FOUR AT THE BALL REVISITED

An Honors Thesis

by

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[Advisor's signature]

Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana

August, 1986

Expected Date of Graduation: Summer, 1986
So, why did I do a television project for my honors project anyway? I'm not involved with television; I'm not planning on making a career out of it. My primary emphasis in my college career has been radio and audio production. I worked at WBST-FM for nearly three years, including summers, and am now on an internship at September Recording, a studio in Indianapolis. I've always been fascinated with music and the radio and television rarely held much interest for me beyond the consumer level. Professionals say that to succeed in the business of radio, you have to love it. There has to be more than money in a career for a prospective radio person because chances are he or she won't make much. Well, that's all right with me. I love radio and I can do without much money. I haven't really felt comfortable working with television. Keeping a succession of moving visuals organized seems rather difficult to me, and I have great respect for people who do it well. For my honors thesis, all roads seem to point toward some sort of radio or audio production as a creative project. So, why did I choose my least favorite telecommunications medium for such an important project?

THE IDEA

I began seriously thinking about what I might do for an honors thesis in September of 1984, near the beginning of my junior year at Ball State. I had been working at WBST the previous summer in their production room doing simple things like promotional announcements for programs and the like. Now I felt that I was ready for something tougher, more challenging.
For some time I had been interested in radio drama, a largely forgotten medium since the advent of television. So much can be done on radio with little expense. A good producer can create an entire world on radio with excellent writing, a few sound effects, and some good talent. I felt that all of this was available at Ball State, and I dared to call myself a good producer. WBST was also interested in such a home grown project, and Program Manager Bruce Haines said that the production room would be available for my use. However, I wasn't sure if I wanted to hang an important project like my honors thesis on something I had never done before. So, knowing that I had a little under two years to do my thesis, I decided to put off making the decision, and tried a radio drama just as an extracurricular project.

I also had an idea to do a radio documentary program. An opportunity to do this presented itself in my Telecommunications 315 Audio Production course with Dr. Alan Richardson during Fall Quarter, 1984. All of the assignments that he had planned for the course I could already do. There was no challenge, and I felt that I was wasting my time. After finding out that I could not test out of the course four weeks into the quarter, I approached him with the idea of a special project. The project was a one-hour documentary on the Student Association, the student government organization at Ball State. It was produced utilizing the facilities of WBST, who were mildly interested in the project's outcome. The documentary was split into two
half-hour shows, since I felt that a full hour on the Student Association would be quite boring. As it turned out, two half hours on the Student Association were quite boring. I was not satisfied with it, and Dr. Richardson gave me a B; WBST did not air it, and I quickly shelved any idea of doing a radio documentary for my honors thesis.

Meanwhile, the radio drama idea never really came together either. A friend of mine who was a student in the Theater Department said he was interested, but we never settled on a project. A couple weeks into Winter Quarter, before Christmas Break, I was sitting at lunch in Carmichael Dining Service when I was approached by Lauri Voyek, another telecommunications (TCOM) major and honors college student that I had known for over a year now. She told me of a sorority sister of hers who lived in Schmidt Hall, Jessica Jenne, who also was an honors student preparing a thesis/project in dance. She was choreographing a piece of music (a portion of George Gershwin's *An American In Paris*) and was going to get a group of dancers together to perform it in Fort Wayne at the end of March. Then Lauri gathered sufficient courage to ask me what she had been holding back during our conversation. Jessica knew that Lauri was in TCOM and had asked her to film the performance. Lauri was in much the same position as I, not knowing what to do for an honors thesis. Her emphasis in TCOM was not in production, but rather in sales and management, and she was also taking courses in Marketing. She saw Jessica's idea as a golden
opportunity to escape the honors project dilemma and they dis-
cussed the possibility of an entire documentary on the dance
including the performance. Since film is so expensive to work
with, Lauri said that such a project would be more feasible if
it were videotaped instead. At a lunch table in Carmichael Hall
Dining Service, she presented the idea of a combined honors
project to me . . . and waited.

I told her I'd think about it. A television project? Me? However, such a project would get me out of my own honors
thesis dilemma. For one reason or another, I wasn't able to
give the idea much thought. About a week later, Lauri needed
her answer. I nonchalantly answered something on the order of,
"Sure, why not?" and then had two weeks of Christmas Break to
think about what I had just done to myself.

Again thoughts crept into my head while I was home as to
why I was doing a television project. I was considering my
options. I could go ahead and do it, and if I didn't like it, I
could just say that I helped Lauri on her thesis and then do
something else. I could also back out altogether, but that
would not make Lauri very happy. At this point I had known her
for about a year and a half. During that time we lead parallel
academic lives. We went through the Honors Humanities Sequence
together, had gone through the same beginning level TCOM
courses, and that Winter Quarter were in yet another TCOM course
together, TCOM 316 Video Production. She and I had worked on
several projects together during this time in these TCOM courses
and had fostered an excellent working relationship as well as a
good friendship. I knew that we could work well on this project together. There really wasn't a problem with that. I was very much unsure, however, of my abilities in the area of television, especially shooting with a little mini-cam. My fears, as it turned out, were not entirely unjustified.

When school resumed in January, Lauri and I didn't talk about the project much. We knew that we wanted to talk with Dr. C. Warren Vander Hill, who was at that time Director of the Honors College, to see if he thought the project worth pursuing. We couldn't agree on a time, however, and Lauri went to see Dr. Vander Hill by herself on January 30, 1985. At first, he was rather skeptical of the project, questioning its scholarly merit. Lauri, as I mentioned before, was in training to be a salesperson and did just that; sold Dr. Vander Hill on the project. She explained that it would be a challenge for the two of us related to our field of study. She also referred to his own experience in the making of a documentary, for Dr. Vander Hill had been heavily involved in the making of the famous "Middletown" series on Muncie for PBS. Eventually, he grew to accept the project and even became somewhat enthusiastic about it once Lauri was finished. He said that he would be very interested in the finished product and was willing to help us in any way he could.

Great. Suddenly, we found ourselves somewhat committed to the project. We selected our advisors: Lauri was going to work with Dr. Wes Gehring, and I chose to work with Dr. Richardson. I felt that since he saw me through one documentary, he
could probably help me through with another. A few days later we received some good news. We were beginning to panic because the performance was going to be at the end of March, less than two months away, and we hadn't even made any basic decisions about how to approach the project, let alone shot any footage or even touched a camera. However, on February 4, Jessica informed Lauri that the performance was not going to be in March, but rather the first week of May. Also, it wasn't going to be in Fort Wayne, but here in Muncie in the Ball State Theater. Naturally, this made our job much easier, and we were able to relax a little. For the last few weeks of Winter Quarter, Lauri and I spent our time finishing up our classes, putting the honors project on the back burner.

