And there are certain things that probably one could find that come about when somebody, for the first time, starts working with technology. But after that, I think it begins to shift dramatically. And I think it— you know, one has to be careful not to try and project one's own past on somebody else's present, and to see what's unique in the situation. Which I think is very difficult. I mean, I certainly struggled with that. So I think, you know, part of what one does is sort of see what's familiar, and also what's different in work coming from a culture that's new to video.

WOMAN: Also, you look at a Chong Pei Li and you look at the early work, so it's not like the video piece comes out of nowhere; it's got a context in a whole body of work.

WOMAN: Yes.

WOMAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: I think one of the reasons(?) (inaudible) ethnocentrism that we begin with American, because it's where consumer equipment was sold(?) here. But that didn't last very long. There're people here who could certainly talk eloquently about the development in Canada, which was virtually simultaneously. Steina?

STEINA VASULKA: Well, isn't this about upstate video history? (laughter) Isn't that the premise here, that we are talking about upstate New York. Because this is where it started. Downstate and upstate and New York City.

WOMAN: Yeah, but I'm just curious about (inaudible)

VASULKA: Well, they came up. (laughter) There were some people on the West Coast(?) actually, before us, but…

MAN: No, no. (inaudible; laughter)

WOMAN: (inaudible) the guy from (inaudible) who's now in Tokyo (inaudible)

(inaudible, voices over each other)

VASULKA: Actually, this was interesting, (inaudible) because I'm very reluctant to talk about the sixties. There wasn't much video in the sixties. It was just Nam June Paik. And he was not part of our history. Look at Nam; he was always in the galleries. He tested the galleries. That's what we had to get out of. It was basically, like, three kinds of video groups. There were the video experimenters, with the signals; then there were the people who were more interested in (inaudible), and doing social things; and then there were the artists. And the artists had no part with us; the experimenters, either with PortaPak or with the signal were colleagues, we needed each other. (Man: Yeah) And it's also something that has nothing (inaudible) I mean, we always needed some special tools. And they were not available. There was nothing to buy. So we had these shattered souls coming back from Vietnam with a lot of knowledge about circuit boards and signals, and no idea of how to live through their shell shock (inaudible)

WOMAN: Then of a sudden(?), you didn't want TV. You had no interest in television.

VASULKA: Of course we had no interest in television. That's a given. (laughter) I wanted to say that it was like this, that we happened to call it(?) artists first. And the reason for that was that somebody tried to get into a gallery, and the gallery person said, "We only show video by people who are already established in the arts, like (inaudible) and (inaudible), who are artists first." And this became the term: Oh, he's an artist first.

VASULKA (Cont.): And they (inaudible). Serra. And Nam June (inaudible) too. Nam June was (inaudible). "You know(?) the ones who're working down Fifth Avenue this year(?), we tried them." He said, "Yeah, we made Nam June our leader, because then we don't have it like the film has it when everybody's fighting. I was fighting already(?). Because, you know, everybody got along with him. But I wanted to challenge this idea of the historian, has to always say that video art started with Nam June (inaudible) showed them a couple of (inaudible). Nobody has verified this story. I asked several times, "How do you know this is true?" "Oh, because I read it by this British person, who (inaudible)." So this is how history is being repeated. And nobody goes to find out, when you say, "(inaudible) in 1969." When did (inaudible) become (inaudible)?

WOMAN: The year? '67. He was (inaudible)

VASULKA: Then this tape is from '67.

WOMAN: (inaudible)

VASULKA: So it's very easy, always, to verify those things, but nobody wants to. Everybody hangs onto those legends. And, you know, we all liked it, because we like Nam June, so we always say, "Let him have (inaudible; laughter). Let him have (inaudible) colorizers." And he invented very little. And, you know, for us to see, as TV Center(?) (inaudible), how (inaudible) to do with video. We were out (inaudible) world. I

VASULKA (Cont.): mean, the video contained the hub(?) of all these radical things. The utopian (inaudible), the (inaudible). Isn't it Radical Software (inaudible)

MAN: Yeah.

(inaudible voices over each other)

MAN: And also, though, Steina, in terms of what you're saying (inaudible) artists, some of it came because the New York State Council on the Arts (inaudible) money(?).

VASULKA: Yeah.

MAN: I mean, I was the first (inaudible) I put on a suit, I went in, I said, "We need money," you know? And people who showed up to get the money really didn't think of themselves as artists (inaudible). You know, I mean, part of being— I mean, we never really… I mean, a lot of it was just funny(?) money. Like I was saying earlier, this is funny money, and we were trying to change things, so where was the funny money? So the funny money was in the art world, so that's where we took it. Then we became video artists. Some of us, right? It was a mixed bag. But then the validation of video by funding began 'cause you needed another control mechanism, and that stopped a lot of it.

VASULKA: So just about that, I just want to say—and maybe we aren't gonna talk about it ever again here or anywhere—but the signal was also of great interest (inaudible). We were listening to Lamont Young(?) concerts with these drifting oscillators and those (inaudible) waves in the room. And of course, walk into a room like that and it's so thick with marijuana that you get this high by breathing. (laughter) And it's important to keep this all into context. That whole scene was so totally out of (inaudible) We were gonna end the Vietnam War. And the women also fit into this, because they were coming out, they were becoming powerful. (inaudible), as well. But I have been to a conference where video history and feminism is, like, equal, the same. That's not true. It was just one of the facets of video history to include and involve. But maybe we need just more time to (inaudible).

MAN: Yeah, I… I think Steina has a very good point there. I mean, but you know, it's like Paul says, he became artist because the New York State Council had arts money. No one was interested, in regular TV, until adding(?) KQED and then adding (inaudible) and KQED (inaudible). And they… The experimental centers were only interested in artists they knew. (inaudible) besides the fact that I sat outside the door where (inaudible). 'Cause that was the most interesting thing. (inaudible) But the funny thing is, the way I was hired was that they— Shirley Park(sp?), who was a very, at that point, (inaudible) documentary films, was coming in. And I was drinking coffee with the engineer—a guy named David Roth(?), who runs the(?) TV Lab(?) in New York—said, "Well, Shirley Park's coming." And I choked on my coffee. The thought of Shirley Park in this very,

MAN (Cont.): very tight, small studio, with her two poodles and with that (inaudible) she was going to videotape (inaudible), I knew that the very straight-laced engineering staff—who eventually came around, (inaudible) But I didn't say anything, because I liked Shirley, she was a friend(?), and I liked her. But two days after she was at the lab, I got a call from (inaudible), "We'd like to hire you as an artist in residence." (inaudible)

MAN: And take the glitter off the monitor.

