REPORT TO THE E.M.E. STEERING COMMITTEE FROM NEIL BUTCHER
RESEARCH PROJECT ON TRAINING PROGRAMMES FOR E.M.E. AND DISTANCE EDUCATION

Introduction

The initial aim of the research project which I have been commissioned to undertake was to compile a comprehensive list of those training programmes which specifically covered those skills required for potential practitioners of the Electronic Media in Education (E.M.E.) and Distance Education. John van Zyl, in an introductory letter to this research project, described this aim in the following terms;

> a situational analysis to determine what is being done in the field of training in E.M.E. at present in South Africa, and then to make recommendations about the development of training institutions locally. Information about overseas training institutions which might assist in these efforts will also be required...SAIDE, the South African Institute for Distance Education, has undertaken [this] activity on behalf of the E.M.E. initiative. It has commissioned Neil Butcher to conduct the research as part of a wider research project into training in Distance Education.

It has, however, become clear that the parameters of this research are too limited and too limiting, and, consequently, working in conjunction with John van Zyl and Jenny Glennie, I have extended the basic parameters of the research project in order to make it of more relevance and more practically useful to the E.M.E. initiative and to SAIDE.

The research parameters have been extended in the way explained below in cognisance of the fact that there is a serious lack of training programmes relating to the specific skills required for practitioners of E.M.E. and Distance Education[1]. Thus, this research project, in addition to providing access to a range of useful information, is now aimed at contributing towards resolving this problem.

The Research Parameters

The research project has now been broadened in order to incorporate the two general fields of training required for E.M.E. and Distance Education, namely training in the Electronic Media (in which I include the printed media, especially as it is particularly relevant to Distance Education) and Educational training. These two fields of training are thus seen as diametric poles, and the aim of the research will be to undertake a comprehensive analysis of those training programmes which fall in between these two poles. In general terms, this would include the following broad types of training programmes;

(1) **Training in Education** - this refers primarily to teacher training (for example, at colleges of education or universities), but is not limited

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[1] The term 'practitioners of E.M.E. and Distance Education' is intended to refer both to those people involved in producing E.M.E. material or creating Distance Education courses and to those people required to use the Electronic Media or Distance Education courses within their teaching. The latter group is often neglected, but this is a dangerous mistake because, without their active participation, the Electronic Media cannot become an effective tool within education.

to purely to formal teaching courses[2].

(2) **Education in the Media** (for example, the Drama and Film courses at Wits and programmes run by the Film Resources Unit) - this refers primarily to courses which provide a theoretical awareness of how the media function.

(3) **Training in the Use of the Media** - this refers to practical training, which will give people the skills required to produce media materials; included in such training would be internships at such institutions as production houses.

(4) **Communications Training**

(5) **Training in the Media-in-Education** (i.e. specifically how to produce educational material for the media, for example, videos radio pro-grammes, printed booklets, etc)

The aim of extending the parameters of the research in this way is twofold. Firstly, by undertaking a more wide-ranging survey of training programmes, the research will hopefully point more clearly to the (considerable) training gaps that exist within E.M.E. and Distance Education. In this way, it will be easier to create policy statements of more relevance to the South African context on the issue of training programmes in E.M.E. and Distance Education. Secondly, it will also be possible for future course designers or coordinators to utilize the research and its resources in order to draw on existing courses, curricula, and skills rather than attempting to devise courses from scratch; in other words, the research aims to help prevent course designers from 're-inventing the wheel'[3]. Other information will also hopefully be of value in this respect; for example, a list of teacher training colleges will be included, and these places are potential bases for future courses and may also act as centres for Distance Education courses.

In addition, the research will also hopefully be of use to other people. The first, and possibly most important, group is that consisting of potential students. Students interested in receiving training in any of the fields outlined above, but denied access to conventional channels of communication (for example, schools careers guidance counsellors), will hopefully be able to utilize this research to make contact with the relevant institutions. Other people who may be able to utilize the research are special interest groups. For example, potential lobbyists for the inclusion of Media Studies components in Teaching Courses (which this researcher believes to be a vital aspect of teacher training) will be able to access the research in order to

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[2]Education needs to be broken down into various categories in order to create an awareness that teacher training consists of several different components, each requiring different skills - the following is not a comprehensive list, but gives some idea of the range of education fields:

(1) Pre-School Education
(2) Primary School Education
(3) Secondary School Education
(4) Tertiary Education:
   (*) University Education
   (*)   Technikon Education
(5) Technical College Education
(6) Adult Education:
   (*)   Compensatory Education
   (*)   Upgrading/Vocational Education
   (*)   Cultural and Political Non-Formal Education
(6) General Education:
   (*)   Health Education
   (*)   Literacy Education
   (*)   Political/Social Awareness Education

[3]The attached preliminary report on the Community Video School provides an example of the type of information that will be included in this research. It must, however, be noted that the research will be offered in different formats, offering different levels of information. The most easily accessible, and the most widely available will be briefer than the attached example.

establish whom they need to approach.