THE SHOOT

Once Spring Quarter began, the project began to pick up in intensity. On Wednesday, March 13, Lauri found out that the first rehearsals were to begin the following Friday. However, we weren't able to get equipment on such short notice to tape this one. It was not the last time that Jessica informed us too late about something that was going on. On March 18, Lauri and I decided on a regular meeting time to discuss developments in the project, Tuesday evenings at 8:00. We also decided that we were going to split our roles in the project. Lauri was going to be the "creative" person, dealing with shots and locations as we were shooting. She was also to act as a liason of sorts between the two of us and the group of dancers. My end was going to be more "technical," dealing with the actual operation
of the camera and problems with sound. (As soon as we began taping, we discovered that we tended to overlap our jobs because we felt that we were not doing enough and that the other was doing too much.) Also, another TCOM major, Tom Snyder, was working on his honors project, one similar to ours except that it dealt with the Theater Department. He was somewhat more experienced at television production than Lauri and I were, and was to become a valuable resource for us. At our meeting, Lauri told me of some advice he had already given. He said that we should try to use the same camera throughout the production. Minor differences in the internal systems of cameras, even those of the same make and model but especially those that are different, may cause shifts in color reproduction. These color shifts will affect the final production when shots of roughly the same scene from two different cameras are run back-to-back.

On the morning of Thursday, March 21, Dr. Richardson showed me how to set up a Panasonic 3400 camera. One of the crucial procedures in the set-up of one of these mini-cameras is the white balance. This adjustment must be made every time the camera is turned off or when lighting conditions change drastically or else colors will not appear on television as they seem in real life. First, one holds a flat white object (such as a sheet of paper or even a T-shirt) under the light in question. Next, he trains the camera on the white object until the viewfinder is filled with white. Turning the white balance control on will cause the camera to adjust its color sensing circuitry for this as white and thereby adjusts itself for all
other colors in the spectrum as well. Setting the camera up was pretty simple. The parts were manufactured in such a way that if one just poked and prodded long enough, it would go together eventually.

That evening, Lauri and I tried our first bit of taping. We wanted to do an impromptu interview with Jessica in Lauri's room in Botsford Hall. In checking out the equipment, I discovered that I was getting video on playback, but no audio. Our troubles had already begun and this was our first shoot. Lauri and I were both quite irritated at this point. I quickly called Dr. Richardson to see if something was wrong. He said that everything was set up correctly as far as he could tell from what I told him. Lauri and I decided not to do the interview because we didn't want to waste time for something that might not work out. We could do the interview later and still have the answers to our questions be spontaneous. However, the meeting was fruitful. I had yet to meet Jessica so we just used the occasion for introductions, information, and a little small talk. I have met few people more cheerful and fun than Jessica Jenne. She's also quite attractive, but, of course, she is a dancer.

Have you ever had one of those problems where you think something terribly important is wrong or broken and then you find out too late that the problem was just a little part that costs about a buck? Such was the case on the evening of March 21. When we brought the equipment back to University Media Services the next day, we played the tape and sure enough, we
heard audio. There was no problem with the recorder or the microphone. The earplug that came with the camera package was faulty.

That afternoon (3/22) we taped their fourth rehearsal. The rehearsal was scheduled for 3:00, so we sequestered Jessica in a classroom in the Music Building at 2:00 and interviewed her. I started the camera before Lauri and Jessica were ready and the tape begins with small talk concerning Mugley's and boyfriends. We talked to her about her conception of the dance: Why she chose the piece of music that she did, and if there was any "message" in this dance. Jessica sat on a piano bench next to a piano. Unfortunately, we had her sitting in front of windows and the microphone picked up some noise from the street outside. Also, light coming in the windows even through curtains offset the iris of the camera and Jessica in her purple outfit came out looking a little dark.

During the interview, Lauri brought up the point that later turned into a problem for us. She asked whether or not we should shoot her asking a question to be edited into the interview later. She was concerned about Jessica "talking to a wall" and wanted to rectify that problem. I've never been a big fan of those shots. Since I know how they are done, they always look so phoney to me. I told her that we might do something with her idea later. We never really shot it, and when Dr. Richardson critiqued the production in January, 1986, it was one of the points he brought up. I may not like the shot, but it seems to be an unfortunate necessity. In the final production,
Lauri was nothing but a disembodied voice.

Next on our agenda that day was taping their fourth rehearsal. They were having rehearsals at times other than when we could attend. However, these Friday afternoon rehearsals gave us a good indication of where they were and how their production was going. We set up the camera on a tripod in an unobtrusive corner of the room. As far as we could tell, the dancers did not seem to care about the camera being in the room. One of the dancers Lauri and I both knew. Mike Nelaboridge, who was Jessica's partner in the dance, lived in Swinford Hall where I lived, though we didn't really know each other. He had been involved in dance and theater for some time and was a very entertaining person. Beth Kennedy and John Truax we had never seen before. Beth didn't seem terribly easy to get along with but was very talented. Her enthusiasm seemed inconsistent; sometimes she would be very excited about something and at other times she seemed to act bored or irritated. One of her peeves at times was John, who was very talented in modern dance but not in ballet, which was the style of dance required for this piece. Eventually, he learned what he needed to know.

From our first angle, the right side of the room and toward the front, following Beth's and John's movements was easy and we tried tighter shots and close-ups on these two as they ironed out their parts. However, viewing Jessica and Mike was not as easy; we couldn't get a full shot. So we tended to follow Beth and John around. After about eleven minutes, we changed position from the front to the rear of the rehearsal
floor but still on the right side. We were operating off of A.C. power at the time, so we had to unplug from the wall to move. Lauri dodged dancers as she moved onto the floor for white balance and then we were ready to go again. At this angle, we quickly discovered the full-length mirrors on the front wall and tried to use them to great aesthetic effect. In the final production, we don't use this shot as much as we thought we would at the time but there is a taste of it.

The next Friday (3/29) there was no rehearsal. The next Monday (4/1), Lauri and I viewed the footage we shot from their fourth rehearsal more than a week before. There were some problems. One of the more drastic problems involved the flourescent lights in the ceiling of the rehearsal studio. On tape, they had this unreal "fire" effect; all that light caused a "video overload." Dr. Richardson suspects that we were not properly white balanced. Not all flourescent tubes are the same color. Also, the iris was open too wide which only added to the effect. The other problem was the room acoustics. We recorded audio from a condenser microphone mounted on the camera. It picked up the voices of the dancers fine except that recording levels were low. However, when they were playing music during the rehearsal the sound was very muffled due to the fact that the microphone was picking up reverberation off the opposing wall rather than directly from their stereo, and even when the microphone was pointed in the direction of the stereo, the sound was still poor. The stereo was also usually far out of range of the microphone's pick-up pattern.
Later that afternoon, when we were returning equipment following the rehearsal, we heard about a piece of equipment that was to have a profound effect on our production. University Media Services, the equipment check-out and maintenance arm of the Telecommunications Department, had just purchased a Panasonic 3500 portable switcher package. A video switcher is what a studio uses to change between shots of different cameras in a live situation. It also can generate effects such as dissolves, fades, wipes, and so on. Well, this new one was a portable version which was not much larger than a personal computer keyboard. It came with two cameras and other accessories. There was some question at the time as to whether or not students would be allowed to use the package, but Lauri and I found out that Tom Snyder was going to use it for his production, and we decided to look into getting it for ours.

