

SECTION IV: USING MEDIA IN THE CLASSROOM

Using Slides in Class

Lois Potter

Using slides for teaching Shakespeare might seem rather passe, now that it's possible for almost anyone to use video in teaching and even (as we learned in the Hypertext session at the 1993 SAA meeting) to put together a technically brilliant computer presentation. But as things stand most of us don't have either the time or the technology to produce such results. Slides, on the other hand, are relatively cheap, easy to store, and flexible in use. It is a lot easier to keep a slide on screen while you talk about it than to freeze the frame on a video, and you can compare very different kinds of material (I like to relate emblems and paintings to scenes in plays, or to situate, say, metaphysical imagery in the context of pictures like those in Gilman's *The Curious Perspective*.)

Sources of material: Slides can be made from anything--book illustrations, postcards, your own photographs. At secondhand and remainder bookstores, I look for art books (one of my favorites is Robert Hughes's *Heaven and Hell in Western Art*) and books with lots of theatre photographs (such as glossy theatrical biographies and autobiographies, Audrey Williamson's two volumes on *Old Vic Drama*, the various picture book annuals about theatres and theatre festivals--you can generally buy these at the theatres themselves, Robert Speaight's *Shakespeare on the Stage*, and Robert Tanitch's *A Pictorial Companion to Shakespeare's Plays*). Theatre programs, exhibition catalogues and theatre magazines are useful too. See, e.g., Raymond Mander and Joe Mitchinson, *The Artist and the Theatre*.*

Getting slides made: Often the least good slides are the ones you buy in museums. It's better to make your own (if you have any photographic skill) or have them made. Most institutions have an Educational Technology unit, or sometimes slides are the responsibility of a particular department like Geography or Art history. If you're lucky you may be entitled to have a certain number made free of charge. It doesn't usually take more than a week or two to get slides made--ask beforehand, and don't turn up at the last minute asking for special treatment, if you want to use the service again.

When you get your slides, be sure to label them at once, so that you don't forget what they are. In my early days I often gave very incomplete references on the label, which I now regret. If the label is too small, you can after all keep a list of the slides you own plus all the details about them. Ideally, you should know the page from which you took any book illustration, because if you ever decide to reproduce it in a book you will need to get your publisher to obtain permission. (strictly speaking, even showing a slide made from a copyrighted book is problematic, but as far as I know no one has ever made an issue of this practice.)

It is also a good idea also to mark your slides in the lower left hand corner; you can buy little dots for this purpose, or you can put a spot on them with a waterproof pen. This will save you the bother of checking which way is up when you load the projector. If you put the slides in so that you can see the red dots sticking up on the upper right hand corner of the carousel, you will know that you're all right. **Teaching with visual materials**: When I first started using slides I went completely over the top, filling every lecture with images only vaguely relevant to the topic just because I assumed that everyone would find them as fascinating as I did myself. Not surprisingly, I got some very negative feedback. Now I usually begin with an explanation of why I'm using

slides, often stressing that my purpose is experimental and not necessarily intended to prove anything. I try not to show too many (30 is the maximum number of slides for a straight lecture; if you want to have discussion you will need far fewer) and I make a point of saying enough about each one to make it clear why I'm showing it.

Like every other device, this approach has variable results. I can sometimes make a point quite effectively with slides: for instance, after showing photos of six or seven different actors in very different Hamlets, I have taken the opportunity to point out that, although photographs may look more obviously dated than critical articles, critical views of Hamlet differ from each other just as much as these pictures do. Though I don't show slides specifically to give people a sense of what the Elizabethan period looked like, this kind of knowledge is often a by-product, and students sometimes mention how much they enjoy seeing people in the "right" costumes. From a discussion point of view, it's often easier to get students to ask questions about production photographs than about the text. Warning: their questions can sometimes be embarrassing, especially when the blown up photos reveal details that you never noticed in the smaller photograph ("Who is the man in the big hat standing behind Hamlet?" Who indeed?), To save time, it may be a good idea to give out a list of the pictures you have used and your sources for them.

