This interview was part of a series of interviews conducted by John Stover, a sociology graduate student. He was studying the filmmaker-run social justice distribution co-op, New Day Films, of which Goldsmith has been a member since 1996. The interview took place in Goldsmith's office at the Saul Zaentz Media Center in Berkeley, California.

John: So I always start in the same place, and I'd be interested to hear from you – how did you get into the field of documentary filmmaking? What was that process like for you?

Rick: I was at a career crisis I guess when I was about 28, and this was in 1979. And I had been working for community agencies for a number of years. I'd been doing administrative work for community agencies, some counseling as well. And then the more administrative work I did, the more I felt like a glorified bookkeeper, and I said, "Wait a second. I went to art school; I started architecture; I dabbled in film; I consider myself kind of a creative person, and here I am doing grant management and bookkeeping." And so it was a "What's wrong with this picture?" kind of thing.

So I just kind of tried to figure it out, I guess. I talked to friends of mine and eventually just hit on filmmaking in general. And I took a six-week summer course at a place called the Berkeley Film Institute, which no longer exists – as a matter of fact, it probably had a five-year life span – and I never looked back. That was the summer of 1979.

And how I got specifically into documentary filmmaking: I think I always felt like I had something to say; I wanted to contribute in some way to the social fabric of my community, and documentary filmmaking just seemed like a natural to me. I don't remember giving it any more involved thought than that.

John: How were you involved in your community?

Rick: Well, when I moved out here in 1975, I quickly got involved with the Berkeley Free Clinic. Berkeley Community Health Project is the official name, but Berkeley Free Clinic is what everybody knows it – and I got into the mental health part of it, which was called the Rap Center, and I did counseling – peer counseling and other mental health-related things.

And then the more I got into the administrative end of it – we called it the *administrative collective*, which was a paid position. We got like $400 a month, and there was even a fight about that – "Was that too much?" – I got involved on a deeper level in some of the political and advocacy issues that revolved around healthcare and mental healthcare especially for the

indigent and so forth. So that was really my main thing, and I did that from ’75 to ’78. I was involved lightly in politics, political campaigns, local political campaigns for mayor and city council.

John: For the city of Berkeley?

Rick: City of Berkeley. So I remember doing that and campaigning and – probably against Prop 13. I’m just kind of reaching back in my memory bank for the late ’70s, and that’s kind of the thing I did. I was always somewhat politically aware, and I’d been involved in anti-war protests in the late ’60s, early ’70s. So that’s just kind of a natural, I think, extension of that.

John: Where did you go to college?

Rick: I went to college – as a freshman, I went to Brown University and started taking courses at RISD, Rhode Island School of Design, my second year. So my second year I was half at RISD, half at Brown, and then I formally transferred to RISD for my third year, and then I dropped out.

John: Is that when you were involved in anti-war protests?

Rick: Yeah.

John: So you took this Film Institute course in ’79?

Rick: Right.

John: What did you do next then on this road in being a filmmaker?

Rick: I tried to get work, and I did get a little bit of PA work, Production Assistant work. And also – I mean I gravitated right away, even in the summer course, to editing, so I was able to get some assistant editing work – sporadic but right away – as soon as I got out of school. And then I got a job with John Korty. Do you know the name?

John: No. Who’s that?

Rick: He was really a very prominent independent filmmaker – still is – still well loved, well noted in the Bay Area. He was in Mill Valley at the time. I’m laughing because the ironic thing was I was back in the – they were involved in a big animated feature, and I couldn’t do animation, so I got a job in the administrative, and I was doing bookkeeping again. So I did

that for a year, and then I finally did some production work with John. And then at that point, it was really time for me to move out.

So that was '80, '81, and again, I was trying to get freelance work in assistant editing, which I got a little bit here, a little bit there.

John: What was interesting to you about editing?

Rick: I think it was my makeup – partly that kind of math orientation I think I have of sitting down and logically putting stuff together both from my art background, from my math background, and from just my sensibilities. It's like I got it right away, and I liked it right away.

You're in a film school environment, and again, I'm back in the summer of '79 – and different people gravitate to different things. Some people – they just pick up a camera, and they don't let go – never. And for me, it was more the editing. It was the creative process of the editing. It always seemed to me from the beginning that you really shape a film in the edit room.