The next practice we were able to tape was a noon practice on the next Thursday (4/4). Lauri was unable to attend due to a class conflict. During this practice, I tried not using the tripod and working with the camera handheld. The video turned out to be a little shaky, but I was somewhat more flexible in my personal movement. Also, I freed myself from the electrical cord (and having to white balance every time I wanted a new angle) by using a battery instead. Now I was able to walk anywhere I wanted to as long as I wasn't in the way. This rehearsal is marked by shifting around several times. During this one, I tried to solve the problem of the "fiery lights" by keeping them above the frame of the picture. On post-inspection
Lauri and I both noticed that there was a lot of floor in the foreground.

There was no practice the next day (4/5), because it was Easter Weekend. On Wednesday (4/10), the group had a practice in the basement of Schmidt Hall but no equipment was available for us to tape it. Once again, they had one of many practices we were forced to miss due to time constraints or lack of equipment, usually due to short advance notice. Two days later on Friday, April 12, Lauri and I took a camera into the Mainstage Theater on campus where the dance would be performed. In my years at Ball State, I had never been in the theater before. We were trying to decide where cameras could go in the theater. There was no way to help taking up several chairs in the back for the camera. Also, we thought that cameras in the side doors would work well. At the time, we were still expecting to be shooting in a crowded place, the actual performance. All in all shooting would be difficult but seemed possible. If we were able to secure the portable switcher, it would be in the orchestra pit.

That afternoon was their next rehearsal as usual at 3:00. During this rehearsal, Lauri handled the camera for the first time. She was a little shaky and a little out of focus at first but she caught on eventually. Her ability was valuable later on when she was able to catch some important rehearsals that I wasn't able to. Once again we were sharing our jobs as she entered the technical aspect. Another way to alleviate the light problem was tried at this rehearsal. We began standing on
chairs and also on a grand piano in the room while we taped. Indeed, one of the funniest parts in all our taping was when we are discussing the piano. The video is of the dancers getting ready to work on a new part of the dance. The audio is Lauri and I talking with background room noise. We didn't know the recorder was running. The dialogue goes something like this:

JOHN : Oh, I don't know.
LAURI : (Garbled)

JOHN : All right. You do it then. Move the thing over and put it in a position where it's comfortable for you.

LAURI : (Garbled. Sounds like, "I'm not though.")

JOHN : What?
LAURI : (Worried) I'd rather not do this.
JOHN : I'll do it.
LAURI : Do you think you're -- how much do you weigh?

JOHN : (Agitated) Not a whole lot more than you. (Then realizing what I've just said) I mean, not so much that it's going to matter to a wooden piano.

LAURI : (Concerned) Okay.
JOHN : Of course, we'll find out.

NOISE. VIDEO BEGINS TO SHAKE AS I START GETTING ON THE PIANO.

JOHN : (Irritated) It's okay, Lauri, just take it easy.
LAURI : (Feigned cheerful) Oh, yeah, I know, I know.

THE CAMERA SWINGS OFF THE SCENE AND NOW POINTS AT A WALL.

JOHN : It's still recording isn't it. That'll look interesting.

LAURI : Is it really?
JOHN : Yes, it is.
LAURI : Hi, Mom.
And the dancers started again and it was back to the business at hand. With a tripod on the piano, it was actually a rather effective angle. On certain shots, however, we seemed a little far away from the action. During the later stages of this rehearsal, the dancers began interacting with the camera, all of which we'd have to make sure we did not use. At one point in the rehearsal, when Lauri did decide to risk the piano, someone said that I would replace John Truax if he was injured when he and Beth did a jump known in the group as "Beth's Flying Fish."

Another shot we wanted to get was a shot of the group as if they were in a team meeting. This was the first rehearsal where we tried to capture them in such a shot right at the end of the rehearsal.

The next day (4/13), Tom Snyder ran his production with the theater group he had been working with. He used the new portable video switcher and Lauri was there to watch. She said it worked very well and wanted it for our production. It seemed a lot easier to use than it had when we first heard of it.

On Tuesday of the following week (4/16), Jessica had scheduled a practice with just her and Mike in the basement of Schmidt Hall. Just before this practice, Lauri interviewed Jessica for the second time. We talked to her about their progress made so far. Lauri asked her about some remarks that Kay Knight (Jessica's adviser) had made about "meaning" in this dance which Jessica has always regarded as being more fun than meaningful. Lauri also asked her what her biggest problem had been so far. Jessica also revealed the name of the performance,
namely Four At The BALL, meaning four dancers at a dance ball, but also at Ball State. During the interview, we had a problem with acoustics. There was a noisy ventilator in the room. Also, the walls were standard painted cinder blocks, causing a rather tinny sound with an echo from the far wall, even with a directional microphone. Visually, the camera work was a little suspect because I was trying to give Lauri her "establishing" shot but I never made a smooth transition from the two of them to just Jessica. Also, the two of them were dressed in bright colors but sitting in blue chairs against a blue wall under fluorescent lighting which created a very one-dimensional effect not conducive to good television. The end of the interview was funny. I never knew if they were going to say anything else important at the end of an interview, so I always let the tape keep rolling. This time they started talking about cheese popcorn, and Lauri gave us a demonstration of how to get it out of your teeth.

From there we moved to Jessica working out some choreography waiting for Mike to show up. The light in the Schmidt basement is very inconsistent. I knew someone over in Swinford who was making a film with a Quartz-halogen lighting package, and I was going to borrow them. However, he didn't get finished in time and when I returned to Schmidt, Mike didn't show up anyway. It turned out that rehearsals for Kiss Me Kate ran long that evening. With just some footage of Jessica working out steps, Lauri and I packed up and went home.

On Thursday (4/18), we reserved the portable switcher for
Friday, May 3. We had been so impressed with what it did for Tom Snyder's production that we had to try it for ours. May 3 was a Friday and would be the first actual performance of the piece before a large crowd of people. We also looked at our footage from the previous week. Our handheld camerawork was unsteady in spots but overall not bad. At 12:00, I went into another rehearsal with the group. By this time, rehearsals had become very routine with nothing exciting going on technically, but visually we were watching the dancers getting better and better, and more comfortable with their performance.

The next day (4/19), Lauri conducted an interview with Jessica's adviser, Kay Knight. They talked about who approached whom for the project, Jessica's abilities as a choreographer, and how and when Kay was going to critique the piece. Again, I still hadn't figured out how to run the camera for an interview; the transitions were very uneven. Visually, we had a problem with Mrs. Knight's hair. It's very light-colored and the top of it came out very bright in contrast to the rest of her hair and clothing, and the background. It was not quite the "fire" effect but did look unbalanced. Also, Mrs. Knight's voice is very soft and sometimes lost in the inevitable background noises of their rehearsal studio. We learned a lot though from the standpoint of the advisor, what she expected from this project. She also complimented us for being a part of this project and hoped for many such collaborations in the future.