MAN: Right. Glitter off the monitor, and the poodles out of the studio, because they were pissing on the (inaudible; laughter). This is a true story. And slowly, I think, we all get corrupted by what's ever interesting. I stopped taking grant money, because I wanted to build a new machine, and nobody was gonna give me two-hundred-and-fifty-thousand dollars to build a new tool. (inaudible) So I invented(?) a home computer (inaudible) video revolution knew what was going on in all the (inaudible) way before (inaudible) were around. (inaudible) predecessor of (inaudible) computers came out, the same thing was happening in California. We knew very little about what was going on (inaudible). All the artists were at KQED (inaudible). And there were different scenes, and they would have all that crazy excitement about them. Yesterday we were talking about (inaudible) is being written today in other areas. But now everybody has the facility for their computer to do this(?).

MAN: Well, you know, I want to jump and just ask you this one question, because(?)… This is the German version of the *Spaghetti City Video Manual* called (inaudible). And it's a pirated edition. And considering that we were running a pirate TV station, I didn't feel we had any right to complain about it. They even added some German diagrams in here. There was a video movement in other countries. But it was tightly controlled—very tightly controlled, because the media in… And I say other countries, I'm really talking about Western Europe, which is the only place I'm familiar with; I can't really talk beyond that. There were… First of all, Sony introduced the equipment later in those market because there was a different standard. And so they had to deal with that difference. And they didn't think the market was gonna be that large. Also, there were things like the government controlled the sale—I think it was in France, I know it was in Mexico—the government controlled the sale of videotape. You had to sign who you were. You had to show identification to buy the equipment and to buy the tapes. So it was a (inaudible) that they were doing it. And the Germans had a very active scene in Munich and in Berlin. And there was a very active video scene in Paris and in Amsterdam, that I'm familiar with; there may have been others (inaudible; inaudible voice) In England and Italy as well, right. England especially was very active. There was a guy named Jack Moore(sp?), who was from Gene Autry, Oklahoma. And he was an amazing character. He used to design opera scenery. And he had a— he was the leader of his group of folks. And he, like, set up on a houseboat in Amsterdam. And they used to do video all over the continent. And he had the keys to the Sony showroom on the Champs Elysees in Paris. And he could go in there after hours and use the equipment. But there was a lot of

MAN (Cont.): factionalism in that area, also, in France especially, because the French video makers called him *le Pape de video,* the video pope. And so they didn't trust him, and they took it with— it was kind of factional… We didn't have factions here in the U.S. (laughter) But it was more expensive, and it was more difficult to do. And also, there were things like, in Holland—and I don't claim to be any expert in this area. But my understanding is that TV was available, channels— there was a channel that was available by referendum. And so a party that got a certain amount of votes could get a certain amount of time on air. I may be misstating that. But there was more access to the airwaves. Plus the airwaves themselves were government controlled, but they were… I was on a documentary about video; there were video people doing documentaries on at least ZDM, the national network in Germany. So there were things going on in Western Europe, and there was active scene there—just to respond to your question.

WOMAN: I just wanted to say that I think that it's important to remember video is also a kind of a performance, and that performance and video are absolutely intrinsically linked. And that's from the very beginning, because Bruce Nauman started to work with video in 1968, when he announced(?) he was starting to buy some video equipment, because he was frustrated by having to use film. And he then passed that equipment on to Keith Sonnier; as a result of which Keith could make his first video works. And Joan began using video very much because of her work in performance, as did Dennis Oppenheim, as did Vito Aconcci. Vito's work in the early seventies (inaudible). And Heather (inaudible), Mary Lucier, Paul McCarthy, Douglas Davis, all these artists were using the

WOMAN (Cont.): video camera as a performative tool. And a lot of those works were made in the early seventies; but as early as 1968, that was already happening. It was… And that's a very important area, which I think that is certainly in the Video Data Bank. You know, volumes of video history. And I think that should be remembered, because that was another group (inaudible) to add to those three that we've already mentioned (inaudible)

WOMAN: (inaudible) And one of the things I've discovered, as you go in deeper, it is really a course that's much more complicated. And I can only see(?) one person's work(?) (inaudible), which is Mary's. (inaudible) Lucier coming through the world of music; was a sculptor, started taking photographs of her sculpture, and became a photographer, started going into performance. Borrowed Shigeko's camera. Shigeko (inaudible) camera to do the first videotape that was part of a performance; and did a video sculpture that was in New York (inaudible) festivals. And one of the things I learned, to break this down further, is that (inaudible) who did a piece that was in that same festival in '73, (inaudible), which was the most remarkable piece(?).

MAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: Yeah. And he doesn't have a photo of it, and I'm dying…

(inaudible voice; inaudible voices over each other)

WOMAN: But that really helps break down the sort of artist-activist pride(?), because he comes out of Videofreex, and that's where all that (inaudible) monitor stuff came from. So as you go in deeper and try to find these facts (inaudible) book becomes even more complex.

WOMAN: And I also think the relationship between film and video is important not to forget. I mean, Tony, we have (inaudible) Conrad's work in film and video, as did all the artists I mentioned—(inaudible names), Bruce Nauman, Vito Aconcci. Mary Lucier worked with slides, slide tape. And I think that that connection's very interesting, just as the relationship between radical documentary film and the media (inaudible). There's a very interesting relationship there. Why do documentary filmmakers, some of which became very radical, stick with film? And then other people, who were working with video, such as yourself, did those, you know, seminal (inaudible). And it's a very interesting relationship. There's a cross (inaudible) sixties, where as it's with image processing (inaudible) with the Whitneys, and then there's (inaudible) image processing. There's a very interesting relationship there. And I also feel worried(?) when video gets talked about in this sort of very isolated way.

MAN: Also, theater. (inaudible) going on (inaudible). And (inaudible) and performance groups. I mean, there's a whole swap going on. I agree that video is a sample of something larger, and it's important we keep all those things.

MAN: Just to pitch in on the international versus the regional or New York State thing, I just wanted to say that I was an expatriot American in Canada as early as 1971, and what I found in Canada was a completely— you know, a scene that was very resilient against the U.S. influence at the time, because there were so many people from the States there. We had a very indigenous movement in Canada. And I was there for 20 years, and you know, because of being an expatriot, I more or less was always rejecting the U.S. influence, so I led a sort of very pure life, and saw the world in a very deeply Canadian way. And what I was struck was is that we didn't have… We had a completely parallel and autonomous video scene, which had many unique features and many interesting things that would parallel historically the U.S. movement; but it was really— there was not a lot of movement back and forth. And I think what's important about the New York State history is that coming back into the States in '91, and having to scramble to learn the American version, which was very interested(?) to revitalize in(?) the knowledge of that, that I found that the unique thing about the upstate movement and the New York State movement was this obsession with signal processing and a lot of these tool development based initiatives, which I think were— really, clearly, that's where the center is, even though that was U.S. based. And where there was experiment with manipulation of signal and with tool development worldwide, I think that that is a unique characteristic of this particular locale.

