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Hertzberg
Film 4200
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I attempted to film smoke rings blown across the frame. I shot over five minutes of smoke rings and various other smoke tricks. Finally, I decided to use the footage of a botched smoke ring.

Smoke rings are produced with lips forming an "O" while blocking the center of the "O" with your tongue, then a quick single pulse or pop of your jaw to propel the air from your mouth forwards. I failed to block the flow of smoke in the middle and instead shot a ball of smoke angled diagonally upwards. The ball rotates in a similar motion to that of a hurricane before the rotation causes the smoke ball to abruptly dip before dissipating. This dip is not unexpected since the majority of smoke rings that I blow dissipate in the same fashion. (Sketch on page 2)

To produce the smoke tricks I used a glass blunt, a chillum pipe that has an adjustable bowl size. I hung a black blanket over a door for the back ground and attached a single one-hundred fifty watt LED to the top of the door. Due to the weak light and distance from it I had to use the lowest exposure that my camcorder is able of recording at. Since I have a mid-range HDV camcorder (Sony HVR-A1U) the exposure alters the shutter rate, aperture, and iso simultaneously, they are unable to be manipulated individually.

This accounts for the artifacts in my footage and the shallow depth of field. I placed my camcorder on a tripod at head level when sitting in a chair. I sat next to the camera which was angled about forty-five degrees in front of me. My focal plane was very shallow and focused around ten centimeters from the lens. The focal length of the lens I used was 5.1 mm; this created a plane in focus that was just over six inches across. My footage was recorded in 16:9 at 1080.60i, however, after editing on Imovie (version 9) I rendered my footage to 16:9 at 720.60i.

The clip demonstrates how a rotational force on an object can affect the direction of the motion of the object. I like how the motion of the smoke ball enters the middle of the right side of the frame the breaks the top of the frame and reenters in the middle of the top of the frame. Since the smoke enters and then leaves the frame, the fluid physics could have been captured better. However, I believe the clip is much more interesting because of the way it enters and leaves the frame. I am curious to why each time I shot either a smoke ring or ball, they always dissipate with a dip. I feel that I have fulfilled my intent in shooting because I was able to capture the majority of a smoke trick flow. If I were able to I would like to improve my lighting. I believe I could develop the idea further by operating the camera while I shoot other people doing smoke tricks.