Taking your slides on tour: Since slides occupy very little space they are easy to take on a lecture tour; they don't seem to be affected by the screening at airports, though I know some people argue to the contrary. Most places can come up with a slide projector and, if you're lucky, a remote control. I have had a few disasters: at a school in Staffordshire it took a good two minutes to get each slide into the antiquated machine with which they had provided me; at Prague, where there was no remote control, the projectionist got so completely out of focus that most of my argument was meaningless; at Bochum, the bulb blew up as soon as the machine was turned on and we all sat for 20 minutes while the projectionist looked for another one; at the University of Maryland I could operate the projector only by dropping each slide individually into the slot and then catching it when it shot up again like a piece of toast. You can see the moral of all this. INSIST on seeing your equipment and the lecture room beforehand; load the projector yourself, making sure the slides are the right way up; make sure they don't give you a carousel designed for thin cardboard slides if yours have plastic mounts. In a modern media room, you will be able to control the lights from the front, maybe even dimming them to the point where students can both see your slides and take notes, but you are more likely to have a choice only between too light and too dark. If you opt for the latter- -total blackout--be sure to ask for a reading light, or even bring your own flashlight in case of emergencies: it's amazing how few people realize that once the lights are out you won't be able to see your notes.

Text, Eyes, and Videotape:
Screening Shakespeare in the Classroom

Stephen M. Buhler, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

In using videotaped excerpts from film and television versions of Shakespeare the potential rewards greatly outweigh present and possible problems; such credits and debits should, however, be calculated beforehand. Some practical problems are considerable and important--the availability of performances, the expense of equipment, the demands of time--but I will not deal with these here. Instead, I will focus on the pedagogical rewards and hazards of using video excerpts, by way of persuading more teachers that the practical problems are worth tackling and by way of preaching to the performance-oriented or

-interested choir that we could make better use of this resource.

Screening excerpts from just one production of each play assigned in a course can lead to a cumulative experience of seeing and hearing Shakespeare performed that is revelatory for students. Even now, their earliest encounters with the plays can too often be marked by Gradgrindian dullness: bound to word-by-word, line-by-line explication; divorced from any clear sense of performance or, in all its senses, play. That state of affairs is, happily, improving; despite this, the ability of students to engage imaginatively with the texts is still limited by their lack of exposure to classical drama--even in film or video form. The dynamics, as well as the aesthetics, of contemporary cinema and television differ markedly from those of the classic theatrical experience: screening Shakespeare in the classroom can at least begin to redress that lack.

More than this, though, the inevitable differences between the students' understanding of plays from initial reading and their understanding of scenes from viewing serves to open up a fruitful interpretive space. There is, of course, a danger that some students (though not as many as one might fear) will accept a given production's take on the scene as the "right" one. Comparing two different versions of the same scene helps to offset this danger, and brings rewards in its own right.

Using paired excerpts for the purposes of comparisons can alert students to the range of interpretive opportunities offered by a Shakespearean playtext: if neither version is given preferential treatment (and if class discussion can be encouraged beyond the privileging of present-day cinematic conventions), both versions can be explored and appreciated both for what they bring to the text and for what they derive from it. Such openness can effectively exorcise the bugbears of definitive Shakespearean performance and definitive Shakespearean reading, with all their deleterious consequences. For beginning students the task of arriving at such definitude seems (as it is) impossible and therefore scarcely worth attempting. For more experienced students the illusion of having achieved such understanding can lead them to overlook those dimensions of a play that are inevitably neglected in the search for an "authorized version" and therefore blind them to the insights realized by a production that highlights those neglected aspects. A genuinely comparative approach to excerpted performances does much to encourage the development of a broad interpretive field-of-vision.

One danger that still presents itself is the tendency to open up the reading of Shakespeare at the expense of closing down or closing off responses to performance. It remains easy to fall into the trap of showing and watching a certain performance for certain things only. Sometimes an emphasis on one aspect of the production completely overrides other elements. How the text is edited or rearranged (a clear and present temptation for those of us with New-Critical or Old-Textual training) or how a character is portrayed are issues with which many viewers who lack extensive technical familiarity with stage or screen simply feel more comfortable. Even when we do consider other elements of performance, a little learning about a given production can be just as dangerous: we ascribe to the production a master-theme that becomes our "definitive" reading of how Shakespeare is interpreted in this particular case.

