

**Virginia Tech**

Blacksburg, VA

**CS 4624 - Multimedia, Hypertext, and Information Access**

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**Contemplative Practices for a  
Technological Society: Video**

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**May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

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# Executive Summary

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This project deals with the documentation of the Contemplative Practices Conference that happened at the Virginia Tech Conference Center on April 11-13. The project involved three distinct phases. The first phase was to gather interviews from various members within the Contemplative Practice field living in the New River Valley region. In this phase, 5 people were interviewed. The second phase of the project was to film the events of the conference, while at the same time gathering interviews from various individuals attending the conference. In total, we have interviewed 18 practitioners. A full listing of the materials including the names of those interviewed can be found later in the report. The third phase of the project involved editing the interview footage, and uploading the interviews to YouTube.

Contemplative practices are a collection of various techniques that are focused on the betterment of the individual through various self-improvement techniques. There are various forms of contemplative practices such as Tai Chi, Qigong, Yoga, Mindfulness, and Meditation.

The goal of the project is to develop a documentary on the Contemplative Practices Conference that happened at the Virginia Tech Conference Center on April 11-13. The extent of our work was to generate the content to make this documentary, edit and publish the interviews, and successfully hand off the content for further development at a later date. So far, the videos have been edited and published on the Contemplative Video YouTube channel (<http://www.youtube.com/user/ContempVideo>), and our professor, Dr. Fox, is in possession of all the content generated by our work, including the raw footage.

For the individuals working on this in the future, the resources available for this project are described in greater detail in the “Developer’s Manual”, there are interviews of 18 people, 5 before the conference, and 13 during the conference. In addition there are many photographs of the conference, various audio recordings, and multiple hours of “Rover Cam” footage, capturing breakout sessions and various events of the conference.

You can find the timeline and discussion of various problems we encountered throughout the project in the Lessons Learned section. Most of the problems we had will not be encountered by future members of the project, as most of them dealt with generating footage.

Finally, we would like to thank Dr. Linder and Dr. Fox for the wonderful opportunity to work on this project, and none of this would have been possible without them.

# User's Manual

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During April 11 through 13 of 2013 Virginia Tech hosted the *Contemplative Practices for a Technological Society* conference. The videos and documents that we captured and collected serve to document the spirit of the conference and the insight of the prominent practitioners who came.

## **YouTUBE**

To publicly exhibit the fruits of our effort a YouTube channel called ContempVideo was created. That channel includes edited forms of each of the interviews we conducted. The link to the channel is here:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/ContempVideo>

Each video posted to the channel includes a brief description of the person interviewed. Links to their personal websites or places of practice were also included where applicable.

# Developer's Manual

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## Data

All data files are stored on the 2 TB external G-Technology drives. This includes:

- Final Cut Pro 7 Project Files
- Raw captured video content (158 GB)
- Audio recordings (1.5 GB)
- Photos taken at conference (10 GB)
- PowerPoint presentations from keynotes (100 MB)

### *Raw Captured Video*

The raw captured video includes interviews conducted with the following individuals:

- Andres Gonzalez
- Anna Pittman
- Ben Knapp
- Charles Lief
- David Levy
- Eric Diogun
- Gyaltrul Rinpoche
- Ivica Ico Bukvic
- John Schorling
- Linda Lantieri
- Margaret Plews-Ogan
- Mark McNamee
- Matthew Komelski
- Michael Carroll
- Patton Hyman
- Rick Bowles
- Roop Mahajan
- Sadah Proctor

It also includes shots captured while roaming around the conference. This includes practices sessions

(such as Yoga and Tai Chi practice) and presentations.

### ***Audio Recordings***

Audio was captured from several of the interviews we conducted as a backup to the audio captured by the camera using lavalier mics. There are also audio recordings from presentations.

### ***Photos***

Photos were captured throughout the conference. They include photos of practice sessions and presentations.

### ***PowerPoints***

PowerPoint documents were collected from each of the keynote speakers as well as from smaller sessions.

## **Editing Video**

Interviews were edited into a more consumable form using Final Cut Pro 7. The Final Cut Pro directory on hard drive contains separate projects for videos edited by Kyle Stevens, Val Komarov, and Yin Zhou.

Each interview has been edited to remove moments when the interviewer is asking questions. In place of the removed questions are a simplified version of the question asked using the Arial font at 30 pt. Videos on the YouTube (more below) channel should provide ample examples of the format.

## **YouTube Channel**

A YouTube channel was created to quickly release basic edits of the interviews to show to the public and to move forward with transcription efforts. The following steps were taken to convert raw footage into the published video:

1. Import raw footage into Final Cut Pro. If the videos were not in the compatible format, they were converted using various resources at InnovationSpace.
2. Remove the interviewer from audio, replace with question slides instead.

