



Producing Video For Teaching and Learning: Planning and Collaboration

O'Donoghue, Michael
Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2014

Book Review

Tags: educational video | teaching with the arts | video production

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Michael O'Donoghue writes that he has "attempted to create a work which [he] hope[s] is more of an educational thinking and production tool than a how-to-guide"(xi). The book does not quite achieve this particular goal because the author has, in fact, quite nicely done both. His paradigm for pedagogy's interaction with video and his helpful sections on effective video creation gives the reader a philosophical as well as a practical grounding in the use of video in academic settings.

O'Donoghue's emphasis on teaching and learning ensures that every concept behind video production is linked in some way to a principle in teaching and learning. Making a pitch, or selling an idea for a video allows for review and reflection by teachers and students. Creating a framework for the film gives the educator an opportunity to clearly define learning objectives and outcomes. And a concern over the visual format of the film leads to a discussion on how teaching objectives are presented and received. While this may sound like a rather clumsy construction, O'Donoghue -- in part due to a clean and clear writing style -- pulls it off.

As the educational justification is laid out for every aspect of multimedia production using video, readers begin to realize that something else is occurring. They are learning the technical aspects of video production and creation. While video production can seem intimidating, O'Donoghue walks the reader through the process from pitching and scripting to camera usage and post-production. His appendices add to the wealth of direction with an example of a pitch document, an illustrated storyboard, a production course structure, and a short section on lecture capture.

But, by far, the best section in this book is the chapter of expert interviews. The author interviewed over twenty people on the use of educational video. He pared those down to the six who appear in chapter five, which is titled "Six of the Best." And the title does not lie. Among the interviewees are Sir David Attenborough, of natural history filmmaking renown, and Richard E. Mayer, one of America's deans of academic multimedia usage. And there is a gem within this gem. The interviews are far ranging, illuminating, and different for each person. However, the final question is the same for them all: "Do you have suggestions for improving educational video productions?" Not only does the reader get very practical tips from these six but the author also gives the response to that question from all twenty-three persons interviewed. There is an embarrassment of riches here.

The final chapter, concerning student production of a video, is interesting and practical but could have been longer. The further reading section and bibliography are also helpful and the index is surprisingly robust for such a short book.

While the technology used in filming has changed in the last few decades many of the concepts of filming have not. Consequently, I see this philosophically and technically practical book being relevant and extremely useful for many years to come for educators in higher educational contexts.

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