

# GRAFT-ON !

COMMUNICATIONS AGENCY

130 Gloucester Avenue LONDON NW1 3JA England

Tel: 01-58614245

27th June 1975

Dear COMMITTEE MEMBER

Seminar 16th July

LOW GAUGE VIDEOTAPE AS A PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION MEDIUM

Please accept this letter as an invitation to a private showing of the half-inch black-and-white videotape "A LOCAL HISTORY", at the National Film Theatre (NFT 3), South Bank, at 3pm on Wednesday July 16th.

This is being followed by a short action-research seminar on the possibilities of low-gauge videotape as a production and distribution medium (please see enclosed documents).

If you are unable to come would you please pass this invitation on to interested parties within your Department or organisation.

We are asking persons attending to bring some information with them (please see Briefing), and enclose a list of other persons invited.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Hall.

R S V P

[telephone message service 834-6524 ext 758]

Organiser: Sue Hall, John Hopkins.

Grant-Aided by: British Film Institute, Arts Council of Great Britain, Greater London Arts Association, Rowntree Social Services Trust.

Accommodation: London Borough of Camden.

Affiliated to: The Institute for Research in Art and Technology Limited (Registered Charity No 262675).

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## ACTION-RESEARCH SEMINAR WITH VIDEOTAPE PLAYBACK, 16th July, 1975

"Low Gauge Videotape as a Production and Distribution Medium"

National Film Theatre 3, South Bank, 3pm - 5pm.

"A LOCAL HISTORY" (West Kentish Town 1900-1975)

20 minute black-and-white half-inch videotape, rough edited version.

This is a social documentary videotape describing the changes in the architecture and quality of life, as observed and remembered by Old Age Pensioners.

The production has been grant-aided by the British Film Institute, the hosts of this seminar, with technical assistance from the British Council donated on a goodwill basis.

### Production Details:

Preresearch and gathering of raw materials:	1	person-week
Shooting:	3	" "
Post-shooting production (viewing, logging, additional shooting, editing, audio mixing):	4	" "
First wave distribution:	1	" "

This work was, however, spread out over several months.

Task Force, the commissioning agency, were responsible for setting up and arranging interviews.

Produced and directed by Sue Hall and John Hopkins, 1975.

Edited at Video Resource Centre, 130 Gloucester Avenue, London N W 1.

## ACTION-RESEARCH SEMINAR

The videotape production 'A Local History' is an experimental project, and some new information which applies cybernetic methods to video production and distribution (see Production Algorithm sheet) has been brought up in the course of the project.

This is the first time the British Film Institute has funded a video production. It is also experimental in that no-one in the U K has yet succeeded in producing a finely-edited product, using half-inch videotape, and suitable for general distribution.

However, we feel that the rough-edit of 'A Local History' is far enough advanced to demonstrate the potential of half-inch video as a general, low-cost production medium with wide applications in the public sector.

In Australia, U S A and Canada, where publicly funded video

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production facilities are available, such productions are now commonplace. This is not the case in the U K because, as yet, no such public facilities exist with the requisite technical sophistication. (This statement includes the Kendal, Bradford and Merseyside Arts Centres). But the use of portable video in many varied applications, is on the increase in the public sector in the U K.

## Technical Constraints

State-of-the-art software limitations are caused by technical constraints in the editing and processing stages of production. These constraints could be removed with a small amount of public investment in the purchase and modification of existing video hardware. This would be carried out as a Research and Development programme aimed at producing models of working systems for use in the public sector (including public access).

Such an R & D programme would also include development of management and accountability models.

## Briefing

Any organisation concerned with the use of portable video in any capacity will eventually face the problems of post-shooting production and editing, and also distribution of the finished product. We feel that a comparison of examples/models from different fields would be valuable right across the public sector.

We are therefore asking persons attending the seminar to bring with them, in convenient form, information on the ways in which your organisation/Department is using, or thinking of using video.

Everyone who contributes information will receive a summary of all the information produced. There may be cause for further inter-departmental cooperation and exchange of information should it prove possible to establish a Research and Development project as outlined in Technical Constraints above, and Technical Reports Nos. 1 and 2 which will be available for inspection at the seminar.

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## TECHNICAL REPORT NO-1.

