An Honors Thesis (HONRS 499)

by

Margaret C. Coyle

Thesis Advisor
Joe Pacino

Ball State University
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SPECIAL THANKS TO THESE PEOPLE FOR THEIR ENERGY, TIME, EFFORT, AND FAITH IN ME:

My mom and dad
Mark Allison
Guy Booher
Mary Booher
Tim Bristol
Nancy Carlson
Terry Coffey
David Collins
Deirdre Counter
AJ Ennis
Rob Fultz
Todd Green
Pat Hensley
Tonya Kimbrough
Joe Pacino
Vince Porter
Aaron Re
Mickie Reuster
Mark Sanders
Joel Wentwort
Marnell White
Purpose of Thesis

The idea for this video was not my own, but rather the joint idea of two friends of mine. It came about after being thoroughly frustrated with a mutual friend of ours who watched television about 25 hours a week and about 25 hours each weekend, depending on how much homework he had to do.

The basic idea of the video is to show how warped people living in this society can become, and may be becoming, from watching too much t.v. Too much emphasis is placed on the importance of this favorite form of entertainment. This is an ironic statement coming from a future graduate in telecommunications with an option in television news. Yet I truly believe that communication between friends, family and even strangers often deteriorates when the t.v. plays a major role in people's lives. My videotape is an obvious exaggeration of the life of an "average American" and his (or the country's) possible downfall due to this seemingly harmless medium.

Some events occurring in the scene appear to happen without a proper explanation of how or why--this was intentional on my part to symbolize the possibility of television beginning to control humans instead of the other way around. What my be called strange or weird shots appear occasionally to symbolize the demented behavior of this individual and the frightening possibility of truth behind the idea of this video. The man's motivation, intelligence, excitement for life, and meaning of his own existence have gradually been connected to television and his entire humanity proceeds to fade away as the television's "life force" is drained.

Any personal or general meaning or understanding of this video is left up to you to discover; the point is to make you think.
VAST WASTELAND

PAN and CU of tv dinner (TV1,2,3): (VOICES OF 3 TV'S ALL AT ONCE)

trays, empty pop cans, phonebook, phone, remote,

CU man's face

LS of room with man and tv's

(TV1): (FUZZ)

MCU of man's face in a tv

(ZOOM to CU of tv1,2,3

(TV2): "WE INTERRUPT THIS PROGRAM WITH A SPECIAL NEWS BULLETIN...REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON HAVE JUST COME IN SUGGESTING THERE'S BEEN A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION IN LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA."

MS man changing channel with remote control

(TV2): "...NATURE OF THE EXPLOSION HAS NOT YET BEEN..."

(TV2): (FADE OUT)

(TV3): (FADE IN) "FOX 19 NOW BRINGS YOU A SPECIAL REPORT FROM WASHINGTON...REPORTS FROM CAPITOL HILL ARE ARRIVING,
Saying Los Angeles, California has been hit by a nuclear explosion. The explosion is reported to have occurred only moments ago, at approximately 5:30 p.m., Eastern Standard Time...

(TV3): (Fade Out)

(TV4): (Fade In) "...he recommends that all persons go as soon as possible to their nearest nuclear fallout shelter, taking any canned food and blankets that is possible. Reports from Washington do not give details on the location of departure of the bombs, only that the United States has not launched any of its own. The government recognizes the possibility of more attacks and recommends all persons find immediate shelter as a precautionary measure..."

(TV4): (Fade Out)

(TV1): (Fade In) "We are experiencing technical difficulties at Channel 7 right now; please excuse the past interruptions. We'll be back after these messages with emergency reports that have just come in from Washington, D.C."
REPORTS FROM WASHINGTON ARE GIVING MORE DETAILS ON THE NUCLEAR EXPLOSION OCCURRING TODAY IN LOS ANGELES AT APproximately 5:30 P.M., EASTERN STANDARD TIME. WHITE HOUSE OFFICIALS ARE MOVING CLOSER TO DETERMINING THE ORIGIN OF THE MISSILE, BUT NO NAMES OF THE POSSIBLE LAUNCH-SITES HAVE BEEN RELEASED. THE UNITED STATES IS NOT AWARE OF ANY THREATS OF WAR TO THE COUNTRY, NOR HAS THE PRESIDENT DECLARED WAR EITHER...