So that was my thing, and in 1982, I did my first documentary film. It was a short film; I still have one of the awards somewhere on my bookshelf here. Best Short Film – San Antonio something or other.

John: What was the subject of the film?

Rick: It was a mural that was painted in the Mission District that depicted Latino art and culture. The Mission District was really then – maybe still now – but then was the heart of the mural painting culture in the Bay Area – maybe in the whole country. So I thought that was – I'd been turned on by the murals in Mexico and in Nicaragua on a trip that I'd done just previous to that, so I just wanted to explore it.

So that was my first film – 15 minutes – nice little film – won a couple of awards, taught me how to produce a film because I had to raise money for it. And I was kind of on my way. It was a rocky road to get it produced, but it's a short film, so it was less than a year in production.

John: What were some of the challenges you experienced on that first film?

Rick: On that first film? Getting it, getting the whole process, raising the money for sure, learning how to deal with rejection letters because it was amazing how many you'd send out and how many would come in as rejections. And that wasn't actually that difficult for me. It is for a lot of people. But

I got that most of the time people aren't going to just open up their wallets and give you money. So then some of them did, and that was great.

Working with a crew – I mean when you say *challenges*, it's not like I struggled, struggled like, "Oh, God, this is really hard." But you begin to learn, "Okay, how do you hire a crew? How do you find a crew? How do you hire them? How do you deal with political correctness?"

At the time, it was funny. It was the Mission Cultural Center, and they were my fiscal sponsor, and one of the things was half my crew had to be Latino. So actually, they turned me onto this terrific cameraman who was from El Salvador. I just loved working with him, and I loved his work. So that was great.

And then I needed an assistant cameraman, who also happened to be Latino, but before I got him, I interviewed somebody. I don't know why I'm thinking of this … but it was a woman who applied for the job who I didn't like – didn't think she was qualified. And I just said, "No." I mean I didn't think twice about it. And she came back and threatened me with a suit for – she was Latino.

John: Oh, a discrimination lawsuit?

Rick: Yeah, yeah. She was Latino.

John: Oh, my God.

Rick: Yeah. So anyway, it didn't amount to anything, and the Mission Cultural Center pretty much backed me up; they were good about it. But you learn a little bit.

It is a funny thing in the documentary filmmaking world and in the culture that we live in – I'm a white male; I get it, and I get that all the privileges I've had – but I've run up against those things, too, where you feel like you can't get grants because you're not politically correct enough. Anyway, I smile about that, too, because it's not a big deal. It is not a big deal at all.

John: But the Mission Cultural Center – that was the fiscal agent?

Rick: They were the fiscal agent, yes. They were the fiscal agent for that first film.

John: So clearly, there was some trust, though, because they were entrusting you with doing this documentary.

Rick: Oh, yeah, totally. Oh, yeah. No, that was a totally wonderful experience. I don't know why I even brought it up now, but you're bringing me back to a time I haven't even thought about in a long time. You said, "What are some of the challenges?" Well, some of the challenges are that you don't just go ahead and have to deal with the creative process, which is challenging enough. There are other hiccups along the way; there are other obstacles along the way; that's all I'm saying.

It was in response to that in your question that I thought well, I could give you the easy answer of, "You've got to figure out how to make a film. You got to figure out a script. You got to figure out who you interview," which is – those *were* all the challenges. Those are the main challenges, but then there's this other stuff, too. It's like anywhere else in society; it's not straightforward. You don't just get to do what you want to do; you've got to deal with other stuff, too.

John: Was that surprising?

Rick: No, not really surprising – just a little bit of a wake-up call but again, it's just a little a hiccup in the road. It's like, "Oh, God, am I going to be sued? No." And then it passes. But sometimes – I know people in this industry where legal stuff or that kind of stuff has gotten in the way, and it's hard enough making a documentary film without the other bullshit.

But I've been relatively lucky. The main challenges for me were to get it done, to get it shot, to get the music done, to get it mixed, to get it – and that was the fun, too, every step of the way. "How am I going to figure out the music? Oh, I know this group, Grupo Raiz, from La Pena." In fact, I might have even been singing with them at the time in La Pena Chorus.