At the beginning of the rehearsal, we had some good footage of Jessica and Beth trying on their costumes. Then the group and Lauri discussed careers in dancing and how little
money dancers make as dancers as compared to teaching where they earn more. Then Beth and John were working out some steps with Beth in costume to make sure that the flowing skirt wouldn't get in the way. Mike was late. When he finally made it to the studio, he "flashed" the camera by ripping off his shirt. As Lauri would say, it was hysterical. This rehearsal was covered much as the previous ones had been. We tried to make use of the mirrors more in this one because the mirrors are so important to their practice. The first part of the rehearsal they tried running through the performance as far as they knew it. They went all the way to the end of Beth's solo. What amazes me is that their dancing is hard work but it looks so effortless. It flows so well that it doesn't look like it takes any energy. It does though. Beth was so tired after her solo that she collapsed into a heap on the floor. When Lauri and I logged this material in October, we wrote in our notes, "Beth dies." This footage is in the final production, approximately 10-15 minutes in.

During this rehearsal we again tried for a teamwork shot. This is the one where the four of them are looking over the note pad, seen at the beginning of the documentary immediately after the opening. Unfortunately, much of the footage that went with the problem they were working out resulted in a lot of unfocused material due to their movements. We were very tight on them because we were up against the mirrors.

The following Tuesday (4/23) Lauri and I met to discuss the performance and how we were going to handle it. We decided
to ask Doug Barnhill and Michelle Mason to operate the cameras while I worked with the switcher in the orchestra pit. Meanwhile, Lauri would have a third camera getting backstage footage. One disagreement we had was how we were going to handle the sound. I was an advocate of a direct line from the theater's audio console to our switcher (which came equipped with a small sound mixer) for the best sound quality on the music. Lauri, on the other hand, wanted "real sound," with crowd noise and so forth; she wanted to erect a microphone near one of the speakers to catch both the music and applause at the same time. Even though I tried to tell her that the sound quality of the music would be reduced and that the balance between the music and audience response would be wrong, I acquiesced and we decided to use the microphone approach.

On Friday (4/26) we interviewed the four dancers together in a group in the same classroom that we first interviewed Jessica in. This time we made sure that the light from the windows was behind the camera and shining on the subject. This interview occurred only one week before the performance so we asked them how far along they were. Jessica informed us that she had to finish the part of the dance where she and Mike dance together. Then we asked each dancer how they felt about their part in the dance, and how dancing was going to earn them a living. The conversation really moved itself along without much prodding from Lauri. Unfortunately, framing the group in the viewfinder was not easy. I could not get far enough back to get the five of them in the shot at once, so Lauri, aside from being
a disembodied voice, was also a pair of disembodied hands. Also, my camerawork was not up to standard especially changing from one person to the next. One of the problems is that the tripod was rather stubborn that day, and I could not adjust it so that I was comfortable with it. Therefore, the video is rather jerky due to bad camera movement. Eventually, I just stopped moving the camera.

At the rehearsal, we were able to get some excellent shots of the people warming up. In the opening of our final production, the shots of Michael stretching and Jessica and Beth putting on toe shoes were taken from this rehearsal. For some time, Lauri and I had been wanting to get a picture of either Jessica or Beth stepping in a rosin box in a corner of the studio with their toe shoes on. They did it quite often, especially at the beginning of a rehearsal, and we wanted to use it for our opening shots in the documentary. We should have just asked one of them to do it, but we never did. Instead we always hoped that one of them would do it and we would catch them at it. During their warm-ups for this rehearsal we had our chance. Beth walked over toward it and I followed her with the camera. As she began to step in, on the tape you can hear Lauri almost shouting, "Go! Go!" I tried to zoom in to her feet only to have someone else walk through the shot and then I misfocused the camera. It was over immediately after that as Beth stepped out and we had missed the shot again.

During the rehearsal, they tried running through the entire dance. However, Jessica still had some holes in it.
Also, Beth was having pain in one of her knees. The dance did look like it was going to be very good. They had one week to get it completely together. My handheld camerawork seemed decidedly steadier than it had been two weeks earlier. They ran through it again and this time Kay watched it for a critique. Lauri handled the camera for this one and did a very commendable job. By this time I feel that we both had become quite proficient with the basic operations of the camera. During Kay's critique, where there was not much motion as Kay talked to the group, Lauri was a little shaky. However, the critique was very important, and we wanted to include some of it in the final production. When we edited the program, we covered up shaky parts with other video pertaining to what she was talking about.

The next week was going to be very hectic. The group was still trying to clean up the piece. The schedule for that week looked like this:

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<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>5/1</td>
<td>6:30pm</td>
<td>Technical Rehearsal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>5/2</td>
<td>8:00pm</td>
<td>Dress Rehearsal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>5/3</td>
<td>8:00pm</td>
<td>Performance</td>
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</tbody>
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Scheduled around these times were more rehearsals, and Lauri and I decided to catch as many as possible. On Wednesday, we needed camera gear after 5:00 when University Media Services closed. We checked it out ahead of time and stored it in fellow student Kim Critchfield's office adjacent to the main School of Music office in the Music Building. Lauri picked it up there and attended the Technical Rehearsal. At this rehearsal, problems with lighting were worked out and the dance was put on the theater stage for the first time. Before the rehearsal, Mike
and Jessica were in the rehearsal studio working out their part again because it still wasn't complete. Lauri was there as they put the waltz together, a sequence that came fairly early in the performance and eventually turned out very well. In the background of the shots other people in other performances were putting on costumes for that evening's rehearsal. Once they all moved out, Jessica and Mike began having too much fun, getting to be far too giggly, even causing Lauri to laugh and wobble the camera. Later Jessica worked just on her solo. From there they moved to the technical rehearsal.

At the technical rehearsal, we found out that we had a severe lighting problem. For some time, we had been telling them that we needed a lot of light to get our cameras to work. That evening, we proved it to them. They set up a stylistic low light plan for the beginning of the dance, and the dancers weren't much more than four black blobs on the screen. Even after the lights came up, a large portion of the stage was still very dark. The dancers often moved into the shadows where they were all but lost. Lauri taped the entire performance to show Jessica what the lighting looked like, as well as letting Jessica see the quality of her performance. It turned out that the lighting wasn't very good for the dance either. On the audio track you can hear Jessica telling her fellow performers to move into the light. Eventually, Greg Miller, the lighting director for the whole show, told her that he would try to get more light on the stage. Lauri and I decided that even the added light that he was talking about would not be enough and
Lauri discussed it with the group the next day.

Our options seemed to be: 1) Tape the dance with full light earlier in the afternoon ahead of the actual performance for the audience, or 2) Tape the dress rehearsal in full light. The dancers said they could not do two performances in one evening. They said the second performance would suffer because they may forget sequence in the dance by feeling that, "I've already done this part." When I heard this I thought that it didn't sound like they had much confidence in their own abilities but they all agreed that this would happen. So, we decided to tape the dress rehearsal in full light which didn't exactly make them happy either, especially Beth.