WOMAN: (inaudible)

MAN: I don't agree with that (inaudible) and all of those artists(?) working in San Francisco paralleled what was happening in New York State (inaudible). There were all sorts of free(?) tools (inaudible) not only from the New York State (inaudible) But I think in California, (inaudible) there was a lot of signal manipulation going on, partially because (inaudible)

WOMAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: I wonder if I could pull together a few threads (inaudible) historiographic way. And that is to answer what we'll be thinking (inaudible) words like tokenism. I just have to invoke sort of one of our great mentors (inaudible) media (inaudible), who when interviewed in the *New York Times* about the internet a year ago, said, "Well, you know, for a hundred years, film, radio, TV, video, camcorders, super 8, the internet, the web and beyond, hope and despair." You know, every prediction of technology is, of course, embedded in contradictions, because historians like Liebner(?) (inaudible) no technology is just there alone. And this a legacy of the twentieth century, and will probably continue to be exacerbated in the twenty-first. But all of this, I think, about relationships between upstate New York and the world, or different nation states and national imaginaries(?) about(?) technologies, different relationships between different art movements—and particularly different relationships between, you know, who started it and, you know, how important were the sixties in the counterculture? You know, I'm always amazed, just in my point of view, how countercultural histories tend to be (inaudible) and sometimes

WOMAN (Cont.): repress the histories of feminism and the Civil Rights Movement, for example, which to me, have been enormously important. Or as histories of video— it's sometimes described as being a period of camcorder activism around AIDS, reproductive rights and diasporan communities. But all of these things raise issues for me that are really ones historians deal with all the time; and that is issues of periodization(?). You know, this isn't just one big mush of anecdotes and, "I was there, you weren't there; what about the young kids?" I mean, my students would probably say, "Oh, I'm so old." You know, like, one of my students said, "You know, people your age are, like, so analog." (laughter) And it's, like, negative now, you know? So, you know, to me, a real issue is to pull it all together, you know, such a richness of experience in this room and on the panel, (inaudible) this kind of real question of question of periodization. Because periodization is often a very complex issues of technologies, as we've heard in this room; aesthetic strategies; social and political structures that are much larger than technologies and artists, like the Vietnam War, or I would also add, like, the wars of genocide of AIDS and (inaudible) equally important in looking at video. And finally, political economy. And as everyone keeps talking about arts funding, you know, almost all the historians I know who study the arts will… You know, it's like a given. What was arts funding meant to do? It was meant to co-opt political movements, to neutralize them, right? And let's not forget the great advocate of arts funding was Richard Nixon. And, you know, there's been many federal records you can go and look at where, you know, there're these statements made in Congress. You know, the Kerner Commission, after the racial riots of the sixties, prompted certain initiatives about television. So I think all of these layers…

WOMAN (Cont.): Its' not like one is better than the other; but I think the question really comes for historians, activists and artists is just trying to figure out what matters right now, as we recap those layers and look at those particular periods. And I think right now, the questions coming from people from other countries are really ones I am so sympathetic to, in this transnational moment, where there are global corporations. It's really impossible for me to think in an ethnocentric, even regionalist way, because I think the region and the globe is connected. I think we've found—and Dierdre knows a lot more about this than I do—but you know, there are these other histories out there around the globe that are connected to our histories here in upstate New York, and they're not so isolated. I think the era of nationalist history is really kind of over. So I'm just raising this issues of periodization, because as I was taking notes, I was sort of saying: Well, there's like, you know, the early sixties and Vietnam; then there was this sort of movement into the art world; then (inaudible); and I guess now we're in the internet world. But you know, maybe that periodization's not accurate, but I don't know how I can understand history without looking at shifts, changes and conflicts, just to bring it back to (inaudible)

MAN: When you look at this periodization, how do you make selections about the past? In other words, if you're choose out(?) selections (inaudible) other countries, understand what went on. Is there, in your thinking of the historian, is there a way that that's…

WOMAN: Well, I (inaudible), you know, who wrote (inaudible) professor here, but he said, you know, "We only do history; we don't ever look back. We always do history looking to the future and to the needs of the present."

MAN: Yeah, but I…

WOMAN: So I think that histories are always reconstructed, they're always fictionalized, there're always fabrications. But I think the question for me is sort of what is urgent right now, at this political, social, artistic moment, about reclaiming this history, which I feel is… I just have to keep agreeing with Dierdre. I mean, it is not a history, it's histories, it's complex, it's segmented. And we all make different kinds of decisions about what we choose. That's the work of history.

WOMAN: So I see hands probably wanting to speak to Patty. So let's give the others… Yes.

MAN: (inaudible) And it's the kind of thing, where is digital media drop— gonna come in, and video media drop out? I mean, at certain points with the TV Center(?), you know, we're having more digital bytes (inaudible) as well as analog signal processing. And as far as image development (inaudible) at some point, starting to accommodate computers, learning how to program DLY(?) and some other processing languages to be able to make video, because the new tools I need to really control the imagery (inaudible) had to

MAN (Cont.): be digital. So it's sort of a… You know, it's like a gradual fade almost, in a way, because one media comes into another. And video gets appropriated now (inaudible) websites and transmitted around the world, we get pieces of code put together from artists all over the globe, working on a digital project. So it's— you can't really work with these kind of set, you know, ideas (inaudible) it's more a tendency (inaudible) other tendencies. (inaudible)

MAN: So then we have the analog and the person wants (inaudible) modify it, because with deteriorization, you first have to(?) digitization(?). So that you're saying it's more like an analog thing.

WOMAN: Let's hear what Tony has to say.

MAN: Yeah, I'm pleased to follow Abby's(?) remarks, because I find them very (inaudible) saves me sort of some of the things I was hoping to put into that. A lot of our commentary has to do with relations between power and this history. And that's an initial assessment, but it seems to me that if we're looking at the peculiar case of upstate and downstate, that what we must finally get to is the fact that this is a very, very particular cultural laboratory that has great specificity, is very unusual. And we can get way beyond the parochialism that's necessary as a groundwork in looking at the details of what happened at a particular time. But I think that Parry is accurate in pointing out that there's certain structural relations to power that need to be invoked. In trying to figure out how

MAN (Cont.): the structure of culture functions, it's occurred to me, as a video maker, that one key factor is the recirculation of voices within a community, or to establish a community. And I think that the technology of video introduces a new mechanism for doing that. So that if you find that you have something like a city or an urban culture, in Diana Crame's(sp?) terms, appearing in an upstate region, dispersed, geographically dispersed and paradoxically focused in another way, maybe the recirculation of a type of culturally specific message within that particular community effects something that's quite special, that has to do with the way that we—with the technology, to be sure—but isn't that what we're looking for in finding ways that, I think as Patty was suggesting, to anticipate and lead into a subsequent history, not to ground ourselves at a particular statement.