So it was like getting in touch with these people that I knew from the chorus, and saying, "Hey, can I use your album for this thing?" And they were very accommodating. It's all part of the creative process, and that was fun – challenging and fun.

John: Interesting. Let's jump ahead. So I didn't get a chance to watch *Everyday Heroes*, but I have seen and I watched again a little bit last night *The Most Dangerous Man in America* which we showed also at the Art Institute where I work with Lexi.

Rick: Oh, yeah.

John: And then I watched a little bit of *To Tell the Truth*. So let's – I'd like to talk about those two films for a second because they have similar themes.

Rick: I think all my films have similar themes, but those two – oh, which two?

John: *The Most Dangerous Man* and *To Tell the Truth*.

Rick: Yeah. Not *To Tell the Truth – Tell the Truth and Run: George Seldes and the American Press*. Yeah.

John: Sorry.

Rick: But people mis-title it all the time. There's no *To* in there. Yes, they are similarly themed, and it would be also instructive to talk about *Everyday Heroes* because it is a completely different film – I mean a completely different type of film.

John: And that was about the AmeriCorps, right?

Rick: Yeah, but these two that you mentioned are historical and somewhat biographical films, and *Everyday Heroes* was totally the opposite. It was in the here-and-now; it was nobody famous; it was just people going through a year, and we followed people through a year. It's maybe the two main type of documentary films. One, retell a story that has already happened, and the other is tell a story that is happening before your eyes.

John: What was more appealing to you?

Rick: They're both appealing in very different ways. And we just showed *Everyday Heroes* here in Fantasy last month, and it was nice to revisit it and see how different it was. So I can address that in however way you want, but I don't think I have a "more" or a "less." But they're very different than I can expound on the positives of both of them.

John: Well, one of the things I'm interested in doing in this process is sort of understanding how the process of documentary filmmaking and your techniques like things around cinematography, editing, point of view, sound – how those things relate to the messages that you're trying to convey in the films that you're putting together. So I'd be interested for any of your films to hear how your decisions around those techniques lend themselves to political/cultural messages.

Rick: Okay, good. Well, let's start with *Tell the Truth and Run* because that really was the first one. I mean *Anatomy of a Mural* was, too, but that's a short film, and I do think it would be wise to move on.

It's funny because I had never made a film of this scope, and why I thought I really could is beyond me, but I guess I just had no doubts that I could. And from the beginning, I saw it as a feature length film.

I came upon this journalist – 98-year-old journalist – from a radio program that I heard an interview with him, and he was just very exciting to listen to and had all these things to say about the press and about history – very fresh, very frank. I liked his manner; I liked his message and everything about him. I just thought this was going to be a film, and when I looked up some of his writings, I kind of got this structure of what would be a film for me.

So I don't know what I even used as models. I remember an interview that I did when that film came out, and I was asked who were my models – maybe even asked who in the documentary world who were my models. And I remember answering that *my* models were people like Hitchcock and Costa-Gavras, who did, back then, a lot of political films but all dramatic films – and even a film like *Citizen Kane* – Orson Wells – films that had strong narrative and that – I don't know.

Somehow, I think I knew early on that a film is filled with questions, and that's the way you best tell a story – continue to ask questions either literally or figuratively that the audience has to keep asking questions in their mind – either basic like, "What's next? What's going to happen?" *Perils of Pauline* – "Is that guy going to survive the waterfall?" – whatever. Or "Why is this guy doing what he did," or "This guy just mentioned his father. How does his father figure into this story," or "What's going to happen," or "Why did he make this choice?"

So I think instinctively, I build my films around questions and answers because otherwise, a person's going to fall asleep or get bored or whatever. So to me, when you find a character like I did – George Seldes – who you admire and whose story you want to tell, you have to be careful that you're not just saying for an hour straight or 90 minutes or two hours how wonderful this guy is because that's not a film. And you often see that in documentary films – not the well-made documentary films but what I consider the poorly-made documentary films – is the subject matter is there, and it's rich, but the storytelling is boring.

So to me, it has to be a series of – especially if you're going to do feature length – you have to say, "What's going to hold my audience's interest for an hour and a half or two hours?"