This decision was reached on Thursday (5/2) and I was just getting ready to attend my last meeting of the University Senate that afternoon in room M-2 in Teachers College. Lauri came by and informed me of the decision and said that we had to start setting up in the afternoon since the performance was to be that evening. Lauri had scurried around getting equipment arranged for us to use. The switcher was not available that evening, so Dr. Richardson suggested a three-camera shoot that would be edited together later. Also, Doug Barnhill and Michelle Mason, who would have been available if we had shot on Friday evening, were not available for Thursday, so Lauri drafted Veda Bachmann to run the middle camera. However, when Jessica's group came on stage, the lights didn't come up. Greg Miller had forgotten to change the lighting plan and the lights started at the same semi-dark level they had the night before.
We taped the whole performance, and even though Greg brought the lights up full, we still could not use it with the beginning lost. There were a number of other problems as well, the audio was bad since we used Lauri's microphone idea for the sound. Being responsible for the technical component of our program, I should have overruled her on this point, but in the interests of partnership harmony, I decided against that action. Also, the audience was allowed to take flash pictures at the dress rehearsal. On the tape, every now and then there is a big flash of light on one frame. Once again, we had a problem that was not conducive to good television. We had to tell the group of the problem and ask them to do it for us again. Jessica said that that would be a good idea since she didn't like their performance anyway.

The next day (5/3) was the first performance of the piece before a regular audience. When the day was over, it seemed a "day of infamy" for this project had occurred on May 3. Even though we couldn't tape that performance we wanted to show them preparing for it anyway. We didn't use a tripod at all; the shooting was all handheld. There wasn't a whole lot of light in the dressing rooms but we shot some decent footage anyway. Lauri was in the dressing room where the girls were getting ready. I took the camera into another dressing room to catch Mike getting himself together. All the dancers were fairly nervous, and tried to hide it with lots of small talk. Once out of the dressing rooms, I handled the camera. I caught them stretching in the stairways and other passageways around the
stage. While he was alone, I tried to get Mike to talk about the performance a little. He said that he was more nervous about this piece because a bad performance reflects on Jessica just as much if not more than on himself and he didn't want to have a bad effect on her thesis. I followed the dancers around as best I could. In deference to the first set of performers that evening, they were talking too softly to be heard clearly so most of the audio is very quiet. The video is rather interesting; it's a little dark but quite informative as to what goes on in the mind of a stage performer immediately before a performance. (We included some of it in the final production.) Our problems were about to begin.

The dance was performed very well. Jessica was so pleased. All four of them were very excited as they walked downstairs to the dressing rooms. I caught some good footage of them leaving backstage and I wanted more. I was caught up in the crowd following them and was moving rather quickly. This was not good, running down stairs that have been walked on by countless rosin-laden dancers' feet in one evening. As I was rounding the stairs, I slipped and fell. Once I hit the ground, the videotape recorder hit the landing with a resounding crack, and I fought to keep the camera from doing the same. As I sat there, someone said, "Is it all right?" I said, "I don't know." The power switch said the machine was on, but there was no power in it whatsoever. I couldn't move the tape; I couldn't get it out of the machine either. I slowly proceeded down the rest of the stairs and into a classroom under the stage adjacent
to the dressing rooms. I sat next to a wall trying to get the machine going again. Finally, I just stopped, realizing that I had broken several hundred dollars worth of videotape recorder. And since there was no power in the recorder, I had no idea what condition the camera was in either. Lauri met me down there and I told her what happened. We weren't going to get any more footage that night.

Lauri and I cautiously entered University Media Services the next day (Saturday, 5/4) and presented the package to Dan Lutz, who checked us in that morning. He told us the repair bill may be about $300.00, which didn't surprise us too much. I was still too numb to be surprised. On Monday, Lauri made arrangements with the dancers to tape the performance under full light the following Wednesday. The lights in the theater were supposed to be removed for the summer after Sunday's show (a second performance by the ballet company including Jessica's dance), however, they agreed to leave them up until we were finished. Wednesday afternoon was the last possible chance we had because John Truax was leaving town that evening. We would tape Wednesday at 4:00pm.

On Tuesday (5/7), Lauri went into Media Services to arrange equipment for Wednesday and learn of our fate from Saturday. The repair turned out to be fairly minor, just the adjustment of an automatic shock guard in the machine, and Lauri and I were charged nothing. We were also able to reserve the portable switcher and all the equipment that we needed for that. We were coming up from what seemed to be the low point of the
project to the high point.

We began setting up in the Mainstage Theater at 3:00 in the afternoon of Wednesday, May 8. All of the gels were taken off the lights so that their colors would not affect the cameras. We decided to take a line output from the theater's audio console into our tape machine rather than using a microphone since there was no audience. After solving an impedance mismatch with an in-line transformer we were set. We had one camera locked in place in the middle of the theater with a full wide shot of the stage, while Lauri manned a camera off to the left side of the seats to follow the dancers. We didn't use a "shot sheet" to plan ahead our visuals; instead we just went into the dance on a hope and a prayer that it would turn out okay. Fortunately, the dancers rehearsed once through beforehand while a friend of Jessica's took some photos. That gave us invaluable practice time. Then they went into the dance "full out." Working the switcher was fairly easy. During their brief practice, I tried dissolves and found them satisfactory. I didn't think that wipes would look good from an aesthetic viewpoint, and the few cuts that I tried didn't look good either, so I decided that the whole performance would be one dissolve after another. As the dancers began, I noticed one problem immediately but did not correct it; the center camera was not centered on the dancers even though it appeared to be centered on the stage. The dancers were a little off-center to the right. Lauri's camerawork was exceptional for not really having any idea what to get. When the shot from our stationary
camera didn't look right, I could count on her to have a good shot from her angle. This was good because I had absolutely no idea what her shots looked like before I put her camera on. Most switchers have a preview line so that you can see what a shot looks like before you put it on. Not this little portable one though; I consider it a design flaw. Once we were finished, Jessica seemed satisfied with the performance and so did Lauri and I. We really had no choice since John was leaving that evening. After turning in the equipment the next day, Lauri and I left this project hanging in the air until the summer so that we could catch up on all the work we were deferring for this project.

THE EDITING

That summer, I was going to be taking classes at Ball State and would be living on campus. Over break, Lauri and I decided that we would try to edit the project on Saturday afternoons in University Media Services. When she arrived on June 22 with her fiance Eddie Dick in tow, we found that editors would be largely unavailable that summer because they were in use either by University Media Services or other students. We decided to put the project off until Fall Quarter began.

Our senior year began in September and on the 9th of that month, Jessica told Lauri that the Fort Wayne Ballet Theater wanted to see our tape of the performance and may use it for promotional purposes. We said we'd give them a copy through Jessica. Classes started on the 10th and Lauri and I found ourselves in Telecommunications 400 together. This would
greatly aid communication between us since she no longer lived in Botsford Hall, but rather in Elliott Hall on the other end of campus. We decided that we should put four hours per week into the project since the thesis is counted as a four hour course. We decided to meet on Tuesday afternoons from 4 to 6 and on Thursday mornings from 10 to 12. The Tuesdays were later changed to 10 to 12 also.