OFFICIALS ARE MOVING CLOSER TO DETERMINING THE ORIGIN OF THE MISSILE, BUT NO NAMES OF THE POSSIBLE LAUNCH-SITES HAVE BEEN RELEASED. THE UNITED STATES IS NOT AWARE OF ANY THREATS OF WAR TO THE COUNTRY, NOR HAS THE PRESIDENT DECLARED WAR EITHER...

THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICIALS HAVE NOT YET RELEASED THE LOCATION OF THE BOMB LAUNCHING, BUT INSISTS THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT RELEASED ANY OF ITS OWN BOMBS. THE PRESIDENT HAS NOT DECLARED WAR; HE DOES URGEO ALL PERSONS TO ACQUIRE IMMEDIATE REFUGEE IN ANY NEARBY NUCLEAR FALL OUT SHELTER. ANY NON-PERISHABLE FOOD ITEMS AND BLANKETS WILL BE WELCOMED AT ANY SHELTER. OTHER NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS HAVE BEEN REPORTED IN THE CITIES OF TOKYO, MOSCOW, LONDON, BEIJING, WASHINGTON D.C.,
MS of man sitting with food and drink

(TV1): (FUZZ)

(TV2): (FADE IN) "...I REPEAT, THE PRESIDENT..."

(TV2): (FUZZ)

(TV2): "...HAS NOT DECLARED WAR ON ANY WORLD POWER. REPORTS ARE JUST NOW ARRIVING..."

(MAN): "GET ON WITH IT!"

MS (over shoulder) as he slams food on table and yells

(TV2): "...CLAIMING THERE HAVE BEEN MORE EXPLOSIONS IN ADDITION TO THE ONE IN LOS ANGELES THAT WAS ANNOUNCED EARLIER. APPARENTLY, BEIJING, CHINA WAS THE FIRST PLACE TO REPORT A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION,

LS as man jumps up and runs over to mess with the antennas; frantically he looks around and sees used tv dinner trays, grabs one and tries to affix it to an antenna

MCU of his face thru back of tv's; antennae look like they are coming out of his head

(TV2): THEN L.A. FOLLOWED SHORTLY AFTER. OTHER EXPLOSIONS HAVE OCCURRED IN TOKYO, MOSCOW, LONDON, WASHINGTON D.C., AND HOUSTON. OFFICIALS REPORT IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO DETERMINE EXACTLY WHAT FORCE IS LAUNCHING THE NUCLEAR MISSILES. THE PRESIDENT IS RECOMMENDING THAT ALL...

(LS of back of man standing in front of tv's, holding tv tray)

(MAN): "WHAT THE...?"

(CU of man's face)

(TV2): "...PERSONS EVACUATE:"

AND HOUSTON.
their places of residence immediately and take refuge in the nearest nuclear fallout shelter... This just came in... continuous messages are arriving from the white house

declaring all persons must find shelter from the nuclear bombings. we repeat, all persons to find shelter as soon as possible. officials claim there is a high chance that more explosions will soon occur. the head of the nuclear tactics divisions calculates the next american city to be bombed will be miami, florida..."

(TM2): (FADE OUT)

(TM1): (FADE IN) "...to safety. we at channel 7 will be signing off shortly to get ourselves to a nuclear fallout shelter. we've stayed as long as possible to hopefully make the public aware of the severity of the immediate crisis. good luck. this is johnson kettering reporting."