John: How did you strike that balance with George in terms of highlighting what's maybe positive about him as well as maybe some of his shortcomings?

Rick: Right. Well, his story was in two parts, in a sense. The first part was his career as a foreign correspondent. Then I set up the film with a line from one of his books which was an autobiographical line, which was something like, "My life as a newspaper man was something like the thrilling thing it is in fiction, but from the first day to the last, there was censorship; there was distortion; there was suppression of the news; there was always coloring in the news; there was always some way to deceive the public," or something. "Getting the truth," or "Getting at the truth is a newspaper man's problem as deep and as wide as the world" – something like that. So that's my setup line in the film – comes in the first three minutes of the film.

So the first half of the film is the thrilling thing it is in fiction and how he comes up against censorship and suppression in every instance. So some of the things were – he goes over his first days in Pittsburgh where there's a censorship story there; he goes over to WWI and censorship from General Pershing with the Soviet Union where they get censored by the Soviets and threatened to be expelled, and then Italy – the same thing.

So that was the framework there, not so much, "Was he right? Was he wrong? Was he good? Was he bad?" That was *The Perils of Pauline* story at the beginning while sticking with the theme, and then as he became a press critic and started his own journal, it was a look at the press itself. So then my questions, "This way, or this way?" revolved around what the mainstream press was doing wrong and he was criticizing. But then as he started his own journal, what were some of the quirks or challenges that *he* came up with or he tended to be –

I mean I have to say it was not strong on criticism of him, but things like that he always – everything was, "The greatest, the best, the least, the worst." He spoke in hyperbole all the time, and this was somebody who worked *for* him saying this. Well, everything wasn't always the best, the greatest, the least, the worst. So you had to take this with a grain of salt. And somebody else commented on, "He's calling everyone a fascist this and a fascist that," but what does that mean to people? He meant it to be this and –

So to me, it didn't so much revolve around how it might revolve around say, Napoleon – "He did this great, and he was great here, but he was horrible here," or Carnegie or somebody like that, but more the challenges that he faced and the decisions he made and why he made them. And if I can jump ahead –

John: Um huh. Please.

Rick: – the Ellsberg film, too – and this I'm co-directing, so it's not all my call. But still, to the extent that I was able to shape it, it wasn't so much, "Is Daniel right? Is Daniel wrong? Is he a traitor, or is he a hero?" which one could make a film that that's the central theme. To me, it was – here's a person who sees a great wrong in front of him, as we all do all the time whether it's a great wrong on our country or you go to work and they're doing something unethical, or your best friend is screwing somebody that you don't want him to be – whatever. We're all faced with these choices of like, "Whoa. That's not so good. Should I speak out against that? Well, that's a risk for me. Maybe I don't want to do that."

So to me, here was a guy who was at the center of power and those people you don't think of once they get there making those kind of conscience-laden decisions. They're at the center of power; they're going to do the thing; they have a job to do, and they do it. And they're mostly men, and that's what they do and – boom. No, this was a guy who self-reflected all the time. How does somebody like that, who was such in the seats, the halls of power, two steps away from the Secretary of Defense – Robert McNamara – how does he go and do something like this – leak a top secret document to the *New York Times*?

So to me, that's a much more interesting film – how does *he* get from Point A to Point B, and then once he does, *he* sets off a chain of events. Well, he leaks this thing to *The New York Times*. What are *they* going to do with it? This is a top secret document. Are they going to publish it, or are they not going to publish it?

Egil Krogh, who was an aide to President Nixon, is charged with, "Get Ellsberg." That's a crisis of conscience for him. "Do I do that? Is this right? Well, present it to me like national security is at risk here. I got to do whatever I can to –" So it sets off this chain of events of a crisis of conscience in like eight different people – his wife, his son, his co-conspirator, Anthony Russo, two Nixon aides, all the newspaper people, the lawyer for the newspapers. "All I wanted to know was – can you publish top secret documents? Is it legal? I got *The New York Times*

hanging in the balance here. Am I going to go out on a limb and push this thing because if I lose, then maybe the *Times* ceases to become the *Times*."