By way of illustrating the limitations of such an approach and some avenues of escape from those limits, I want to share a few of my ongoing experiences in discussing the film versions of *Henry V*. Laurence Olivier's and Kenneth Branagh's productions of the play are well suited to a comparative treatment in the classroom because of their wide availability, because of their obvious differences in conceptualizing Shakespearean stagecraft and its relation to film, and because of Branagh's constant and shrewd awareness of his formidable predecessor. Accepting either Branagh's own terms of the dialectic at work between the versions or simply their own prior reputations as offering Shakespeare "at war" and "not at war," however, can interfere with our perception and appreciation of these films generally and in specific scenes.

There is a growing body of materials and criticism about these films and their relation to Shakespeare's playtext; some of these resources appear in the

bibliography that follows this essay. Here I want to mention the materials I have found most useful in approaching *Henry V* on film. First, there are published versions of Olivier's and Branagh's screenplays: Olivier's, in the Classic Film Scripts series, includes a brief foreword by the director; Branagh's, printed in conjunction with his film's release, has a more detailed introduction and extensive commentary in the director's descriptions not only of the film's action but also the characters' states of mind. Second, there are two recent studies which help to challenge some of the received notions about these films. Ace G. Pilkington's *Screening Shakespeare from "Richard II" to "Henry V"* notes important differences between the published Olivier screenplay and the actual film; he also considers Olivier's early draft (or "treatment") and shooting script. Peter S. Donaldson's "Taking on Shakespeare: Kenneth Branagh's *Henry V*" provides an overview of Branagh's encounters with Olivier as actor, director, and cultural icon.

Olivier's film of *Henry V* has similarly achieved an iconic status, presenting an impressive facade that often deflects closer scrutiny. An awareness that Olivier appropriated *Henry V* for the purposes of propaganda and morale-building during the Second World War, combined with the obvious casting of himself as the hero-king, has led many observers to assume the director has effaced thoroughly the tensions which animate Shakespeare's text. When one considers the constraints, psychological and otherwise, of producing both a propaganda and a commercial film during wartime, one may instead be impressed at how scrupulous Olivier is in at least considering--if hastening to resolve--many of those tensions. The immediate experiences of loss and destruction shared by his primary audience demanded some candor toward war and its costs. But the same life-and-death struggle in which his fellow citizens were engaged also led Olivier to be tentative in his exploration of the divisions and competing interests that would lead again, in history and in Shakespeare's Histories, to civil war. Instead, Olivier's version presents a vision of comprehensive British unity or, at least, a singleness of purpose shared among Britons. Ethnic differences are noted and effaced: even Pistol's prejudice against the Welsh captain, Fluellen, receives its due comic comeuppance. Ethnic prejudice is the only reason left, besides Pistol's surface bellicosity, for his *animus* against Fluellen: in this version, Bardolph is not hanged for disobeying an order against looting, so Fluellen cannot refuse Pistol's desperate plea for him to intercede on Bardolph's behalf (Pilkington 105).

Some sense of the costs of Harry's ascendancy and success as king is communicated, however, which requires further reassurance that the cause for which these costs are suffered is just. One excerpt which captures this tension is Olivier's rendering of the disguised King's debate with a few of his common soldiers. In Shakespeare's playtext, Michael Williams directly questions the justice of the war Henry prosecutes in France and endeavors to attach responsibility for the war's outcomes--especially the deaths of soldiers like himself--on the King. But in Olivier's film, the horrific vision of the soldiers' dismembered joints coming together on the Day of Judgment (4.1.134-146) is assigned not to Michael Williams, portrayed here with insouciant cynicism by Jimmy Handley, but to a very young Alexander Court, as played by Brian Nissen (Olivier 59). After hearing Court verbally purge himself of the horror, and subsequently receive the disguised king's reassurance that his "soul is his own" (4.1.177) the film's viewers see Court settle down to sleep and *become* the wretched slave who, in the subsequent soliloquy, sleeps in Elysium at the king's own cost (Olivier 61). In some ways, this treatment helps to contain the threatening judgment offered by the "latter day" speech: the actor's youth suggests that Court's fears stem from inexperience, a lack of battle-seasoning; his immediate somnolence suggests that fatigue contributes to such jitters. And certainly the laconic delivery of Bates' lines by Arthur Hambling (offering a rustic version of the stiff upper-lip) and the view of Williams as genial grumbler lessen any sense of challenge to Henry's authority or his meriting of success.