The research project will also incorporate a collection of the views of a number of E.M.E. and Distance Education practitioners on the training they received before entering their respective fields. The aim of this is to provide an evaluation of some of the existing training programmes, as well as to point more clearly to the gaps that have existed within the training of current practitioners. This will also hopefully feed into and influence future curriculum and course designs.

Progress Report

The research project is still in its infancy, particularly because its boundaries have had to be re-defined. Nevertheless, the following has been done in addition to clearly establishing the research parameters of the project;

(1) The drafting of two questionnaires - the first forms the basis of interviews with people from those institutions incorporated within the research, and is a wide-ranging questionnaire incorporating details about training courses, past training courses, proposed training courses, internships, and the institution itself. The second forms the basis of interviews with E.M.E. and Distance Education practitioners and the training they have received.

(2) The collection of names and contacts in order to establish exactly which institutions and people need to be visited. This will remain an ongoing process during the research, in order to make the research as comprehensive as possible.

(3) The visiting of institutions. The following institutions and people have already been visited;
   (*) National Education Policy Investigation.
   (*) EduSource
   (*) Education Policy Unit (Witwatersrand University)
   (*) The Community Video School at FAWO
   (*) Speak Radio Project
   (*) OLSET
   (*) Centre for Continuing Education (Witwatersrand University)
   (*) University of the Witwatersrand Education Faculty and Drama Department
   (*) National Literacy Co-operation
   (*) Kumi Naidoo
   (*) Nicola Galombik

(4) The establishment of preliminary contacts with a number of people and institutions has also been made, such as, for example, the DEAL trust, Audio Waves, the Matla Trust, the Media Resource Centre at Natal University, and the Centre for Continuing and Adult Education (CACE) at the University of the Western Cape.

(5) Preliminary plans are also being made for the easiest and most accessible way in which to collate and make available the research material, in order to ensure that it does not remain exclusive, but can become available to as wide a range of people and institutions as possible. The attached document on the Community Video School provides an example of this planning.

THE COMMUNITY VIDEO SCHOOL
A PROJECT INITIATED BY THE FILM AND ALLIED WORKERS ORGANIZATION

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Introduction
According to its mission statement, the *Community Video School* (CVS) "was established on the basis of the Film and Allied Workers Organization's (FAWO) resolve to create a community based film and video educational facility. This resolve arose out of the historical legacy of Apartheid that created imbalances in the distribution of skills, denial of access to education and production resources for black South Africans"[4].

The CVS began in January 1991 as a project initiated by FAWO, in recognition of the need to empower black students with skills previously only available to white students. While the CVS intends to remain closely affiliated with FAWO, plans are nevertheless under way to develop the school's independence and autonomy from FAWO. The school includes among its aims training self empowered film students from disadvantaged communities, attempting through its training to create a distinct South African film culture, linking with others in the struggle to democratize the film and television industries, and struggling with communities and organizations to establish community broadcasting centres for self empowerment. As an example of an activity in which the CVS is involved outside of the courses outlined below, it is currently lobbying with the relevant industry organizations and FAWO for a film subsidy scheme to entrench a system of traineeships and internships at production houses.

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Training Programmes Presently Offered
(1)   **Full-Time Film and Video Training Course**
      This course aims to offer training in a range of cinematic skills, from a general understanding of the processes of film and video production, its history, and relation to society to the practical and technical skill required to produce film or video (see curriculum outlines for more details). The aim throughout is, in addition, to promote independent and critical thinking in the students. While there is not an E.M.E. component to the course at present, the curriculum developers are examining the potential inclusion of such a component to the training.
      Length: Two years, with an internship at a production house after completion of the course. There is currently a plan to formalize the internship and make it part of the final year of a three year course. Extending the course to three years would also allow for greater attention to life skills within the curriculum.
      Intake: 12 students annually, in July.
      Main Field/s: Technical Media Training; Media Theory
      Accreditation: Certificate, but not formally recognized; Wits Education

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[4] Community Video School Annual Report, 1992, p. 4.

Policy Unit is reviewing curriculum for diploma accreditation and, if accepted, this accreditation will also be offered retrospectively to past graduates; Industry Recognition exists in terms of the acceptance of interns annually.

Course Fees: R2500 per year - bursaries are offered by the school and from outside for people unable to afford fees.

Accommodation: According to CVS, accommodation and transport to the school remain a problem, but each student is given a monthly allowance to help with transport and personal expenses. In 1992, additional money was also granted to the six neediest students in order to help with accommodation. There are also development plans to establish an accommodation residence for students.

Training Programmes Previously Offered

(1) Four Month Part-Time Courses to upgrade people to level necessary for full-time course above. Four such courses were run.

Training Programmes Planned

(1) Part-Time courses in specialized training (eg; Sound Training).

Materials Available

(1) Full-Time Course Curriculum [First & Second Year]
(2) Part-Time Curriculum 1992 [Upgrading Course]
(3) *Community Video School* Annual Report 1992
(4) *Community Video School* First Quarter Report, 1 January to 30 March 1993