3. Correct for exposure by applying a Color Adjustment effect.
4. Remove stereo sound if more than one source was used in the interview.
5. Export video using the following settings:
  - a. 720p resolution @ 29.97 Hz
  - b. Highest quality audio/video settings
  - c. MP4 filetype.
6. Compress footage with Compressor using H.264 compression. Default Settings.
7. Upload resulting product to youtube channel.

The owner of the channel is Kyle Stevens, but administrative and ownership information will be passed on to Dr. Edward A. Fox and Dr. Douglas Linder shortly after the completion of the project.

The channel name is ContempVideo and can be accessed at the following link:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/ContempVideo>

Information needed to administer the channel, including the password, can be in the youtube\_admin.txt file stored on the project hard drive.

# Lessons Learned

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## Timeline

- Feb 8th - Met with Dr. Fox, Joan Grossman, and Parke May to discuss the project
- Feb 13th - Met with fellow group members to figure out who to interview first
- Feb 15th - Met with Joan to learn how to set up the set for an interview
- March 3rd - Conducted a practice interview
- March 4th - Interview with yoga instructor, Anna Pittman
- March 8th - Interview with Provost, Dr. McNamee
- March 26th - Interview with ICAT, Benjamin Knapp
- March 29th - Meeting with Dr. Fox, Joan Grossman, and Parke May to discuss the equipments for the conference
- April 8th - Interview with tai chi instructor, Matthew Komelski
- April 10th - Interview with ICTAS Director, Roop Mahajan
- April 10th - Meeting with Dr. Fox, Joan Grossman, and Parke May to discuss the conference in details
- April 11th - Pre conference, opening remarks of the conference
- April 12th - Conference, conducted interviews with :
- John Schorling
  - Dr. Margaret Plews-Ogan
  - Michael Carroll
  - Linda Lantieri
  - Rick Bowles
  - Patton Hyman
- April 13th - Conference, conducted interviews with
- Charles Lief
  - Gyaltrul Rinpoche
  - Andres Gonzales
  - Ivica Ico Bukvic
  - Eric Diogun
  - Sadah Proctor
  - David Levy
- April 24th - After conference meeting with Dr. Fox, Joan Grossman, and Parke May



## **Problems**

There were a lot of problems we ran into in this project. One of the problems was the scheduling conflicts between interviewer, the person being interviewed, and ourselves. We had to try to schedule an hour between different people who all had very busy schedules. This was challenging to do during the short span of time.

We also ran into a lot of problems when shooting the interviews, such as audio noise and shadows. While shooting our first interview, we noticed a lot of disruption in the noise quality. After analyzing the noise we found that the noise came from surrounding noise and the sound of the microphone rubbing against the clothes. The first few interviews we conducted had poor lighting.

The biggest problem I think was the time constraint. The project was extremely time demanding in scheduling interviews and conducting interviews. We also had to shoot a significant amount of footage and interview many individuals within two days during the conference. The last issue is that after the conference was over we had only a month to learn how to edit videos and actually edit the interviews. The time constraint was a significant challenge.

## **Solutions**

In order to deal with the scheduling conflicts we learned how to conduct interviews ourselves. This made the requirement of scheduling an interviewer unnecessary, which helped reduce the scheduling conflicts. This also made interviewing people at the conference simpler because we did not need to rely on a designated interviewer's schedule.

We also had a problem with audio noise. Some of this was due to the environment but the majority was due to lavalier microphones rubbing against clothes. We managed to fix this problem by adding boom mics and multiple audio recorders to record the interviews. Then we used video editing software to sync the video and audio later.

During our first few interviews we had issues with lighting and shadows. We solved this issue by analyzing the video and by trial and error figured out a way to set up a set properly that got rid of a majority of the shadows. As we progressed further on the project we grew more competent at lighting a set.

The most significant factor that hindered our ability to make a great documentary was the lack of time we had. We tried to solve this problem by scheduling interviews before the conference and

scheduling tasks during the conference. This helped reduce the time constraint and stress on the team. As for the short time we had to edit the videos, we thought that editing the interviews down to short videos that we could post online was the best approach. That way we could show some of the content of the videos to people who want to see the conference shortly after the event. Hopefully this also makes life easier for the future editor(s) of the documentary.

# Acknowledgements

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## Special thanks to:

Doug Lindner - lindner@vt.edu  
Parke May - parkemay@vt.edu  
Joan Grossman - joanrg@earthlink.net  
Edward A. Fox - fox@vt.edu  
Spencer Lee - zamfir@vt.edu

Scott Pennington  
Purdom Lindblad

Andres Gonzalez  
Anna Pittman  
Ben Knapp  
Charles Lief  
David Levy  
Eric Diogun  
Gyaltrul Rinpoche  
Ivica Ico Bukvic  
John Schorling  
Linda Lantieri  
Margaret Plews-Ogan  
Mark McNamee  
Matthew Komelski  
Michael Carroll  
Patton Hyman  
Rick Bowles  
Roop Mahajan  
Sadah Proctor

Innovation Space  
The Inn at Virginia Tech: Skelton Conference Center

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