(TM2): (FUZZ)

(TM1): (FADE IN) "the president is declaring this nuclear crisis has put the world in an emergency state. radiation levels are up to 75 percent according to recent reports. gas masks are advisable for people traveling long distances on foot to a
CU man's face

NUCLEAR SHELTER. ALL...

LS over shoulder of man getting up and turning off tv

(TV4): (FUZZ)

(TV4): (FUZZ OUT)

MS of man sitting with phonebook in lap

(TV2): "...PERSONS UNABLE TO REACH A NUCLEAR SHELTER ARE URGED TO GO NOW TO BASEMENTS OR OTHER SHELTERS UNDERGROUND..."

ECU of phonebook page that says "television repair"

(TV2): "...NETWORK REPORTS WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED OF CORRECT SAFETY PROCEDURES..."

(MAN): "WHERE ARE THEY?!"

MS man with phone at ear

(TV2): "...AND UPDATES ON THE EXPLOSIONS. PERSONS TRAVELING ON FOOT SHOULD BE WARNED THAT THE HIGH RADIATION LEVELS..."

(CU of tv's

(TV3): (FUZZ)

(TV2): "...WILL CAUSE SICKNESS AND EVEN DEATH IF EXPOSED FOR EXTENDED PERIODS OF TIME. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS RECOMMEND STAYING INDOORS IF AT ALL POSSIBLE."

(LS man lying back

(TV3): (FUZZ OUT)
CU man’s face; eyes staring at ceiling

ZOOM out to MS as man sits up

LS over shoulder of man and tv’s (only 1 tv on [snow])[TVI]: (FUZZ OUT)

CU of man’s face, vacant stare

(TV2): (FUZZ OUT)

ZOOM to ECU of his eye

DISSOLVE to fuzz

(TV2): (FADE OUT)

CUT TO BLACK
Over Christmas break I composed the first rough draft of my script. I handed it in to Joe Pacino (my advisor), meeting two or three times after that to revise my script. During each appointment I arrived with a new version until Mr. Pacino approved it. I then drew a rough storyboard to accompany the script, indicating the exact angle and distance of every shot I had written. This helped me to visualize exactly what I wanted for each shot and if each intended shot was even possible. Mr. Pacino approved the storyboard after giving me some professional advice on the logistics of creating certain camera shots and giving me some very ingenious ideas that would add more symbolism to my video. Adjustments and additions were made to the storyboard.

The next step was to find people to be news anchors, thereby starting on the pre-production stage of my project. This included writing four different news casts. Each one needed to be timed perfectly, so that only one news cast would be heard at a time; otherwise the actor would not be able to hear his cues and the sound track during the final production would be too jumbled. Once the news casts were written I found four students willing to help and recorded each one on a standard medium close-up shot. To do this, however, I had to learn how to operate the lighting board, the teleprompter, the audio board and the switcher. I kept persuading friends and strangers alike, into the studio to show me how to do each of these things. Then I was able to record the newscasts.

After this was done, I had to dub each news cast onto a separate tape, along with other tv programs, snow (the off-air signal), and a plain black signal. A separate tape was made of just snow and black. Each of these items had to be timed down to the last second so that if all 5 tapes were started at once, everything on each tape would be synchronized and
play in the order of my original script. I did this by using one tape; the one with the news cast that was to be the most prominent. I timed all the other tapes according to this newscast. I used my script, which was already timed to the last second, including each excerpt of each newscast that was to be heard aloud in the final production. All of this pre-production work took many hours of editing, checking and re-checking to get all five tapes synchronized exactly. I ended up having to re-tape all five tapes because the sound was too loud and some of the timing was off. When I originally recorded the tapes, I lowered the sound way down on the parts of the newscast that were not supposed to be heard. My intention was to have one newscaster really loud and the other still audible, but very soft. When I finally got into the studio with and played the five tapes simultaneously, it was impossible to hear anything but loud, mumbled voices. So, I went back and re-dubbed the tapes, turning the sound all the way down on the parts that were not supposed to be heard.