So anyway, whatever the subject matter is, I guess what I'm saying is you have to look at, first of all, why you got drawn to this subject matter; what's compelling about it; and in the end, what do you want people to leave with? So with Ellsberg, again, if the question is, "Was he a hero or a traitor?" to me, that's a pretty narrow question. And in fact, 98 percent of the audience is going to have decided that at the beginning. In our film, we could have framed it that way. What's the point in saying, "Was this guy, 40 years ago, a hero or a traitor?" To me, no point.

But what's the point in getting you, as an audience member, to examine, "What would I do in that situation?" or "Wait a second. This guy did leak top secret documents. What about today? What's going on in Iraq? What's going on in Afghanistan?" Two words that did not appear in our film – but obviously, they were the subtext for the film.

John: Well, I couldn't – both times I watched the film, I just couldn't keep thinking about weapons of mass destruction.

Rick: Right, exactly. Exactly. And we never said, "Bush;" we never said, "Iraq;" we never said, "Afghanistan." But obviously – and I use this analogy a lot – are you familiar with the play by Arthur Miller, *The Crucible*?

John: Um huh.

Rick: Okay, so it was written during the McCarthy era; it was performed on stage during the McCarthy era. It never once mentioned McCarthy. It took place in the 1600s – the Salem Witch Trials. Obviously, he's not going to write a play about the Salem Witch Trials because he finds Salem, Massachusetts interesting. There's a reason he wrote that play then. So same with us and all the questions that come off of that are the questions that I want people to leave with.

John: Is what you intended going into the filming of – let's take *The Most Dangerous Man* – is what you intended your vision at the beginning – is that the outcome of the film? Are they in alignment? Are there differences?

Rick: Right. I think in general for *The Most Dangerous Man*, yes, they're very much in alignment, and I think that was true with each of the three films

that we're talking about. I don't think it's always the case, but I think that you have to be both arrogant and humble to be a documentary filmmaker. And by that I mean you have to be arrogant enough to think that in some subject, especially if it's a present day subject where you're following something but even in a thing like the Ellsberg film – to say that you have a vision for what this film is going to be – and it's like you can't just go into it and start shooting people and start coming up with questions. You have to have a script, an outline, a whatever, a treatment, at least, of where you want to go and what you want to say and what the themes are.

And you have to be humble enough to not shut yourself off to the surprises that you're going to get along the way because if you are, then to me, it's not a true documentary film. I suppose technically it is; you could do it that way, but if you're not open to the discovery – I don't know. There's something about may it be – it's being a documentary filmmaker – if you know that much about your subject that you can shape the whole thing before you even pick up the camera, then you're either a genius or you're missing the big picture. And I think any author, any – would say the same thing. When you get into a subject, you discover stuff, and you have to be pliable enough, humble enough, if you will, to let the material change *you* and change at least in subtle ways where you originally intended to go.

John: What did you discover about Daniel's story that you didn't know when you started?

Rick: Very good question. What I discovered about Daniel is that he – especially for somebody who I knew going in is somebody who sucks the air out of a room – he's big; he's arrogant; he's big; if you were to just get together with him and it wasn't a film about *him*, he'd probably do most of the talking. So what surprised me – pleasantly surprised me – was that he was so self-reflective, and I think that's both what made him who he was – in other words, a man who would leak the Pentagon Papers and then talk about – but it also made him a good subject because on camera he wasn't just saying stuff that was pat. You know what I mean?

John: Um huh. It's very process-oriented. He described a process.

Rick: Yes, that's right. And so to the extent that he did that and could reflect and self-reflect and respond genuinely to questions from me and Judy, probably most of which he'd heard before – he's been interviewed a lot of times but maybe not in the same way that we asked them – and formulated answers in response, that was terrific – as opposed to George Seldes, in a way, who was also a terrific interview but in a different way. And he was somebody who was already 98, and I think first of all, when you're at that

age, a lot of your response does come from rote, from having said it a zillion times, and so it's hard to be fresh. But he wasn't as self-reflective as Dan Ellsberg was. So I think that was the biggest thing.