On Tuesday, September 17, editing began in earnest. Dr. Richardson showed Lauri and I how to operate the video editors. The first type of editing he talked about was called "crash" editing. He advised us not to use it because it doesn't look good for a number of technical reasons (which will be explained in a moment during the discussion of the control track). The second type of editing available on these machines is Assemble editing where pieces of video and audio are edited together one after the other; however, no special work can be done during the assemble editing process. The audio that goes with a particular piece of video will be edited in at the same time and there is nothing you can do to change them unless you Insert edit afterward. This was the third type of editing Dr. Richardson showed us. Insert editing utilizes the multi-tracks of VHS format videotape. The VHS format is structured as follows: There are one video track, two audio tracks, and what is called a control track. The control track is a series of electronic blips that control the video tape as it is feeding through a tape player, much like sprockets in a roll of film. A blip is recorded sixty times per second (the same rate as A.C. electric
current). As insert and assemble editing take place, the two video tape machines, the source (tape for raw footage) and the editor (tape for final production), synchronize their control tracks through the editing console. (Video is electronically edited, unlike audio where the tape is usually physically cut and spliced, much like film.) For this synchronization to happen, both tapes must have at least five seconds of solid, unbroken control track before the point where the edit starts. During assemble editing, a control track is recorded on the editor tape as you edit. For insert editing, a control track must be recorded before editing begins. Though the process is longer, insert editing may give a smoother production than assemble editing because the control track is more stable, being one continuous recording rather than one possibly flawed due to the physical actions of the machines.

If the control track is broken, the picture breaks up and "rolls" while the machine tries to synchronize with the control track all over again. This is the result of crash editing, simply recording pieces of video back-to-back with no concern for the control track. In assemble editing, the control track is laid down along with the video and audio. If the producer would like different audio with the video (such as an interview with pictures of the subject in action rather than the subject talking), he can go back and insert edit over the assemble edit, including across two or more assemble edits. However, since insert editing from the start can result in a smoother production, and since Lauri and I had the time to have the tape
prepared by University Media Services, we decided to go with insert editing. But before any editing could take place, we had to find out what we had down on our five tapes, totaling six or seven hours of footage. That next Thursday (9/19) the process of logging began.

Logging is a grueling process. We had to write down each shot and the time location it was on the tape with a brief description of what was going on. Since we usually turned the camera on and left it, just following the action as it took place before us, most shots would have many descriptions. As we went through, we marked shots that we thought might be good to use in the final production. We also marked those that were no good so that we would avoid them later on. We were seeing some of our footage for the first time, and we had a tendency to try to lay the blame for bad camerawork on the other person. A wobbly picture often was the problem with any one shot, along with problems concerning angle, lack of action, bad color, bad focus, any combination of these, etc. We had a disappointing first day. In two hours of logging on Thursday (9/19), we only bored through a little less than an hour of tape.

Logging continued the next Tuesday and Thursday (9/24 & 26). On the following Tuesday (10/1), we raised our flagging spirits by not logging for the first twenty minutes, and instead watching the final performance. It really helped us out and we went back at it with renewed vigor. We were still only working two hours per day on Tuesdays and Thursdays, but we both knew that we would probably be working on Saturdays as well before
long. Logging continued the next Thursday (10/3) and was finally finished the following Tuesday (10/18). The least interesting stage of editing was over, and now came the fun part, the creative part. We decided that a thirty minute program would be about right: We would have a twenty minute documentary, the ten minute performance, and then close it up somehow. We decided to break up the job. Lauri would be responsible for the body of the show, while I came up with the opening and closing credits.

While we were logging, Lauri and I knocked around some ideas for the approach we would use in presenting the documentary. We never really resolved anything and I decided to let Lauri come up with the approach when she came up with the editing script. When she presented her script to me on Tuesday, October 15, her 2-page rough draft called for a roughly chronological approach with 24 minutes of documentary material. This did not include the opening or closing credits. We didn't see a way to cut it back to 20 minutes so we left it at 24. I had some ideas for the credits involving a character generator for names and titles, freeze-frames of the various people involved, plus some representative action shots showing some characteristic of the person, but I had nothing on paper to show Lauri. She was not entirely pleased but understood because I was bogged down with other projects. We were beginning to feel the pressure to get it done, especially Lauri because she was taking credit for it that quarter. I felt pressure, too, because I didn't want to hold Lauri back even though I wasn't taking the credit until the next quarter.
On Thursday, October 24, we were going to try a few practice edits; however, we had incorrectly laid our control track and took it upstairs to University Media Services to have it done properly. While we were waiting to get our tape back, Media Services loaned us a tape to practice on. The quality of the video did not look good even only one generation removed from the original. Our doubts about this project began to creep back in, even though it was too late to stop now. Also, I brought up the idea that since we didn't know what our program looked like beyond the editing script, we might want to rough edit the show and do a good version of it later after we had a chance to see it complete. However, Lauri said that it was going to take us a long time to do this, that we should go for real on the first try. We decided that that would be the best move and plunged in. We laid down four edits that day and threw out the fifth on account of it looking bad down one generation. We also decided to meet in the editing lab the next Saturday (10/26).

Saturday was not a good day in the editing lab. We began having problems with the equipment immediately. The second edit we tried, a shot from the Kay Knight interview, fluttered when we played it back. We had the same result when we tried it again. Joe Pacino and a student from Media Services couldn't figure out what was wrong with the machine. When we called Dr. Richardson, he thought that the heads of the machine might be dirty, and since all our editing had been done on that machine, it may be responsible for the bad picture quality we had
experienced so far. After several hours of work, we had not gone forward at all; indeed we had gone backward. We re-edited the show on different equipment and only accomplished one more edit than we had on Thursday.

The next Tuesday and Thursday (10/29 & 31) went more smoothly. We only had to make a couple of changes to Lauri's otherwise perfect script. Also, our audio inserts over previously edited video were working out fairly well for the most part. To make these we would first time our audio segment, and then edit the video and lowering the audio volume for the duration of the interview sound to be inserted. Once that was done, we would go back and insert the interview on one of the audio channels, leaving the modified volume of the original audio intact on the other audio channel, and of course the video was untouched as well. On one occasion, it didn't work well because the recording level of the interview was not high enough, and we should have left the original audio out entirely but we chose not to. Dr. Richardson would point this out as a fault when he critiqued the show in January. By the following Saturday (11/2), we had edited well into the second page of our editing script. I was so glad that we had taken the time to log all that material and come up with a script. Many students were trying to edit projects without one, and were spending far too much time hunting around their footage for suitable pieces of video. Our project would have been impossible if we did it that way.