Kenneth Branagh's depiction of the same scene reacts strongly against Olivier's version. Branagh has expressed the terms of the dialectic at work between his film version of the play and Olivier's in this way: Although Olivier's film had been welcomed and celebrated as part of the war effort, its seeming nationalistic and militaristic emphases had created a great deal of suspicion and doubt about the value of *Henry V* for a late twentieth-century audience (Branagh 9). Branagh's "post-Vietnam" (and "post-Falklands") version deliberately enters into conversation and debate with Olivier's on a number of levels, although here he concedes that many of the differences are matters of emphasis and even, as Branagh says, of "seeming." The terms of conversation include a strong element of personal ambition--not only the King's, but Olivier's and Branagh's own. Branagh has recalled how the gradual allaying of his "personal paranoia about having to 'prove myself' as an actor . . . helped [his] playing the role immeasurably over the long months of the Stratford season" in which he first played the role for the Royal Shakespeare Company (Jackson and Smallwood 102). But that same resolve to prove oneself is clearly a central component of Branagh's conception of the role, and a strong factor in his directorial debut with the film version (Donaldson 60-61). The terms of debate include the kind of realism with which war is represented: Olivier's movement to naturalistic cinema still idealizes the conditions of battle, especially the medieval variety; Branagh's slide into the mud entails both looting the fallen and combat that is less decisively one-on-one, less chivalric.

Interestingly, the scene with Michael Williams shows Branagh's Henry less willing than Olivier's monarch to "bear all." He applies his little touch of Harry in the night only to substitute warlike anger for the near-paralyzing fear some of his soldiers feel, not to take on their burdens. As in the original play, there is deft skirting of the whole issue as to whether this is a "just war." Olivier's film borrows from the Latin mass in proclaiming *dignum et justum est*--it is right and just--immediately before a truncated version of Henry's prayer to the "God of battles" (4.1.289-305). Branagh's version does not avail itself of even such mediated divine approval. In fact, Branagh suggests that the King fills a void left vacant by the Church. At the beginning of the scene in Branagh's film, Williams receives a blessing, upon being shriven, which has no calming effect on his nerves: if anything, thoughts of the hereafter shake him all the more thoroughly, since the grizzled veteran (portrayed by the actor Michael Williams) is the one who conjures up--and is haunted by--the ghastly vision of soldiers' limbs coming together at the Last Judgment. At the end of the scene, Henry himself will be shaken by his direct appeals to the Almighty, as the script specifies: "The feverish prayer will not work" (Branagh 93). While this shared fear lends Williams' challenges increased authority--as does his age and obvious experience--it also begins a movement toward solidarity between Henry and all his men, especially these soldiers. Even during the intentionally ironic anthem "Non nobis," sung while the survivors recover bodies from the Field of the Dead, audience members may note the King's kinship with Williams and Bates as they and he load bodies onto the cart, and be moved by Henry's kiss of farewell on the head of the slain tavern boy. Rather than see the King's own head bent "as if in shame" (which is Branagh's account in the published script, p. 114), we may see it bent simply in mournful sorrow or in exhausted relief.