### EXPERIMENT RESEARCH REPORT:

### ESTABLISHING A HALF-INCH VIDEO EDITING RESOURCE.

By Sue Hall, Graft-On! and  
John Hopkins, Centre for Advanced Television Studies

3rd Edition, London, January 1975.

#### CONTENTS

- 0 Introduction and Recommendations
- 1 The Present System
- 2 Use of the System
- 3 Administration and Maintenance--We take responsibility
- 4 Design
- 5 Disadvantages of the Present System
- 6 New Criteria
- 7 New Developments
- 8 Immediate future
- 9 Specification
- 10 Video Resource Centre
- 11 Recommendations

Figure 1 Software objectives

Figure 2 Hardware Required

- Appendix 1 Press Release  
Appendix 2 Users and Enquirers  
Appendix 3 Joint Statement of 5th April 1974  
Appendix 4 Glossary of technical terms used

**GRAFT-ON! Citygrowers**

98 Prince of Wales Road, London, N.W.5.

CENTRE FOR ADVANCED TV STUDIES,  
15 PRINCE OF WALES CRESCENT,  
LONDON N.W.1 8HA ENGLAND

## TECHNICAL REPORT NO 2

### ESTABLISHING A VIDEO RESOURCE CENTRE

John Hopkins, Centre for Advanced Television Studies  
Sue Hall, Graft-On! communications agency

London, June 1975

#### 1 TECHNICAL

##### 1.1 What's Wrong with the Portapak and Why?

- 1.1.1 Video
- 1.1.2 Syncs
- 1.1.3 Audio

##### 1.2 What you need for editing and processing a 1" video signal to broadcast standards.

- 1.2.1 Video and Sync Processing
- 1.2.2 Video Mixing
- 1.2.3 Audio
- 1.2.4 Video Editing
  - 1.2.4.1 Vertical Interval Editing
  - 1.2.4.2 Types of Edit
  - 1.2.4.3 Automatic Editing
  - 1.2.4.4 Existing System: T P Ltd
  - 1.2.4.5 Vertical Drive
  - 1.2.4.6 Rates of Editing

