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The History Corner

Memories of the Dukane Filmstrip Projector

By Barbara Fiehn, Western Kentucky University

Classroom technology from the mid-Twentieth Century

Sitting in a place of honor on my professional book shelf is my copy of Jerrold Kemp's *Planning and Producing Audiovisual Materials*, 3rd Edition. Along-side is Brown's *AV Instruction: Media and Methods*, 2nd Edition. While worn and a bit dusty, these books formed a solid base for the technologist I am today. Amid the technology contained in those books is the classroom work horse of the 1940s through 1990s, the filmstrip projector. First the filmstrips used in the projectors were black and white, later becoming colored, and finally were coupled with a sound recording, a phonodisc (phonograph record) or half inch audio tape.

Filmstrip projectors were manufactured by a number of companies. From the schools I worked in I remember Viewlex, Bell and Howell, and Dukane. The Dukane 750 Silent Filmstrip / Slide Model 28A75 was a modern looking rectangular, cream colored box sold primarily in the 1970s by the Audio Visual Division of the Dukane Corporation of

St. Charles, IL. The "advanced models of the projector included the capability to connect to a sound device that could be synchronized with the movement of the film, while other versions had a cassette player built into them" (Barnes, 2003, p.4). Using a 50 Hz subaudible tone the sound filmstrip projector allowed the classroom teacher to monitor the classroom while the filmstrip and narration played.

I have clear memories of annually gathering all of the filmstrip projectors for inventory, and cleaning the lens, glass film channel, and fan housing. The filmstrip projector was easy to use, sustained little damage, and relatively inexpensive to purchase. Teachers used this machine consistently; it was *the* teaching machine of its day.

Reference

Barnes, K. R. (2003). *Dukane Filmstrip Projector*. AECT Archives Paper. DeKalb, IL: ETT 640, Northern Illinois University.