Which, then, is the more "anti-war" rendering of these scenes and of the play? Olivier's version, for most viewers, does downplay the terror and the challenge implicit in Williams' invocation of both the individual day of judgment that comes to many in battle and the general judgment at the end of time. In contrast, Branagh's film invests considerable attention and emotional weight into Williams' meditations and thus underscores both the horror of war and the weight of responsibility. Certainly the categories of "war effort" film and "post-Vietnam" film fit comfortably with such responses. But these categories might preclude our perception of other, less formulaic aspects of the directors' filmic interpretations and might limit our responses to them. I

have already suggested some of the ways these versions can work against the dominant interpretations ascribed to them. Here let me acknowledge how many of those observations are indebted to the discussions and debates that have arisen among students and colleagues who have seen these two renderings of that particular scene. In first developing the classroom comparison, I thought I "knew," to some substantial extent, these two interpretations of the Shakespearean playtext: I often framed the discussion accordingly, leading any given group to see these films from the same perspective. Fortunately, the independence of several groups and a developing openness in structure for the groups' responses have contributed to broadening my views and enriching further my experience of these films and the playtext.

The session with the members of the "Shakespeare and the Languages of Performance" institute was especially instructive. Despite my own awareness of how much I could learn from the participants, given their experience and skill in Shakespearean performance and scholarship, I still seemed to operate from the assumption--however unconsciously--that I had something *like* a definitive word on these films. Fortunately, the structure I'd devised for viewing and discussing the excerpts helped in resisting definitude. First copies of the passage as it appears in a standard teaching playtext, the Signet Classic edition, and copies of the scene as it appears in the published version of Olivier's screenplay were distributed to the group. To make it less likely that everyone concentrated on textual matters--however important in this instance-- the "viewing guide" which follows was also distributed. Loosely adapted from Patrice Pavis' (310-11) influential "Questionnaire" for responding to stage performances, it asks viewers to concentrate on aspects of the films they might otherwise overlook.

VIEWING *HENRY V*

Today, we'll focus on two versions of the scene in *Henry V* where the King, while dispensing a little touch of Harry in the night, converses in disguise with three soldiers--John Bates, Alexander Court, and Michael Williams. The first version is from Laurence Olivier's 1944 "war effort" film; the Second World War provided not only a context but the impetus for Olivier's account of "this star of England" and his reign. The second version is from Kenneth Branagh's 1989 "post-Vietnam/Falklands" film production.

As you consider the differences and continuities at work between these two scenes--and also at work between these versions and the Shakespearean playtext-- narrow the focus a bit further, and compare and contrast the versions in *one* of the following areas:

- 1) Design: set, costumes, lighting, dominant colors.
- 2) Casting: age, physical size and shape, facial features, roles in other productions.
- 3) Sound: music, clarity of dialogue, voice-over, effects, vocal delivery, accents.
- 4) Text: deletions, rearrangement or reassignment of lines or scenes, interpolations of original or extra-textual material.
- 5) Camera: angles, focus, depth and duration of shots.
- 6) Characterization: emotional state, mannerisms, suggested history and background, social status (and attitude toward that status). You might use one or two words to sum up or to describe each character in the two versions.
- 7) Movement--physical and emotional: blocking, group placement and dynamics, personal interaction.
- 8) Overall Impression: the "feel" or "tone"; pacing; the guiding interpretation; the intended and actual affective impacts.

The list of elements within each category is *not* exhaustive; you might find other aspects which apply to each general term. Also, as the last category implies, these focuses are somewhat arbitrarily divided--all the elements

overlap and coalesce in the filmic experience.

In a classroom situation, numbers can be counted off by the students; after viewing, the students can work initially in small groups devoted to the element designated by each number. After discussion, each small group can then report on its respective element to the class as a whole, both sharing and eliciting observations and insights. The members of the institute selected their own areas of concentration, and the diversity of their selections and their willingness to offer individual viewpoints redressed any lack suffered in skipping the small group work. Also, combinations of elements and their resulting effects were explored almost immediately. For example, the warm, roseate light amidst the darkness which marks the scene in the Olivier film was seen in conjunction with the casting of the very youthful, rosy-cheeked Nissen as Court. Refusing to attribute automatically greater sophistication or honesty about war to Branagh's staging of the scene, many members of the group directed our attention to the poignancy of having this painfully young man try to prepare himself simultaneously for the violence and devastation of war and for the condition of his soul throughout eternity. The discussion drew parallels with the exigencies of maintaining a fighting force during the Second World War itself, as indeed younger and younger men were called into service (and older and older men, too, who could be reflected in the decidedly middle-aged Bates of Olivier's film). For these viewers, the sense of doomed innocence which culminates in the slaughter of the "boys and the luggage" is intensified by Olivier in ways Branagh does not match.