Editing continued the next Tuesday (11/5), and on
Thursday (11/7), we were finished with the main part of the program, and all that was left to do was add my opening and closing. Our production would then be complete. However, our success thus far was not achieved without further frustration. We had about a half-hour left of our usual two hour block of time in the lab. We began to insert edit the performance on to our final tape. We were about three minutes into the ten minute performance when everything stopped. The machines froze and the editing console beeped at us. Something was wrong. We tried it again, and the problem recurred in the same place. It happened a third time with Media Services personnel Dan Lutz and Mary Booher watching. Upon inspection of a freeze-frame on the offending portion of the editor tape, the verdict was that our tape was suffering from a nearly fatal ailment: The control track was broken at that point on the tape. Nobody knew how or why it happened, only that it was. Lauri and I thought we were doomed to having to re-edit the whole show over again on another tape, until Dan showed us the obvious solution. He told us we could assemble edit the rest of the show and it would work out. The videotape machines would synchronize their tracks, and then the old control track on the editor tape would be replaced by a new one. Then, of course, if we needed to insert edit at all (we did), that would still work after our assemble editing was done. I couldn't stay past 12:00, however, so I left and Lauri finished the job.

Two days later, Lauri played the still unfinished tape for her fiance, Eddie, who told her that it seemed to flow well.
That gave us confidence in the project that an inexperienced person could see the continuity we were trying to achieve with no extra voice-overs on our part to try and tie it together. I still did not have the opening and closing ready yet but I was working on it. I had some shots that I thought would work out as freeze-frame close-ups of the people involved, only to find out that such effects cannot be accomplished on the editors available in the Telecommunications Department. As finals week for Fall Quarter neared, I was still looking at my logging notes for what may have been possible pieces of video to use in the montage. On two occasions, I had misplaced my pen and wound up typing notes on the back of my editing script on this extremely large typewriter that Media Services has in their lab. This thing typed letters that were about a quarter-inch tall! They were certainly easy to read. At the same time, one of Lauri's sorority sisters, Shelly Whitney, prepared a graphic for us to use with the character generator. On the morning of Tuesday, November 19, during finals week, I had some time in TCOM's color studio. Fellow student Russ Henry set up the graphic in front of a camera while I typed the various names and titles into the character generator. Using the effects buss of the switcher for the color studio, we superimposed the titles over the graphic. The character generator has eight "pages," meaning that it can store eight different messages. By changing pages, it can recall any one of them. I set up the first page with the graphic, faded to black, and rolled a videotape. I faded in the graphic with the words "Four At The Ball" from the character generator.
Then I faded out the characters only, leaving the graphic, changed pages, and brought the characters back on the screen with the second message, "Music from 'An American In Paris' by George Gershwin." I went on like that until I ran out of pages. The closing sequence of messages was a little different; I didn't bother fading out each message but just changed pages and each message would simply be replaced by the next one.

That afternoon, I was in the editing lab, editing in the titles with the shots I had selected. I knew that putting on the closing credits would be easy. All that was involved was simply editing in the graphics as I had recorded them with no breaks at all. The opening was more difficult. Lauri and I had left three minutes at the beginning of the tape with nothing but control track so that I could insert the credits. Not knowing just how long they were going to be, I had to edit the graphic and shots in backwards, taking my last shot of the graphic and inserting that just ahead of the opening shot of the body of the program. The process of backwards editing was not any more difficult, but somewhat more time-consuming than normal editing. Each shot had to be timed out, then the editor tape had to be backed up that exact amount of time from the beginning of the last shot edited, which of course would actually be the next shot on the tape. When it was done, I had a little less than a minute left of the three minutes of open tape.

While I was editing, I had Lauri record onto a video tape the complete An American In Paris in Media Services. Using much the same process as I had editing in the shots for the opening,
I backed up the music tape the same amount of time as the entire opening on the editor tape, and edited the music onto the tape so that the piece ended at the same time as the opening. As you watch the program, you will notice the opening music and video ending with the body of the program starting immediately after them. For the ending of the show, editing in the music was less complicated. I used a portion of the piece that Jessica did not use, yet a part that was similar. I thought that the music had been heard so much in the program that using it again at the end would be detrimental to the project. Using a different portion of the piece made the ending just a little more interesting. When the credits ended the music was simply faded out.

After all that time and torture, the project was finished.

THE CRITIQUE

Lauri turned her thesis paper and a copy of the tape into her advisor at his house that evening.

I turned in the master copy to Dr. Richardson during the weeks ahead of Christmas Break. I told him that I was willing to make changes in the tape if he felt they were necessary. However, he decided that the tape would be the finished product as is, regarding the program as being the best we could do. I felt that that was fair, and awaited his critique.

Dr. Richardson gave me his critique of the program in January of 1986. The following fourteen points (in bold type) were what Dr. Richardson had to say about the program:

1) Opening/Closing graphic idea is good -- the graphic itself
is well-structured, but needed more contrast. The graphic provided continuity through the opening with all the various shots used, however, the Shelly Whitney's chalk drawing was too light to show up well on television.

2) **We needed a statement early giving us the purpose of the program. What is "Four at the Ball"?** The program did not explain very well what was going on. All we had were clips from Jessica's interviews, which explain what Jessica was doing and why (as an honors project), but nothing really explains "Four at the Ball" as a concept. Also, nothing tells why the program was made until the end, when the honors project by Lauri Voyek and John Rose is mentioned in the closing.

3) **Lauri -- off mic (microphone) -- we should have seen you at the beginning to give your voice a body. The disembodied voice is distracting for the whole show.** Since Lauri and the camera were usually looking at Jessica, especially in the first interview clip, Lauri never really speaks into the microphone which is mounted on the camera and she sounds a little hollow. As for the disembodied voice, I think that that is really my fault. Lauri tried to get establishing shots and/or cutaways (those "phoney" interviewer shots over the shoulder of the interviewee) but as I explained earlier, I either botched the camerawork, or didn't give her one at all.

4) **Good job of editing and intercutting scenes with the interviews.** Though done on a somewhat trial-and-error basis,
Lauri and I did manage to create a certain amount of program flow by using the interviews as well as discussion in the rehearsals to move the program along. There were a few spots in the program where an announcer would have helped explain the action, but Lauri and I decided against a narrator before she wrote the editing script. On a technical level, there were no serious flaws in our editing. Our meticulous process included examining each edit after we made it to make sure it had no problems, such as blank frames between scenes, cutting off important words, and so on.

5) In one of the rehearsal sequences, there is an obvious jump cut. This could have been avoided by . . .