#### 2 DISTRIBUTION

- 2.1 Hardware
- 2.2 Strategies
- 2.3 Finance

#### 3 PUBLIC SPONSORSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- 3.1 Sponsorship
- 3.2 Accountability

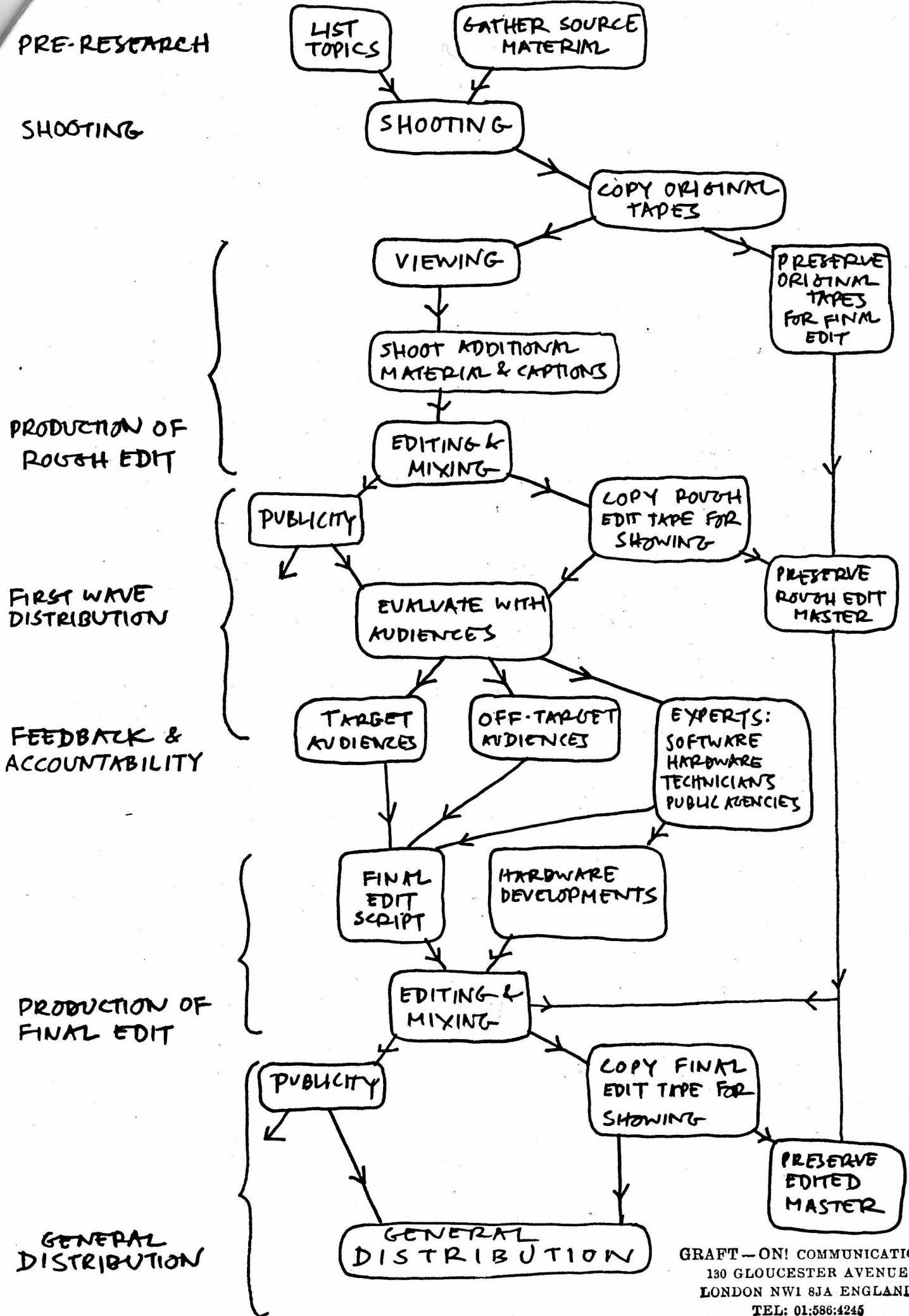
#### 4 VIDEO RESOURCE CENTRES

- 4.1 Training
- 4.2 Style of Management
- 4.3 Finance

Diagram A: Schematic Detail of Video Signal  
Diagram B: Comparison of Broadcast and Portapak Syncs

Available from  
RESEARCH INSTRUMENTALITY, 130 Gloucester Avenue N W 1.

# HALF-INCH VIDEO PRODUCTION ALGORITHM



List of Persons Invited (not in alphabetical order)

John Buston  
Rod Wilson, Arts Council of Great Britain

Peter Sainsbury-  
Barrie Gavin  
Staff, British Film Institute

Tony Wraight  
Fiona Duncan, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, London.

Ellis Hillman, Chairman, GLC Arts Board  
Gareth Hadley, Director General's Office, G L C.

Pratap Chitnis, Joseph Rowntree Social Services Trust.

Michael Barrett, British Council.  
Acting Director, Task Force Head Office.  
Field Worker, Task Force Camden Branch.

Robert Tasher, Fund Raising Coordinator, Help The Aged.

Frances Berrigan, Researcher, UNESCO and BFI.

Michael Barrett, Project Director, CO-AX, Milton Keynes Devt Corp.

Harry Marsh, Family Service Unit, Head Office.

Helen Holden, National Council for Social Service.

Mrs Temple, Director, Community Division, Centre for Urban  
Educational Studies, ILEA.

Frances Dawe, Voluntary Services Unit, Home Office.

A P G Brown, Director of Information, Information Division, D H S S  
Mary Preston, Local Authorities Social Services Division, D H S S

Mr Day, Training Liason Officer, Civil Service Dept.

Alan Davis, Secretary, Interdepartmental Group on Leisure Experiments:  
D O E.  
Dorothy Dent, Leisure Experiments Branch, D O E.

Mr D R Jones, Assessor to the British Film Institute, D E S.  
Mr Max E Broome, Library Adviser, D E S.  
Mr Dovey, Schools 3 Branch, D E S.

Mr Michael Weatherley, Training Services Agency, Manpower Services  
Commission.

Professor Brian Lewis, Open University.

Caroline Heller, School for Advanced Urban Studies, Bristol Univ.

(25 copies, internal circulation, B F I)