The next stage was finding an actor for the part. I decided to ask Rob Fultz, a telecommunications student and someone who had given me some good ideas for the script when I first showed it to my advisor. He was happy that I asked him and was willing to put time into it. The major problem for my actor was that all of his actions had to be timed to the prerecorded tapes. It was vital that everything be exact, including the actor's movements. This problem was also the same for me, as director. When it was time to tape, I had to know exactly what was happening on each of the newscasts, because most of the camera shots were based on the timed videos.

After Rob agreed to help me, I had to figure out how I was going to get 5 monitors and 5 VCRs and enough outlets for each one. Luckily, the tcom department has televisions with a VCR attached that work as one unit. This meant that for every tv and VCR I needed, I would now only need
one piece of equipment. This made things so much easier. It also meant there was only one plug to worry about for each tv and VCR, rather than two plugs (one for each). I ended up borrowing every available monitor, VCR, and combination tv/VCR. I was able to use a total of 3 combo tv/vcr's, two from the department and one from a professor of mine. I also used two other monitors and two other VCRs from the department. Getting access to all of this equipment wasn't easy since I could not use it during the day when professors needed it for their classes. I could only use it in the evenings, which meant that I had to get the equipment out of the office before it closed at 5pm, and my advisor would have to return later that evening to let me back in the office to lock up the equipment. Setting up all the VCRs and monitors took about thirty minutes of hard work. In any case, everyone involved was extremely helpful in allowing me use of the things I needed.

Rob and I began meeting for practices. At first I just went through the script with him, shot by shot, and told him what I was looking for. After he felt comfortable with that, we got the monitors and VCRs together and he practiced while the tapes were running. It was imperative that Rob had the exact timing and cues down before we brought in the camera people and the rest of the crew, or everyone's time would be wasted. I had tremendous difficulty getting enough people to help out for the taping. I wanted to practice a couple times before we did the final shooting, but that was impossible. Several students finally agreed to help me, but only for one afternoon. So, I continued to meet with Rob and had him practice with the video taped newscasts again and again. Pretty soon his timing was perfect.

The final shoot was scheduled for Sunday March 29, from 1pm to 5pm. I had an assistant director, a technical director, three camera people, a person to do the lights, a person to do the audio, and I would be
directing. I arrived at noon, along with Joe Pacino, Rob, the lighting man, and sound man. We began constructing the set, setting lights and running sound checks. The whole crew and I spent six hours in the studio that day. There were problems with the lights, the sound, and the camera shots. Finally we were ready to tape and the first recording we did was great! There was no need to do another taping. Part of the reason for this is the ability to "isolate" each of the three cameras. This means that while there is a master tape recording the cuts and dissolves, etc., each individual camera is being recorded the entire time. Any mistakes I may have made calling the shots, or any mistakes made by anyone involved in the project, can be covered by editing in material from one of the three cameras. I finished up the afternoon by recording extra shots that I wanted, but were impossible to do during the taping due to the length of time it would take to set up each of these shots.

All that was left was editing the entire piece together. Although time consuming, this was the best part of the project, watching the entire thing come together, piece by piece, for the final product. I'm a perfectionist, so I spent a long time making sure each edit was exactly what I wanted. In addition, I had four tapes from which to work and find the "best" shot. I constantly referred to my script to remember the original order of events that I had planned, but also made some revisions using shots that worked better than those that I had already planned. My perfectionism often worked to my disadvantage. I would try out so many variations on a single shot that I would soon forget why I was even putting that shot in my video in the first place. It was very difficult to keep myself focused on the whole picture and not become wrapped up in individual shots. But, I eventually was able to start seeing the whole picture in my head as I continued to work on the project. I spent so many hours editing this together that I have every line, every movement, the
length of every shot and the upcoming shots memorized. I had several
problems, too, such as a break in my master tape halfway through the
editing so that I had to re-edit everything that I had spent hours doing.