WOMAN: (inaudible) do you wanna answer Patty's (inaudible)?

MAN: Well, I think… I mean, I liked a lot— you know, I liked what you opened up. You know, I think it's very… For example, let me just say that by arts funding—knowing that arts funding was (inaudible), we sort of knew that going in; you know, that this was a gamble. But there wasn't any other money around. So I mean, I know, as the guy who put the suit on, that this was a gamble. And from my point of view, the co-optation did happen. You know? At a very serious level. But there was a play space there, and what came out of that came out of that. You know, so I mean, I agree with your line of thinking; I think we should stay on that.

WOMAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: I just would like to say you just mentioned a word that hasn't been said too much, but we have heard stories, is "play." From an artist's position, a lot of this work was about play. Certainly, what Steina's talking about is about play. And art making these days does not seem to be playful. I mean, it's hard, even as an educator, to introduce the notion of play into exploration. (inaudible) it's missing. And you know, where does that fit? It really wasn't all that serious. There was a lot a whole lot to lose, in personal terms, to put on that suit and go, because you couldn't foresee the direction you would go later. It was an experiment, it was, like: Let's see what happens.

MAN: Well, it was there, but the play was against a ground of seriousness.

WOMAN: Yeah, absolutely. Absolutely. I'm not saying it wasn't serious play.

MAN: Well, let me just… You know, the codification—and tomorrow there's a panel on writing and video, and I'm gonna go over this text called *Cybernetic Guerilla Warfare*, which became *Guerilla Television*, Shamberg's book. You know, it became sort of one of the icons that was used. That codification, on the one side, there was the Weathermen saying, "Bomb (inaudible)," you know. And then the other side was the suit. You know? So in certain ways, video for many people was a feat of imagination that gave us a middle way, in a very difficult time. It gave us a place to play to try and develop other stuff,

MAN (Cont.): (Woman: Exactly. Exactly) you know? And as Parry said, the Vietnam War is critical. That's ground. You know? There were(?) high risks in everything you did.

WOMAN: Well, I'm not denying that. But I'm saying in terms of how young people today consider risk taking…

MAN: Yes, I agree. Yes.

WOMAN: …ok? Compared… We had youth. We had a sense of youth.

MAN: Yeah, right.

MAN: Ellen(?), I think one of the things that just hit me, coming here, is the(?) reclaiming of that utopian vision, and how... The people— I got involved in video... You know, there's also Peter— people like Archigram, and that sense of architecture and a joining of human spirit of human space. And I think it's the hardest part to document. I mean, they were so good because it was nonprofit(?). It was not about, you know… I think what has survived (inaudible) easily can be easily shown and say, "Here is this three-minute piece that represented this time." It was so very, very difficult to try to show those very fluid, flowing experiments of joining the space; of you know, burying TVs, burying monitors and: Hey, lookit, this is the goal(?) of transmitting. And it's a new way

MAN (Cont.): of looking at… It was like this… In many ways, it was this very simple model of, you know, in some ways, what has become the internet itself. You know? But it was very fluid. I mean, you know, so it's very difficult to document it in (inaudible).

BOYLE: Could I just take a reading of the room? I'd said we would take a break, but I'm reluctant to stop this here. So would you rather I took a break—we're supposed to end at four—or should we just keep going?

WOMAN: Just keep going.

(inaudible voices)

BOYLE: It's fine with me.

WOMAN: I just wanna interject one little thing, then, Scott. I've been thinking about Patty's question as I've been listening to people talk. And lately I'm finding that my students don't wanna talk about video at all. I teach a screening course called New Directions in Documentary. So it's more about genre than medium. And I say, "Well, let's talk about this as video." "Why?" You know? It's, you know… And they call everything film anyway. Everything is film. (laughter) And, you know, after a while, you succumb to this and you join them. And then there comes a point, "Well, maybe there is an issue here." And then they suddenly— then, once you start to talk about it as video,

WOMAN (Cont.): it's television. Or it's poor quality; we're talking about low-tech. And I think— you know, I wrote a history, for reasons that met my needs, and I put it out there into the world, hoping it would be of some use. But as a teacher, I actually find that raising history as an approach, as a departure point is not of tremendous interest to my students. At all. And in fact, I don't even teach the history course—which I thought, you know, would be my ticket to the next ten years of (inaudible) the book. But I can't do that. It's not of interest. But when you look at people who feel that the reason that there's, say, students in a program that are learning skills 'cause they wanna get a job, and they're feeling tremendously constricted because they don't know if there is going to be a job, when you open up the possibility of a world where your involvement in communications suggests that there is far more opportunity out there than simply getting a job so that you can pay off your student loans, then you start to change the way people think about, you know, why they would be doing this in the first place. So for me as a teacher, I think that's where you start. I mean, it's not history because history's important; it's because if you don't know the Santayana concept, if you don't know this history, not so much that you're condemned to repeat it, but you're condemned to be forever in the world of the, you know, beast industry.

WOMAN: There's a… I'm sorry. He's been waiting. Then (inaudible)

MAN: I wanted to go back to one other thing that Connie(?) said, that… And I don't know if this was her implication, but… The idea of transnational, I think, is important to bring into this conversation; but I don't think that what's happening is simply a move from the regional to the national to the transnational, as the model of progress or regress, however you wanna look at it. I think both things are happening at the same time. I think there is a move increasingly into the transnational. But I think that very movement, and the homogenization that brings forces a move back into the regional. You have to have a community from which you can speak. And that tends to be a regional kind of community. And I think one of the powers of this moment for many of us is that we look around and see lots of people we've known coming through this particular space at various times over the last quarter century. But I think this… It is important to recognize that everything we do is transnational, part of the transnational reality; but I think we are also, as individuals, always part of regional realities. And so I think this idea of focusing on the region is absolutely apt, and is in as much tension with the national as the transnational is.

WOMAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: Community… The regional is really important. A lot of people nowadays—and they did back ten, fifteen years ago—was travel the festival circuit. We used to have the AFI Video Festival, we had various Festivals in the States, and there are lots and lots in Europe. So people would see their peers always at that annual event, if they could

WOMAN (Cont.): afford the plane ticket. But now, like this discourse I was mentioning from the Walker Art Center, that's kind of like a little community now discussing, you know, this issue. Kathy Hoffman(sp?), who came in just a while ago, was great. She lived in Europe and now she's back, and it's like, you know, having a discourse with Kathy by e-mail when she's over thousands of miles, or when she's upstate. Right now at MOMA, we've got a super 8 exhibition; it's going on for about two years. My colleague, Jytte Jensen, and Steve Anker have put together this amazing series on super 8 done in North America. But it was interesting. Sally Berger, my colleague and I noticed in the MOMA calendar that unbeknownst to us, they had put in some Sadie Benning material in this last week. And Sadie, of course, works with the pixel camera and video. But it was like they were dealing with the aesthetic of this super 8, which of course, George Kuchar used, continues to, and he's also made films— I mean made video. So the fluidity of these technologies and what's going on with experimental film certainly very much parallels. When MOMA did the Open Circuits Conference in 1974, Michael Snow and others were counting the angels on the head of a pin in arguing film is film and video is video (inaudible).

WOMAN: (inaudible) moving image (inaudible)

WOMAN: I agree. But there are a lot of purists, still. And there are still differences.

WOMAN: (inaudible) I mean, you don't get paid to (inaudible)

MAN: Is it really important, at the end, (inaudible) Things will change. The only thing I can guarantee is that things in the future, the entire way that(?) computers work (inaudible) They have been changing. At some point, (inaudible) computer screens (inaudible) video things can run, (inaudible) big blockbuster films. And… Either they're gonna put it on television or put it on the other. They're gonna produce it and edit it on the computer.

MAN: (inaudible) both those interested in the signal and those interested in documentary become (inaudible) graphics that are floating(?) on the internet. Or the next (inaudible)

WOMAN: I think that's (inaudible) Margaret, yes.

WOMAN: (laughter; inaudible) I just want to get out(?) this aesthetic thing. (inaudible) about '89, and I was actually showing work that simulated video in film. So that you actually (inaudible) then climbing up the ladder(?) and all that. So the whole thing is supposed to look and synch like video, but (inaudible). So it strikes me that there is an aesthetic that is at stake. It's not *just* the medium.

LONDON: But… Can I just add… A year or so, we did show at MOMA called Young and Restless. And it was very much a young generation, people in their mid to late twenties working with video. And there were, of course, performance based works, when I'd say, "Oh, this person has seen the work of Joan Jonas," but it might have some of that

LONDON (Cont.): aesthetic, but the issues are very much, you know, today. People working with tools that are available. And it might be, you know, a little teeny-weenie Handycam. But a lot of people are working with that small technology and projecting, working with (inaudible).

WOMAN: I was just gonna say I think one thing that we've forgotten, just in terms of video—I'm not thinking about video and computers—is that when we started, I remember, when you said you were involved with video, people said, "What's that?" You know. They understood what television was, but they didn't understand video. (Woman: They still don't understand) My experience teaching my students is that video's like turning on the faucet. You know, it's as common to them as, you know, turning on the faucet. And so in a sense, they don't value it as a medium. One of the things that happens is some of them will say, "But I wanna work in film." And if they make a strong case for working in film, I say, "Ok, try." And they get very, very frustrated because of the time delays and trying to meet their assignments. And then they come back with a fresh look again at video, in terms of, you know, the fact that it's about the moving image, it's the aesthetic and all that. But I mean, we're in an interesting period, in terms of the common features of video and their rejection of it for those reasons. And now, of course, they don't wanna work with the old tools, they just wanna work on the computer, so…

MAN: Let me ask you a question, just a general question. What does it matter? What do we accomplish when we tell them(?) history of video? In some sense(?), that looks like a lot(?). I wanna sell a book. (laughter) So, I mean, I have a motive for being involved in it. And a good time, too. I mean, you talk about play, I think it's fun. But… What I can remember. But it's… I had to ask myself the question, you know, did I wanna, you know, claim some sort of direct line from— whether it would be David's(?) and Giotti's(?) sculptural pieces, multi-monitor, or whether it be the kind of interactive pieces that David Court(?) worked on a lot, or the kind of activist video that I was very involved with. What does it matter? What happened that made a conference like… I mean, except for that fact that, you know, some people in this room had a not only good time, but maybe used some of the ideas in something else, or got careers out of it, what's the point? What's the sum and total of video history to date? It doesn't mean anything.

WOMAN: Someone who hasn't spoken yet.

WOMAN: I'm neither a video maker nor a video consumer. (inaudible) relative (inaudible). But I should think it matters financially, because there are preservation issues. And history, (Man: Well, I think [inaudible]) as cynical as we all sound…

MAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: …there is a question here of the deterioration of important, historical documents, work of art. And history serves that purpose sometimes. And I think that there's a lot (inaudible) It matters to write history to draw attention to video preservation. That's not a philosophic (inaudible), practical reason why it matters to me.

WOMAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: I think, you know, we're not only preserving video, we're preserving ourselves. We're working in a medium (inaudible). And once it gets conveyed(?), you have (inaudible) you start thinking about preciousness, you start thinking about, you know: Is it gonna be displayed in that exact way (inaudible) You know, how do you write this history and make sure that (inaudible) political climates and financial climates change that, you know, essentially, we're gonna need to write a history because it's middle-aged(?). (laughter)

(END OF VIDEO REWIND TAPE TWO)

MAN: —some other way that people can use these tools that they are using. I think if(?) this would eventually focus(?) (inaudible) or at least represent the film(?). (inaudible)

(inaudible)

WOMAN: (inaudible) But I'm with you, (inaudible) chances to see early video (inaudible; Woman: That's right) I had students there who took college courses here (inaudible) playful aspects (inaudible) It's nice to sort of see what we were made of(?) (inaudible)

WOMAN: (inaudible; laughter; inaudible) The Video Data Bank a couple years ago, (inaudible)

MAN: Louder, please.

WOMAN: The Video Data Bank a couple years ago released part of what you saw today when Dierdre showed her clips at the beginning.

WOMAN: (inaudible) first decade.

WOMAN: Yeah. Incredible (inaudible) called Surveying the First Decade. It's that(?) seventeen hours of video from 1968 to 1980(?).

WOMAN: You have a flier of it in your package.

WOMAN: And it's eleven-hundred dollars. But it's on nine reels, so it works out to be about sixty-seven dollars per tape, which is very reasonable. And there's sixty pieces,

many of which—all of which, I think—everything— almost everything we've seen today is part of that (inaudible).

WOMAN: Not everything.

