

THE VIETNAM WAR

TELLING THE PENNSYLVANIA STORY

Tips for Shooting Video

To help you tell the story more effectively, we've asked our WPSU videographers to share some of their secrets and strategies for successful videotaping:

- If possible, change the aspect ratio setting on your video camera to Widescreen (16:9) instead of Full screen (4:3). DO NOT select "letterbox" or "pan-scan"
- Some cameras include a feature that imprints the date and time of a recording on the video. Please turn this feature OFF.
- Use a tripod when possible. If a tripod isn't available, use other solid objects to stabilize the shot (e.g. lean against trees, set your camera on a table top, or sit in a chair and use the armrest to help make the picture steady).
- Make sure that your camera is level and the scene looks straight in the view finder.
- Resist the temptation to do a lot of "panning" and "zooming" with your camera. It's best to physically move your camera from one place to another in order get a different angle.
- When shooting inside, try to use areas that are well lit. Don't be afraid to bring additional lighting into a dark room. If it's hard to see detail in the viewfinder, extra light will help reveal it.
- Avoid shooting a person with bright light, such as a window, in the background. The camera will adjust for the bright light and make your subject darker.
- People make the greatest subjects. No matter what your topic is, don't forget to record people as well. To the extent possible, try to get people in your shots acting "naturally."
- If you plan to interview someone, do so in a quiet setting and make sure that the camera is within 3-4 feet of your person. If possible, use an external microphone.
- Give some thought to the significance of your topic and why you chose it. It will be evident in your final product.