

tevec

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Television éducative du Québec.

Tevec is where the grey-haired lady in butterfly glasses beams in French, "We have learned to learn".

Tevec is where the young Quebec housewife says, "We have learned to communicate".

Tevec is where the farmer who has learned enough English to read the machinery catalogue says, "We have found out what this region is all about".

Tevec is where a man arrived from Bagotville with a fractured spine clutching a pillow and blanket, to write a grade 9 exam flat on his back.

Tevec is an educational T.V. experiment in rural Quebec where an expected 15,000 registrants blossomed to 35,000.

Tevec is where an educational T.V. program had a Nielson rating of 38.5% of the whole population. The average for educational T.V. elsewhere is .03%.

Tevec is where a group of nuns with senior matriculation stayed up until past midnight 5 days a week to take a class at grade 9 level. In the mornings they had to be awake at 6.

Tevec is where housewives hid school books from their husbands and fought to take exams at exam centres.

Tevec is where a community of 235,000 people, in two years, was advanced from a pre-industrial to a post-industrial stage.

Tevec, standing for Television éducative du Québec, is the 1967 educational experiment of Radio-Québec, which took place in the Lac St-Jean region of Northern Québec.
(CBC International Service)

The Saguenay-Lac St. Jean region, 150 miles north of the St. Lawrence River behind the Laurentian mountains, has the second highest unemployment rate in the Province of Québec. The unemployment rate averages 12%, although in the winter, it can climb up as high as 17%.

The 1961 census turned up some very interesting, though frightening statistics; out of a total adult population of 153,000, 80,000 had seven or less years of schooling. Depending on the region, between 38%-77% had not even completed their primary school studies.

There were very few professional training institutions or courses of study leading to a vocation or to college courses, and those there were had limited facilities.

The law obliging children to attend primary school dates from 1943, thus those people 33 years old and older, are likely not to have completed primary school. It was only in the period 1958-1960 that access to secondary schools increased enough to meet the needs of the general public. Thus, those people over 25 years of age, especially in the more rural areas, are likely not to have completed their secondary education, if any.

Once on a job, or in a trade, the workers found it easy to get good on-the-job training, up to the university level. There were also some adult education programmes in existence in that region, especially correspondence courses.

In the Lac St. Jean-Chicoutimi area, it was found that 95-98% of the households possessed television sets. There are two television stations in the area, one at Jonquière, a C.B.C. Affiliate, and a privately owned station in Chicoutimi, which uses much of C.F.T.M. programming.

Because of the low level of schooling, the high unemployment, and the fact that almost everyone had access to a television set, the Québec government initiated its first experimental project in adult education through video in this area.

The Tevec project was an application of T.V. to a particular pedagogical problem,

that of a non-scholarized population which was to be recycled so that it could develop itself economically as a region.

The actual programs to be shown had to situate themselves in the socio-economic context of that particular region, firstly as a motivation for the individual to listen to what would otherwise be a dry, academic program, and, also, to try to develop a "regional consciousness", and a more acute awareness of the region's economic problems.

The aims of Tevec were to open up a series of courses at the elementary level (7th grade), and a follow up series at the high school level (9th grade) to the greatest possible number of adults. The academic matter (French, English, and mathematics) was inserted into programmes dealing with the socio-economic problems facing the region.

To help guarantee a viable feedback system, people trained in 'animation sociale' set up local and regional groups, as well as volunteer groups, and did active community work to interest people in the Tevec programmes. One of the essential aspects of the project was that the student make known his reactions rapidly and effectively.

There were regular house calls made by trained personnel to follow the progress of the individual students, to help them out, and, in the case of those with less formal schooling than the basal level of the programmes offered, to help these people attain the necessary comprehension to succeed in the course, and to persuade them if they fell too far behind, to attend the Saturday village classes. These village classes were two-hours long. During the first hour the students helped each other with problems that they had encountered in the week's programmes, and they discussed the programmes together. In the second hour, the teacher would help with any problems that the group was unable to solve by itself, or respond to questions which the group wished to have answered.

In general, the student would watch the programme, he would consult the brochure (which later developed into a newspaper) with additional backup information on the programme he had seen, both academic and socio-economic, and he would answer a daily questionnaire.

The answers to these questionnaires were recorded on I.B.M. cards furnished along with the brochures, the student keeping one copy, while mailing the other in a pre-stamped and pre-addressed envelope to the Centre Informatique du Cégep de Jonquière. The Cégep computer then transmitted the results to the information center of the Ministry attached to the project which did two things: recorded each student's results and scores in his personal file, and transmitted the overall results to those responsible for making the programmes. Backup programmes were previously prepared for every telecast programme, and if the results of the tests on a given programme showed that many people did not understand, then the backup show was telecast, as a reinforcing mechanism.

There was approximately a two month period before this feedback system really got rolling. There were two main reasons for this: the system was handling about 15,000 cards per day; and the population of the region had had very little if any experience with I.B.M. cards

Programmes:

The programmes were each 90 minutes length, and were shown on both of the T.V. stations mentioned above, at four times in the day: 7:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:30 p.m., and 12:30 a.m.

Each of the programmes was divided up into 4 sections. The first part, which was the presentation of the particular socio-economic theme for that day or week could include such diverse items as film clips, interviews and discussion groups which combined the local people, with experts on the given topics. This was followed by a 10 minute section which dealt with student feedback, through film clips, tapes, letters etc. . . Each programme devoted 35 minutes to the presentation of academic material, and the rest of the time consisted in answering the questions of the previous day's questionnaire. The programme also offered two coffee breaks of approximately 3 minute duration.

Tele-Clubs

On Fridays, there was a general recap of the week's programmes, and in the evening there was a programme directed not only to those people registered in the programme itself, but to the public at large. These were the Tele-Clubs. The Tele-Clubs were a review of the socio-economic themes that had been studied and explored during that week. People in various villages and locales gathered in groups of five to twelve, and, after watching the Tele-Club show for the week, they would discuss it, and/or the topic it covered. The findings of the groups were then posted in a central location, along with the opinions of the other groups in the region. The clientele at these Tele-Clubs was a faithful one but it was not as significant numerically as were some other participatory aspects of the program.

Academic Dossier:

The student's dossier contained the following documents: his registration form, reports of house calls made and the progress noted, and the answers to the daily questionnaires. The latter two were a part of the overall evaluation formula, and accounted for a percentage of the student's final mark. The rest of the mark came from a final examination written individually. Over 6,000 people successfully completed the two year course and received diplomas certifying 9th grade educational status.

Regional Consultative Committee

In order to provide both a local and regional participatory structure, the animateurs sociaux set up the following structures. Local committees were formed in each village and municipality by citizens who freely donated their services and their time. There were 73 of these local committees in all, who sent delegates to 4 Sector Committees, which compared notes on particular problems of these sub-regions of the area. These four sector committees sent delegates to a Regional Consultative Committee; also on this committee were representatives of all the important regional organizations (economic, political, social, religious, etc. . .) as well as the Regional Supervisor of Tevec. The mandate of this committee was to advise Tevec of public opinion on all phases of the project, and to coordinate the action of the different regional organizations and the people participating in Tevec.

Animation Sociale:

The animation sociale techniques were not put to the same uses as those usually cited in discussions of animation sociale work. That is, while people were encouraged to open up their perceptions and to develop a fuller regional consciousness as well as a private and personal consciousness, they were channelled to do so within the limits of an organized adult education project. The