Meanwhile, Branagh's version was acknowledged by other members of the group to address the "just war" issue more directly, but they noted that Branagh's Henry is more concerned with instilling warlike aggression in Williams than in providing a rationale (or not) for his military policies in France. He succeeds in that morale boosting enterprise, however inadvertently, as Williams' near-paralyzing fear is replaced with angry contempt for his visitor's appalling, apparent naivete. Even here, one commentator noted, Branagh's Henry "proves himself" as an instinctive leader, a motivator. The cold, blue light that pervades the scene--coloring the characters' faces--was observed as lending further credence to Bates' commentary that "as cold a night as 'tis, [the King] could wish himself in Thames up to the neck" (4.1.114-115).

The lighting was also seen as part of a series of direct answers to Olivier's own visual and emotional decisions about the scene. But by reconfiguring the emotions at work in Olivier, the group had gone far in reconstituting the terms of the dialectic in which Branagh had engaged. Further, the visceral power of the scene in the playtext and in any performance of it had been deeply affected and enriched for me by the communal experience and analysis of these scenes.

I realize that this lengthy--but by no means complete--review of the institute participants' thoughts, along with my own and those offered by other groups, about the passage in filmic performance might also serve to limit the perceptions of others. That is not, of course, my intention. It is rather my hope that the rehearsal of developing, shared perspectives on the playtext and its renderings will suggest the potential and potentially unbounded fruitfulness of the comparative approach. The absence of boundaries is not, I think, a result of radical indeterminacy or of the infinite play of signifiers, that unsettling counter-image to the Tillyardian cosmic dance--however useful those concepts have been in challenging the quest for authoritative readings. Instead, I prefer to think it is the result of **inexhaustibility**: that of playtexts, with their intricate intertextual negotiations and the infinite variety of their potential stage and screen actualizations; that of performances, with their rich interplay of sights, sounds, and other sensory contacts, their exploration and exploitation of social, cultural, and communal relationships; that of students and teachers, of readers and audience members, whose roles constantly shift and reconfigure in discussion. In resisting the notion that any of these can ever be (much less need be) exhausted, the comparative approach to Shakespeare in Performance can help to stave off

pedagogical and interpretive burnout.

WORKS CITED

- Branagh, Kenneth. *"Henry V" by William Shakespeare: A screen adaptation.* London: Chatto and Windus, 1989.
- Donaldson, Peter S. "Taking on Shakespeare: Kenneth Branagh's *Henry V*." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 42 (1991): 60-71.
- Jackson, Russell, and Robert Smallwood. *Players of Shakespeare 2.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Olivier, Laurence. *"Henry V" by William Shakespeare*. London: Lorrimar, 1984.
- Pavis, Patrice. Dictionnaire du Theatre. Paris: Messidon/Editions sociales, 1987.
- Pilkington, Ace G. Screening Shakespeare from "Richard II" to "Henry V". Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1991.
- Shakespeare, William. *The Riverside Shakespeare.* Ed. G. Blakemore Evans. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Some Suggestions for videotaping performances and classes

David Kranz
Dickinson College

I. Preparation

- a. Spend some time getting to know your videocam(s) by reading the manual and playing with all the buttons and switches. Use a tape and see what different features (e.g., manual or auto focus, zoom) will do. Test the camera's limits with regard to light and sound.
- b. Use tripods whenever possible. At the very least, have one for your long range or establishing shot camera (the video camera that is likely to be operating throughout the performance/class).
- c. Make sure that all your battery packs are fully charged and have extra tapes available. Buy and use high quality tape cassettes only (more expensive, but worth it, especially if you will be editing).
- d. Try to find out in advance the limits of your "fields" in terms of width, depth, and height so that you can get what you need in the frame and still stay reasonably close to the action.
- e. Make a case, with the director/instructor, for lighting which is uniform over the "field," flat (low contrast), bright but not glaring, and, if possible, from only one light source--outdoor, incandescent, or fluorescent. Videocams often react to high contrasts by blacking out the low light areas, and mixed sources often have detrimental effects on color. In addition, a lack of bright light reduces depth of field, making focus difficult for the video camera.
- f. If possible, use two cameras. The primary, or long range, or establishing shot camera should be set up to encompass the "field" at its widest angle setting and be placed as near to the center line (middle of stage to middle of audience) as possible. The second video camera should be available for closer work but clearly outside the frame of the first videocam. Talk with the director/instructor to determine the best location(s) for this camera.
- g. If your primary, long-range videocam is over fifty feet from the performers/instructors, consider using an external remote microphone wired to