Finally, I was ready to turn it in to Mr. Pacino to view before I
turned it in for a final grade. He told me that he liked most of it, but that
he wanted me to re-shoot some things! I was so angry and frustrated.
However, I knew he was right, and that my project would be 100% better
if I did reshoot. So I spent from 1pm on a Friday afternoon until 9:30 that
night reshooting and re-editing my thesis, again, for the third or fourth
time. The improvement was tremendous; I was no longer angry at Mr.
Pacino for making me reshoot, but very grateful that he had pushed me
those extra steps that I may not have bothered to take on my own. Mr.
Pacino readily approved my thesis after viewing it for the second time,
suggesting only that I add a title for the final touch.

The last thing I had to do to complete this project was to make a
well-drawn story board and finish the final drafts of the written
materials. I paid a fellow telecommunication student and a very talented
artist, Carl Jimenez, to draw the final draft of the storyboard.

Overall, I am very proud of my determination, my perfectionism, my
willingness to ask for help and take constructive criticism, and, of
course, the final product. My thesis is a symbol of much that I have
learned as a telecommunication student, a symbol of accomplishment, and
also a symbol of myself. The final outcome is such a far cry from the
initial stages started over Christmas break that it is very difficult to
remember or even imagine how I made it from then to now. I came very
close to quitting before I even got started. That I even started this
project is something that must be wholly accredited to my parents; they
were able to make me look at the idea piece by piece, and make me see
how I was very capable of doing each small piece, although I was
completely overwhelmed by the whole picture. Even now that my thesis is completed, the insecurities and doubts I once had are still very real to me. This was a very challenging project for me, but I completed it, overcame my doubts, and replaced my insecurities with a new feeling of confidence and pride.
ME AND EXHIBITIONS

1. NAME
2. ADDRESS
3. TELEPHONE
4. DESCRIPTION OF ITEMS
5. ADDRESS
6. TELEPHONE
7. DESCRIPTION OF ITEMS
8. NAME
9. ADDRESS
10. TELEPHONE
11. DESCRIPTION OF ITEMS
I. ...
I, [Name], hereby certify that the aforementioned statement is true to the best of my knowledge.

[Signature]

[Date]

[Title]

[Position]
AS NATION YOU
ASSISTANCE IN
PROTECTING YOURSELF
FROM THE IMMINENT THREAT.
WE HAVE RECEIVED
STABLEBAND TO
PREVENT ANY
DEATH OR DAMAGE.
SURELY, THE
RESULTS ARE
NOTicable.
WITH THIS
BULLETIN, STAY ON
MARP THE AREA.
ACTIVITY UNLIMITED.
THOSE OR "OPEN OUR
MATTER IN THE AREA.
THE LANGUAGE IN THE
AREA WILL BE FUTURE.
MERICAN COMBAT STUDENTS
IN WASHINGTON, D.C.
WILL BE AN IMPORTANT
SOURCE OF INFORMATION.
BEING VITAL TO US.
THE PRESCOUNT HAS NOT BEEN ADDED TO PRESCOUNT-THE ERECT NATURE OF THE EXPLOSION IS SUSPECT.

SO THE COUMBER OF THE PERSONS IN THE WAVE AT THE PLACE IS POSSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC. I ASK THE PUBLIC TO BE EXCITED NICE.

WAVE AS NOT SUSPECTED TO BE DENSELY REPORTED FROM WASHINGTON. I NOT GIVE DETAILS OF THE LOCATION OF REPORTS OR THE BETTER. GIVEN THAT THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT

AND ALSO NOT OF THE WAVE.

THE GOVERNMENT AS OF THE OFFICIALS AT THE WAVE, AND BY OFFICIALS. ALL PERSONS AFFECTED ARE

HELD THE PUBLIC HARMLESS.

AS IT IS.
AING MANUFACTURING
WORLD POWER IN OVERBOARD
MISADVENTURE DISCOVERY.
WHITE HUNTERS CHASING AN
ANCIENT HUNTER.
REVEALING THE PAST.