6) (Giving) us more close-ups of the talent, reaction shots and so forth. A jump cut is a pair of shots from nearly the same angle, but obviously different in the position of the subject. The subject seems to "jump" from one spot to another and usually this is not considered good television. This problem often occurs when editing together two takes of the same scene. The shots Dr. Richardson refers to occur about six minutes into the program, when the dancers are working on a piece in the middle of the room, then suddenly the scene jumps. Mike and John are in roughly the same place, but Kay Knight is in the picture and Jessica is on the floor, and so on. It is very unnatural. The normal way to solve the problem is to use a cutaway, another shot between the two similar shots to hide the jump effect. The
cutaway is often a close-up shot showing the reaction of the subject to the situation they are in. Also, cutaways may be used to break up very long wide angle shots, which tend to get a little tedious if there is not much action. Lauri and I were never really in a position to shoot such shots since we didn't feel like asking the dancers to move back to a certain position so that we could do so. And we could not do them as the action took place for fear of missing something important elsewhere on the floor while close up on one of the dancers. Also, we didn't really think about doing them because our skills were not yet that sharp. However, it was an oversight, and I will take such measures in the future if I ever do another video or film project.

7) In another sequence, there is a good bit of distracting background conversation, (which) made it difficult for us to understand the words of the coach. This occurs about seven and a half minutes into the program when we hear Kay Knight's voice during a shot of the dancers working out a new part in the dance. The recording level of the interview was very soft and we could not bring the background sound of the video down low enough in the mix without it dropping out altogether. That's actually what we should have done, gotten rid of it completely; even though it would have sounded awkward to have that audio simply drop off and then have Mrs. Knight start talking, we would have been able to fully understand the important point she made.

8) Hollow quality of sound is distracting -- I know, I know,
those were the mics you had to work with. It could have been helped, however, by recording some of the interviews in (an acoustically better) environment and using that beneath the rehearsals. Even though another (and better) microphone was included with the camera package, Lauri and I decided to use the one mounted on the camera. Also, the TCOM Department has studios for audio production which would have been better suited to recording the interviews.

9) Camerawork and lighting are good -- except the need for more close-ups. In choosing the shots for the program, the quality of the camerawork was a factor in judging their worth. No matter how important the material covered in them, Lauri and I decided we would not use jerky, wobbly, out-of-focus, and otherwise bad shots in our program. The lighting was really no concern of ours; we knew that the rehearsal studio had enough light for what we needed. No special lights were used on our part for this program.

10) Cast was not particularly self-conscious -- good. The dancers did not "mug the camera" often, and Lauri and I simply omitted all shots when they did.

11) Jerky transition from backstage to performance. Could have used a card or a program or some such. Once again, an oversight on our part due to inexperience. That transition isn't very good. The dancers seem to suddenly appear on stage immediately after walking around backstage. Using a shot of the program for the evening's performances would have been a good idea or we could have inserted the
"Four at the Ball" graphic again that we used in the opening of the show.

12) **Good dissolves in the performance, the 3500 package** (portable video switcher) *obviously worked well*. I'm pleased that you didn't try any of the fancy wipes and stuff. The switcher was really a lifesaver. Trying to edit the performance together would have caused our editing process to run much longer and would have been more difficult than any other part of the show. The switcher had various controls for wipes and a character generator, but they were not the most graceful of effects (especially the C.G.), so we decided that they would not be right for this production. I decided to keep it simple, and it paid off.

13) **Lighting on the performance was fine, but pushed the contrast range of the cameras -- not much you can do about that.** It's interesting to note that at one time we were not going to have enough light on stage (when we thought that we would have to shoot the actual performance). Now we have too much. Shots from the side camera are not too bad; those from the center camera, however, really show the effect. The shots look out of focus; they are not, just washed out.

14) **The post-performance feature was good. Still never saw Lauri.** We knew that we could not just end with the performance and then roll the credits. If the performance was the climax, like any good story there had to be a resolution. Lauri came up with the obvious solution: Simply interview Jessica again after it was all over. We
didn't want to dwell too long on it, however, so when it came time to edit it in, Lauri kept it short.

**Overall excellent job, but not quite ready for prime time.** Well, we kind of knew that going in. Not to belittle Dr. Richardson's point, however, because he is absolutely right. As a student production, it's actually rather average, and television network programming executives would not take it at all seriously (even PBS). Nevertheless, for a first try at a production of this nature, and for two people whose training is not in television at all, Dr. Richardson felt that the production was very well done. For this portion of my honors project grade, Dr. Richardson assigned the grade of B.
For a project that I had serious doubts about at the start, in the middle, and all the way up to the end, all in all I am remarkably satisfied with it. In writing this retrospective paper, I feel that I've discovered that I didn't have as much to worry about as I thought at the time. The John Rose of more than a year ago now would probably disagree with me, and it is possible that normally 20-20 hindsight is wearing "Rose"-colored glasses at the moment. However, the experience was largely unforgettable at least to this point. Once again, Lauri was a joy to work with, both on the production and indirectly on this paper. (Her paper provided most of the dates, times, and places used in this paper since my "journal" if you will was not kept in a notebook but rather in my head. My memory quickly lost details but held onto feelings and reactions.) I also must thank all of the folks in University Media Services for putting up with two green video producers, though we wondered about their tolerance at times, they really came through when we needed them. Jessica Jenne and her troupe of dancers along with Kay Knight were responsible for the great show, the basis for the entire project. WBST-FM with the help of Lisa Beard's station keys provided the word processor for this paper. Dr. Richardson deserves much thanks as well. He told Lauri and I from the start to come see him or call him at home if we needed his assistance, and we took advantage of his offer on more than one occasion as this paper will attest.

There are many, students and faculty alike, who deride the Honors College at Ball State as a waste of time and money.
However, such attitudes primarily belong to those who are short-sighted of the goals of this university and its Honors College. The courses I took in the Honors program are among the best I had at Ball State. Being a child self-raised on rock and roll, I largely ignored the literary side of our culture. The Honors College opened my eyes to this and now I enjoy the thought-provoking as well as simple entertainment sides of both of these cultural forces. In fact, I count the Humanities sequence with Dr. William Magrath as one of the most enjoyable experiences in my life. I didn't always agree with what Dr. Thomas Lowe had to say in Natural Resources 390, but that course helped open my mind to many of today's environmental abuses that our culture causes through our industry, and how these attitudes may affect our future. Dr. Vander Hill's special treatment of history and society in ID 199 made that class very interesting and gave me a look at our country and the world from a perspective I had not considered before, which is the course's purpose. That sums up the purpose of most if not all of the courses in the curriculum of the Honors College, to look at both new and familiar concepts such as culture, science, literature, and so on in ways other than how they have been presented to us before. Always, Honors College students are called upon to reach their own conclusions about what they are presented in class, from the bioethical decision-making strategy in Biology 199, to the opinion/research papers in many of the colloquia. These conclusions are accepted by the professor as valid (even if the professor does not agree) as long as the students have sufficient logic and reasoning to
back up those conclusions. Well, my conclusion about this project, and about the Honors program itself, is that I never considered it as something I had to "get done," but rather as a labor of love. That's one of the reasons it has taken me so long to write this paper, because I believe the Honors College supports this notion, especially regarding the honors thesis. From the beginning, they told Lauri and I that we had as long as we needed to complete our project; an incomplete would not be considered a flaw in it, so long as it was finished before graduation. (I don't think they expected more than a year for completion on my part, but ....) Perhaps if more Honors students thought of their curriculum as a "labor of love," they would get as much out of it as I did.