the long range videocam. Set it up inconspicuously closer to, but not within five feet of, the actors/instructors.

h. Set tape speed at the fastest setting (usually "standard play" or SP) and, if possible, test run the cameras for a minute or two to see if framing, light, sound, and the like are within tolerable limits. Watch the test on a VCR if possible; if not, watch it through the lens of the camera (no sound).

2. SHOOTING

a. Turn on your cams and "bleed" your new tapes (on "play") for thirty seconds before the actual shooting. Having the "leader" tape may be useful in editing and can be used for titles and credits if so desired.

b. Press the "record" switch on the longer range camera at least five seconds before the scene or class begins. Ditto the other cam for parts of scenes you want to film closer in or from different angles. (Most cams take a few seconds to begin taping after you press the "record" switch).

c. One cameraperson: Let the long range cam run throughout on its own. Use the second cam for cinematic variety, shooting sections of the performance/class from various positions, distances, and angles. (Editing, of course, will be required after the taping.) Two camerapersons: Some use of the zoom capability on the long range cam may now be possible. (There are dangers to such use however. See below.)

d. The two cam shooting allows you to cover the action with one when the other (usually the long range cam) loses battery power or gets close to the end of its tape. Just move the second cam to the best position, start recording with it, and then stop the first cam to replace battery pack or tape or both. Remember to "bleed" the new tape, of course. Try to stop the first cam at a moment, preferably longer than a few seconds, of no sound and start recording again at another like break in sound. (These opportunities will make editing easier.)

e. Common problems. Try to avoid (unless formally or aesthetically appropriate) the following:

Camera movement (except panning and zooming), particularly jerky hand-held attempts to be a dolly or a crane.

Excessive, jerky, and badly timed zooming during recording. It's better to find the distance you want on the telephoto of the second cam when not recording and then record for eventual editing into a "cut."

Panning too fast or too much.

Focusing problems with the telephoto or zoom capability. Using the telephoto on auto-focus can result in many temporarily blurry frames, especially when the subjects on which you are focusing are moving or when lighting is not even and constant. (If you want a rack-focus effect, use manual focus.)

Framing problems, especially with the telephoto feature. Actors may go outside of the frame if you try to zero in too much with the telephoto. This is particularly bad when you cut off speaking heads at the top of the frame.

Off-frame sounds, like change in your pocket or whispered evaluations of the performance near the cam's sound boom.

Extremes of lighting, as noted above.

f. Cinematic possibilities. With the second camera, you may wish to try variants of shot (medium, close up, extreme close up), angle (high, low, oblique), lighting (under and over exposure), moving camera (pans--reaction, swish, tilts, hand-held cam), mise-en-scene by camera position (imbalanced, tight/loose, symmetric/asymmetric, camera proxemics, aleatory/anticipatory set-ups) and montages (fades, expressionistic cuts).

g. Either "bleed" the tape for a minute or two after the performance is over or just let the camera(s) run on record for a while

3. LABELLING, COPYING, AND EDITING

a. Remove the cassettes from the cameras and put labels on them. Make a copy of all tapes just as you would for files in a computer. Put labels on these cassettes ("an unlabeled tape is a lost tape.")

b. Using a videotape editor if possible, splice in the appropriate scenes from the second cam onto the tape from the first or long range camera. If sound disjunctions are a problem, try to make the cuts when there is little or no sound, or use the sound from the first cam with the video from the second (if your editing equipment has this capability).

c. Make a copy of the editing tape and label it.