AMERICAN INDIANS HAVE
NEVER SEEN THEIR HERITAGE
IN THEIR TRUE FORM.
THE FINEST SHAMANS HAD
THEIR PREHISTORIC ANCESTORS.

AND ONCE SEEN, \CANNOT
BE FORGOTTEN.

WE ARE NOT IN A
PAUSE TO PROTEST TO
POOR ORIAGIN ARE THE
TRUE ORIGINS,
IN A HOLY BOOK.
BETWEEN THE KINGS.
REALITY IS NOT A
REMEDY FOR LIVING.
WITNESS THE STORY OF THE
CITY OF BABEL IN THE
PLANNET TELLING.

THE STORY TELLS US
FALSE AND TRUE.

FALSE AND TRUE.

THE STORY TELLS US
FALSE AND TRUE.
FURTHERMORE, THE EXPLOSIONS
INCURRED AT WASHINGTON
HARBOUR, THE FOURTH
OF JULY, FOURTEEN
AGREED DEFINITELY ON TRYING
TO RESIST THE
INCREASED TENSIONS AS WELL.
WITHIN THE SEAPORT, A NEW
NIGHT HAS RISEN.
DISCOVERED THAT THE
NIGHT IS COMING AT THE
END. TOWHEE'S HAD BEEN
MADE, SUGGESTING THAT THE
NIGHT'S BEGUN IN
PROTEST FROM A SMALLER
COUNTRY AS IN THE
SAME WAY AS IF THE COUNTRY
WAS THE ONE WIELDING AS
A GIFT FOR SOUTHERN ON
A TREATY, THE DOG SAW
HAFBRAIN EXPLODED IN
HORIZON, THE POSSIBLE
WAYS OF SUCH A GIFT
HAVE NOT BEEN LEFT
ON WHICH THE-
BOMBS. ... THE BOMB WAS NOT
PLACED IN A ROOM WHERE
BOMB WAS ADDED. WHEN
THE BOMB WAS SET.

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THE BOMB WAS SET.
RAS ORTHOL THE SEAT
IN THE SOUTH, FEBRUARY 6
ANNUAL RIVALS ARE
STILL NOT CARRIED IN THE TWO
MIDSTERN SYSTEMS IN THE
TWO AND WIDE ORBITATIONS.
ON THE BRIGHT CREST OF
THE RIVER IN THE FIELDS;
ON THE BUILDINGS OF THE
WOMEN'S - AND THE ENAM "ORCHESTRA" OF
THE SUBURBIA, WITH
THE PEOPLE ARE THE
BEARINGS, DRIVING, THAT
SEPARATE THE SOUTH
FROM THE BRIGHTERS.
ONE OF THE FIRST OF
THE SEAT, THEY ARE
HEAVEN: THE ARRIVING;
MAN VERSUS LANGUAGE.
AND THE
SEPARATE JOURNEYS OF THE
WORLD OF OUR OWN
BEING IN RIVALS IN THE
WORLD OF OUR OWN
THAT FOR THE FUTURE THE
WEATHER IS VARIOUS
BECAUSE OF REASONS IN
THE VAST EARTH.
THE UNIVERSE INTO WHICH MISSIONARY CAPTAIN SIR ROBERT FLETCHER WAS BORN, TO PREVENT THE LOSS OF LIFE AND PROPERTY, THE FOLLOWING ORDER HAS BEEN ISSUED:

1. All persons are requested to leave the area immediately.
2. Keep all doors and windows closed.
3. Do not use elevators.
4. Proceed to the nearest shelter.

Please do not attempt to return to the building.
PERSONAL ITEMS, INCLUDING CANNED FOOD AND TOILETRIES, TO OTHER TEAMS WILL BE
ALLOWED IN THE FIRST SIX WEEKS If I'M AWAY FOR MY
MISSING COTTON AREA, THEY ARE
MISSING IN 72 PERCENT.
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