WOMAN: Not everything. We're still working on (inaudible)

MAN: Could I just answer this question of why it matters? I'm certainly well into middle-age; I don't think that means I have to do history because it's (inaudible) life and I have to become precious. I think it matters because, in fact, it's a history of what people did when they want their lives to matter. Sometimes they mattered more than others. But it is a fundamentally spiritual quest that people are on when they try to make great work, whatever kind it is. We're looking at one history of many histories, in which people tried to express their spirit—however you want to term it. And because it is a place, in some cases, where, it seems to me, spirit does get expressed, it is important. And it's a place where we can go to get revitalized and not become precious as we get older; to be reenergized and stay in a state of mind that allows us to be one to matter(?).

WOMAN: (inaudible)

MAN: I'm always in the mood(?). And I'm also always documenting something. I mean…

WOMAN: Ken(?)?

MAN: I'd like to introduce into this thing— talk about regional and international. (inaudible) We started to get to it(?), but I think (inaudible) bring quickly to it is that my of the world is self-evident(?). And the play, the expression, spirit, the display of that, the exercise of that is what (inaudible) might call (inaudible). And I'm still involved with it. I still struggle with other. Other as local community to collaborate with, (inaudible); community to show to, to (inaudible); and then on up to the whole world. And I think that that's… You know, I'm here because (inaudible) 1970—that's a lotta years ago—I did something (inaudible) young statement. And I followed a guy(?) who gave Kerry Hill(?) his first camera. (inaudible)

MAN: Is he gonna give you some of his MacArthur? (laughter) He owes you.

MAN: (inaudible) But I think it's the process I (inaudible) self and others, where I belong, and where do these various residences and self (inaudible), residences and others outward (inaudible) play with other. And that's where history comes in, that's the value. (inaudible) And I just throw that out there more as a…

WOMAN: Susan, I'm gonna get some of the hands that I haven't seen before.

WOMAN: I have sort of a simple idea of why it matters. Well, two. One is that I still, practically wherever I go, people don't know what video art is. And America doesn't— I mean, does not know what video art is. Secondly, it's obvious that with the internet and the television and the computers coming together, everyone's going to have streaming video. (inaudible) This history is important. We've gone through(?) a million(?) different issues—political, social, utopian, aesthetic. It seems like (inaudible)

WOMAN: The lady in the brown.

WOMAN: Thank you. I have sort of a question about what we can learn from it. I think that right now, the internet (inaudible) there's this sort of vision, the decentralization of video(?), and finally, producers (inaudible) getting their work out through the internet. But I (inaudible) conference called One Planet, One Net, done by Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility. And they were talking about how this convergence was going to happen, but that it was, once again, going to be pulled(?) by mainstream media

WOMAN (Cont.): moguls. And I was wondering—'cause I think this is something that we were confronted with in the seventies, in the early part of this movement—what can we learn from that, in terms of (inaudible) space. Which may well lead to(?) distribution. (laughter)

WOMAN: (inaudible)

MAN: (inaudible) I think it's a critical question, and a very difficult one. In other words, you want things to try to distill(?) out of this history, what (inaudible)—co-optation by the art world is one; lack of an integration into some sustainable economy is another; factionalism is another. You know, no ground, the falsity of grounding something in a technology at all, is a question. Should we be defining ourselves in terms of this hope/despair cycle of the technology? Maybe something we can learn about history is how to get the hell out of that. You know? So I mean, there's a lot of things that can be learned, I think, from this, if you put that lens on; how to prevent it from reoccurring in a computer globalization.

WOMAN: (inaudible)

MAN: Well, I think for those of us who see—like, maybe Ken is mentioning here—to see our work as constitutive of community, rather than a product of it, there are other issues about history and the preservation of objects. And I think this raises a question to MAN (Cont.): me that's very important in relation to some of the things that have been put before us here today, because it's useful to me to think about another medium as a model. I think about the telephone, a medium which has only one great phone call, namely, "Is that you, Watson?" (laughter) And after that, there's no great phone calls. (laughter) I would really like to hear people talking on the phone in 1910. I would like to

hear people talking on the phone in 1920, 1930. I'd just like to hear what they say. I would like to hear *them* talking. You know, I don't need to hear a *great* phone call; I would like to hear *any* phone call. (laughter) And I can't hear any of them. And I think by putting our eggs in the basket of greatness, we're losing out on another feature of this medium, which is: Sure, it's erasable; but it also offers some kind of a window—not to recover the past, but to provide a great density of information about certain circumstances, where culture has been transacted and has constructed community in an earlier situation, in a different situation, which we can learn from.

WOMAN: (inaudible) speak of what your students have been like, and Chrissie, again, also speaking about integrating film and video, just video in the academy. I, for example, teach video art at the Adelgard(?) Film Program, where (inaudible). This can be a kind of challenge. But one thing… And also, history, period is a challenge. But one thing I've done is to show them Edison kinetoscopes, and then show them TVTV tapes and say, "You must be as kind and sympathetic to this technology in the early seventies as you are when you look at something from 1895." And so I'm trying to bridge a gap with film students, who often just say, "Bad tone, I hate it, it's video." And so what do you do with
WOMAN (Cont.): that? And so I try to think thematically, in the interest of a broad based liberal education, which I am in support of. So I'll show, after seeing With One's Own Eyes by Stan, then something like Pasik(?), by Bill Viola. So you have creative programming about a certain issue that all these curators want. Which is what they do. But it helps to bridge another gap, because a lot of people (inaudible) teaching video film

programs, which can be hard to do. So in terms of passing on education, I think it matters how you do it.

WOMAN: The lady in the back. Yeah.

WOMAN: I mean, I think (inaudible) upstate (inaudible) history process (inaudible) very unfortunate. But also, (inaudible)

WOMAN: There's no (inaudible) or discourse. And it's especially true with the younger generation of the curatorial… As the department heads retire, the younger ones come up in younger areas. So yes.

WOMAN: And in contemporary art…

WOMAN: Contemporary art.

WOMAN: …(inaudible) curators (inaudible) film and video art (inaudible) video (inaudible) gallery space. (inaudible)

WOMAN: You've got, in an institution like mine, you've got areas of specialty, like where Chrissie is at the Whitney, you've got, you know, a photography curator; but you've also got people in painting and sculpture or myself, who are interested in some of

those photo issues. When Sam Taylor-Wood makes a video installation, then the photography is, like, part and parcel. And it's housekeeping. When Richard Serra's sculpture is the responsibility of a sculpture curator, his films are somewhere else, his videos are somewhere else; but it's one person who's made it.

WOMAN: George?

