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<http://www.k-state.edu/media/mediaguide/bios/weschbio.html>

Note to editor: Robert Hinderliter is a 2003 Haviland High School graduate. Mark Hanson is a 2001 Marion High School graduate.

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## K-STATE STUDENTS' VIDEO ASSIGNMENTS MAKE THEIR WAY AROUND THE WORLD, DRAWING MORE THAN A MILLION VIEWERS AND EVEN HELPING STUDENTS, GRADS LAND JOBS

MANHATTAN — Many assignments for college classes go no farther than between the student completing it and the professor grading it.

But assignments in Michael Wesch's anthropology classes at Kansas State University have been seen around the world and by as many as 1.5 million other people.

The spring 2007 intro to cultural anthropology class created the video "A Vision of Students Today," which has been viewed more than 1.5 million times and prompted others to respond with their own videos. The video is up for a YouTube award for most inspirational video of 2007. It features Wesch's class describing what it's like for them to be college students today. Mark Hanson, senior in anthropology, Manhattan, did much of the camera work. The video can be viewed at <http://mediatedcultures.net/ksudigg/?cat=4>

The digital ethnography class is an upper-level anthropology class at K-State in which students examine YouTube and the future of the Web site that lets users share videos with one another. Wesch assigns two videos, the first of which is a viral video project. The other video assignment is more research-based, Wesch said. The videos are posted at <http://mediatedcultures.net/ksudigg>

"The purpose of the viral video assignment is so that students start to think about what attracts viewers to a video and what is the culture of this video world and how you tap into it," Wesch said. "A lot of them come in and they've never made a video before.

"I often get asked how do you teach students to make a video, and all I do is just ask students to make a video. It's the wrong way to go about it if you tell them how. I save the face-to-face time in class to talk about the aesthetics and the video culture."

(more)

When these videos make their way onto the Internet, often via YouTube, the students' work gets exposure in a way that traditional classroom assignments don't. A video posted in February by Jessie Stone, senior in anthropology from Bakersfield, Calif., received comments in Portuguese just a few hours after being posted. Her video, which has been viewed at least 1,000 times, explores the way in which video means that political candidates are judged as much on how they look or dress as their qualifications and stances. You can watch Stone's video, "Those Groovy Politicians," at <http://mediatedcultures.net/ksudigg/?p=147>

Another video with at least 1,000 hits is "Introduction to Girl Talk" by Nick Kimminau, a December 2007 graduate from Andover. Kimminau used a mash-up of music videos found on YouTube to accompany a song that another artist created by layering songs over one another. You can watch Kimminau's video at <http://mediatedcultures.net/ksudigg/?p=148>

Adam Bohannon, a senior in anthropology from Overland Park, took Wesch's digital ethnography class in 2007. One of his videos has gotten nearly 4,000 views. You can view it at <http://mediatedcultures.net/ksudigg/?p=76>

Bohannon's video skills led to a job with Diigo, an online research tool that's better explained through video than through words. That's why Diigo had Bohannon create a video to explain what it's all about. The video can be viewed at <http://www.diigo.com/>

Bohannon now is working on creating teaser and tutorial videos for a new version of Diigo, as well as helping evaluate alpha software. He said the company gives him creative leeway with his videos but also offers opinions and suggestions when they conference via Skype.

"It's a great learning experience and eventually leads to some pretty awesome results in the end," Bohannon said.

Several K-State graduates are among those whose videos have found popularity on the Internet. Rebecca Roth is a December 2007 graduate from South Lyon, Mich., and research intern with Ethnographic Insights. At K-State, she created "The Internet Has a Face," which garnered more than 10,000 hits and will be featured on the AT&T Tech Channel. Roth's video can be viewed at <http://mediatedcultures.net/ksudigg/?p=102>

Robert Hinderliter, a May 2007 graduate, has gotten more than 26,000 views for "A History of YouTube," which can be viewed at <http://mediatedcultures.net/ksudigg/?p=108>

Wesch's students and their video projects also have drawn attention of media from NBC to BBC. Yet the students' work makes its way around the Internet without orchestrated marketing.

"That gets at the complexity of today's media environment," Wesch said. "The students don't advertise. They get the videos out on blogs, people start linking to them, and other people find them."