MAN: Well, in this idea of art, and modern art and contemporary art, video art has a unique position, in that the aesthetic that's generated by video artists leaks(?) upon the culture through television. That's the thing, other artists don't(?). It's co-opted, where hand-held camera work (inaudible) television shows. And one of the reasons why it is (inaudible), is that the history hasn't told where those things come from. In a completely different vein, around here, (inaudible) billboards, the Winston cigarette billboards, that look hacked. The statement, the aesthetic of hack billboards, and used it, co-oped it to sell cigarettes. And immediately, (inaudible) history of hack billboards, and the activism

MAN (Cont.): around that. And so unless people know where the aesthetic ideas came from originally, they think they came out of popular television. And I think that's critical to solve.

WOMAN: We're so involved with popular culture, co-opting of video by the art world is certainly an issue; but our world is ga-ga for spectacle. Just ga-ga. And you know, put an

image on a wall, you know. But what makes an image on the wall in a gallery great? You know, there are great installations.

MAN: Well, partly, I think, George, it has to deal with the separation of the aesthetic from the larger intent. You know, which is what a billboard will do. And how do you generate something that is not vulnerable to co-optation? You know? And I think there are some ideas in video that, you know, that are still unexplored and unearthed, that have that capability.

MAN: (inaudible) I think that video has the possibility of being (inaudible) co-opted by film itself, by the history of film. Video (inaudible) tried to do that(?); music and sound (inaudible) tried to do that(?). There's another state of video, which was really banging on the (inaudible) We have to be able to (inaudible) enough to know what they're creating. I think video has change drastically. And computers are getting in there slowly, and there may be other instruments in the future; computers (inaudible).

MAN: But when I say we need to go back (inaudible) build the machine in the eighties, real time feedback of visual imagery, when I thought back(?) thirty-one years ago when I started, and I'm still building the same product(?), the same machines(?).

MAN: Let me say one other thing. You know, one of the things about video that hasn't been mentioned much is that it was appropriated by counter-culture—and all these terms

are difficult—in direct opposition to broadcast television. Alright? That it was an attempt to deal with broadcast television. And I would argue that in a certain sense, part of what is possible with video… And let me back… I mean, what television does, it allows us to monitor events simultaneously with other people. That's what it does. Whether it's Princess Di or the moon landing or something, we can monitor events simultaneously with other people. We weren't monitoring the Vietnam War. So, you know, let's try and monitor what's important to monitor. And I still think it's possible to develop systemic deployments of video and video intelligence that's more on the edge of what's going on. Let's monitor what's unfolding, in such a way that we can learn about it and make a difference, before it collapses. And if we… You know, one of the things I worry about, about video history, is being precious unto itself, and apart from the responsibilities of monitoring the culture. In my own effort, that has to do with the ecological system. It's still breaking down. And we're not paying attention to it. You know? We're just not. We're acting as if it's not there. You know, that our minds are sucked into this other sort of thing. So, I mean…

MAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: But many of the contemporary artists want to be on TV.

MAN: I'm sorry?

WOMAN: Many of the contemporary artists now want to be on TV. (Man: Yeah) There are in vogue. They want to be in the mainstream culture. They don't want to oppose it. They want to be right on the front cover.

MAN: Yeah. Yeah, and I don't…

WOMAN: (inaudible)

WOMAN: But when you were talking about television, the big difference between an artist's videotape and television is television is a big… It's a corporation. I mean, ABC, CBS. It's station's view(?). It's… And then the personal vision of the artists.

MAN: Well, personal vision is one thing, but you know, the smallest television station in the world used to monitor what was going on in that little town and trying to… I can remember Barb(?) running around with a baby carriage saying, "Oh, nothing's happening today."
(inaudible voices)

MAN: (inaudible) not the original uses of video. In, for example, law or medicine. Or pornography. Or… 'Cause I'm sure there are other people, in the hard sciences, in mathematics, engineering, who are using video in another way. Could somebody address that, and give us maybe… I would like it if we all (inaudible) of some of those uses.

WOMAN: Contemporarily.

MAN: Even historically.

WOMAN: Well, because the early video uses were… You know, some of the first literature was about its use in psychological counseling with prisoners, with drug addicts. You know, Frank Gillette's piece on St. Martin's Place was with kids who were getting off of drugs. There's a lot of literature… I don't know how that has evolved over time; but certainly, there is a lot there. And you know, the whole interest in using video as an art medium, playing with the notion of surveillance… Certainly, there's literature on video as surveillance (inaudible), whether you wanna go the FBI route or the route that we saw in the Proto Media Primer. But I don't— frankly, I mean, maybe somebody else here can speak.

MAN: I think it's an important question. I don't think anybody's done much work on that. You know, like, where the legal stuff is. But there is a lot— there was a lot done psychologically. And I don't know about medicine, but you know, there has been a lot done across the board that we don't know about.

WOMAN: George?

MAN: A classic study in education gave the same information to four different groups, one by listening to a lecture, one by hearing an audiotape of a lecture, one by reading the words of the lecture, and one by watching the lecture on videotape. (inaudible) was in the video.

WOMAN: Patty(?)

WOMAN: I have a personal example, 'cause I feel like I should (inaudible) anecdotes (inaudible; laughter) But I had knee surgery last summer, and in our now downsized medical economy, where the actual surgery takes forty-five minutes, then you're out the door, I was… I had a problem with my knee; I was given, like, really good drugs, and told, "Well, how (inaudible) you wanna be? How (inaudible) you wanna be? What do you want? (inaudible) And how much of the video monitor do you wanna see when we go in and reconstruct your knee?" And I said, "I gotta watch the whole thing. Can I get a tape?" And they said, "Oh, no, we regularly give people tapes, just like we do when WOMAN (Cont.): you're pregnant and you get fetal monitoring." And so I was there, really thinking about people that had worked with Stan Brakhage, 'cause I thought I was a Stan Brakhage film. (laughter; inaudible) And what I discovered from the hospital was two things. One, you're watching (inaudible) you are in the sixties, because the anesthesiologist has (inaudible; laughter) You know, I'm having this high anxiety 'cause (inaudible) whose funeral? (laughter) Sure, no problem, Patty. And then, you know… But then the second thing I found out was that this is a regular thing. You can get your tapes,

x-rays, you know, fetal monitoring. And in fact, I then discovered, in reading books of digital theory, that they're actually (inaudible) many artists are now reconstructing their tapes. So that there're hybrid tapes of kind of your own body. And I thought, like: God. I thought: I'm an artist now, you know? My knee's been reconstructed on surgery. But all joking aside, I do think there're many scholars who have worked on this history, and the person who comes to mind, of course is Lisa Cartwright, with a very important book called *Screening the Body*. And also Ella Shohat, who's written about her endometriosis. And I have to also, you know, Kathy Heiser(?), which(?) I think interrogates this whole idea of medical imaging. But I do wanna just get back to this question about why does history matter?

MAN: Well, why does video history matter?

WOMAN: Why does video history matter? Many of us in this room, I noted, are professors, where we sort of like are in this failed (inaudible). And often, I feel like I don't reconnect(?) (inaudible). I work in Poland or the new countries of the Soviet Union, who are becoming privatized by capitalism. And I had a talk with Dierdre and some of my other colleagues here in New York a couple weeks ago, and they said, "How's it going?" And I said, "Well, same old same old. The TNCs are coming in, we've got (inaudible) shares paid(?) by the TNCs." And we all bemoaned this. And I think there are

sort of four things going on that make any history of anything really important. And one is a lot— most of higher ed is being privatized and demobilized, because we are colonies of the transnationals. And I think most of the nonprofit sector is dealing with this, including museums like MOMA, who get funded by Philip Morris, one of the largest food transnationals in the world, who run Picasso exhibits. And the second is, I think some of us have—you know, and I have to say, I used to participate in this, but I've rejected it now—is intellectually, cultural studies in the eighties in communications and certain media let scholars have fun studying dynasty and writing about it. So it's a really incredible thing, where scholarship which looks radical is actually supporting certain hegemonic corporate practices. And it becomes really seductive for deans and administrators, because they will say to people like me, "Your courses cost too much! Well, I have this person here, and they're teaching a course and it doesn't anything, because they take it all off the internet(?)." And so I think this issue of cultural studies, which is so enormous now and has taken over a lot of (inaudible) publishing, as well because those books can be (inaudible) easier than, of course, anything I would ever WOMAN (Cont.): write, is a very important thing because it's displaced certain kinds of discourses of history as play. I don't see histories as what middle-aged people do. I see history as what political people do, who are energized about the future. And I think the third issue for me is I think as communications education becomes digitalized, there becomes a kind of techno-fetishism. It's not about what Steina described as, you know, playing with the signal. We are now playing with the machines of transnational capital. And in my own institution, I think machines matter more than anything right now. And

it's not about art making. And finally, my great concern in this, and why history matters, is there's so much emphasis on jobs. Someone's job (inaudible) Hollywood. You know, talking about Hollywood and talking about commercial media production. But if you deconstruct that, to me, it's talking about racializing media as very much white, and within a certain class sector. So other kinds of discourses. You know, some of the artwork you showed, Barbara, become, like, whack(?) (inaudible) talking about that. How is this related to the instrumentalizing of the minds of the young? So when students say, "Oh, it's not political like it was in the sixties," I don't blame those students for not understanding this or not being political in the same way, 'cause I think there is a massive restructuring going on ion the nonprofit sector that has— really demands that we do something to rethink it and reimagine it. And I think it's a (inaudible) proportion(?) that's much more severe than it was in the seventies and early eighties, when there was arts funding. I feel like we've taken (inaudible) and I'm hyperventilating. You know? I hear about another corporate transnational agent coming to, like, recruit students; I think— you know, I felt— like, coming here, I was really excited, 'cause I thought: Oh, God,

WOMAN (Cont.): people like me; I won't feel like an alien, you know, from another planet. But I think these are very, very urgent and very serious, and require vision in programming. You know…

WOMAN: Those issues are huge.

WOMAN: They are huge; but that's what we're dealing with.

WOMAN: No, no, I know. And every time we do an exhibition, you know, whether we're able to get Samsung money in cash, Sony equipment, showing (inaudible) exports work and I get it from the Austrian government, you know… You know…

WOMAN: Philip Morris?

WOMAN: Yeah, I… It's not for my shows, but yeah, the institution… I don't know, I think it was worse when the Metropolitan Museum had a Ford— no, Avis underwrote their Impressionism show one summer, and there were coupons in the brochure to rent a car with a discount, you know? (inaudible) I don't know.

WOMAN: Since no one has raised this, (inaudible) history of video, I just thought I would mention that I— the way I think of it is as a fundamental tool for understanding ontological changes that are (inaudible), that have change the very nature of our reality.
WOMAN (Cont.): So that, you know, (inaudible) the substitution of media for, you know, physical realities. All of you, it seem like(?) you— video as having been a very important tool that helped us recognize fundamental aspects of our world that film could never have told us, that TV could never have told us. So I view it as a method of learning fundamental things about the world that you can't learn, perhaps, later, or with other tools. And therefore, it's this very—there're just almost like experiments in the history of science—very important pieces, very important movements, collectives that you had, that

you could learn how to live (inaudible) capitalism, the connection between counter(?) activity. All of these things are— they're actual things that we can't learn any other way. I mean, that's why I think video history's important.

MAN: I think I agree with all of you. (laughter; inaudible voice)

WOMAN: Believe it or not, it is four o'clock. I don't know where the time has gone to. I certainly have the sense that we could stay here another hour, if not more; but I think there's a reception soon, and there's the tool room, and there's talking to each other…

MAN: Is there a chance that—because I think Patty raised a lot of issues with which some of us will agree; and I don't see this, by the way, as a confrontational issue along institutional lines, I think it's a general issue—but that maybe we would have a chance to construct a listserve or some other way to actually found a caucus on this? This is the only forum that we have.

WOMAN: I agree.

WOMAN: Absolutely.

MAN: You know, so maybe we could put out a signup, that people could communicate that way.

WOMAN: I wanna add one thing (inaudible), which is that this is an incredible group of people we have here of makers, historians, and curators. And I'm really honored to be part of this crowd. What I would like to see come out of this is new ways to teach this history. You know, I hate to say it, Barbara, but like, I don't always see the same artists, you know, shown in the collective, sort of like this is the history of. I wanna see, like, people I've never heard of, people I never knew existed. And this is the place for everyone to see it. This is the place for everyone to be talking about and meeting people who have never talked to me before. And I wanna hear about their work. I mean, because we're people who're gonna go back out and be taking this work back out to other people. So I want everyone here to, like, you know, bring their most, like, unknown pieces together, so that we can take it back out. It's, like, the only thing (inaudible)

WOMAN: I don't know if there're any plans to develop a listserve, but in registration this morning, were you asked to give your e-mail addresses and things of that nature. (inaudible voices) Well, I would suggest that before you leave here, whenever you do

WOMAN (Cont.): leave here, that you make certain that that information is conveyed. I'm not gonna be here for the rest of the weekend, unfortunately, but I for one would be very interested in participating in just that kind of exchange.

MAN: I have a book, if you wanna just have a piece of paper. I could leave this on the front, and then we can find out who wants to pick it up.

(inaudible voice)

WOMAN: Thank you very much for a wonderful day.

MAN: Thank you.

(applause; inaudible voices over each other; END)