And you asked a slightly different question – what was surprising about his story? I think what was surprising about his story, as we got into it, was that there was so much richness in so many parts of the story. And by that I mean *The New York Times* part of the story had its own drama. Even *The Washington Post*, which we didn't deal with, had it's own drama. Tony Russo had his own drama. Robert, his son, introduced something else.

People like Janaki and Randy Keeler, who were the anti-war people – there was a whole other thing going on within the anti-war movement and behind the scenes that I wish we could have put a little bit more in film. We couldn't for other reasons, but it had it's own drama, so it was a many-layered story in a way that I didn't know it was when I first started.

John: Did that complicate the editing?

Rick: It could have complicated the editing. I think what we had going when we edited – I started as an editor, then we went to Lawrence Lerew, and then we went to Michael Chandler. What we had first of all is we had two directors who had come together on a vision.

John: You were one, right?

Rick: I was one, and Judy Ehrlich was the other. And so we had to be in agreement, and there had to be something that was startling, and maybe even startling in the same way to both of us, to veer away and then incorporate into this story. You know what I'm saying? We had a framework, and it was hard enough just keeping two directors on the same page. And then if you started finding other things out in the story, well, that's interesting, but how far can you go?

There was stuff with Harry Rowen. I don't know if you remember him in the film, but he was Ellsberg's boss at the RAND Corporation, and we tried to get him to speak on camera in the end and weren't able to. But stuff about Harry Rowen, stuff about Dan and his first wife and the tension there about getting his children involved – we have some of that in the film. There's a lot more of that, which I found fascinating and in a certain way would have liked to get in.

In the end, I think all the choices we made were great ones, and I wouldn't second guess any of them, but there were times when I felt like, "Oh, I want to go here a little bit more." The more people you have in the ship, the heavier the ship is and the harder it is to – the heavier the ship is, the harder it is to turn it. So I think there was only so much room for that – that's what I guess what I'm saying.

John: Both *Tell the Truth* and *The Most Dangerous Man* – and correct me if I'm wrong – I would categorize them as highly stylized documentary films.

Rick: Hmm. Okay.

John: You're using a lot of archival footage; you're doing recreations; you have sort of the traditional talking head, "voice of God" narration.

Rick: Yeah, in the Seldes film and Ellsberg – he was the "voice of God."

John: *He* was, right. And I'm just curious – sort of a side question – did you script those for them ahead of time, or was that them just sort of talking and thinking?

Rick: Okay, so two different ways – the Seldes film we had – if you remember, we had two narrations going. We had the overall narration – "voice of God," if you will, which was Susan Sarandon, and it was purposely a woman.

John: Why?

Rick: Because we also had – and this I concede from the very beginning – the written word of George Seldes being spoken by Ed Asner, and I wanted to be – what easier way to differentiate than have a woman do one and a man do the other? If you have two men, if they sound at all alike, people aren't thinking – they don't get – I actually had people – many people who thought that Seldes *was* reading his own words –

John: Oh, really?

Rick: – even though it was Ed Asner. And for that film, I had a scriptwriter, Sharon Wood, who was terrific and taught me everything I know about scriptwriting. I consider myself pretty good now. At that time, we shared credit, but as I said to my opening audience, anything that was really good scriptwriting – that was hers. Anything that was awkward – that was mine.

[John laughs]

Rick: But she was very good both in writing treatments and proposals but writing a documentary script. So when there was script to be written – I would edit stuff, and she would look at it again, and then she would either write stuff or not write stuff because it didn't need writing, and then we went back and forth, back and forth. And then the Seldes passages – they were read by Asner. I pretty much knew in my mind which ones I wanted to include.

So in the end, yes, of course, Susan Sarandon sat down in October of '95 right before – when we were locked.

John: What do you mean, "We were locked?"

Rick: *Locked* means that you've done all the picture editing and –

John: Oh, I see. So the film is locked in place, and now you're just doing the final touches?

Rick: It's locked in place; that's right. And so we had what's called a – again, my vocabulary is failing me – not a dummy but a narrator who's not the final narrator.

John: Like a stand-in narrator or something?

Rick Anyway, so yes, we had a stand-in narrator. "Scrtch-track" narrator, that's the term I was looking for. And that script – and that's how the final film was cut and locked. And then we recorded Susan, and I had somebody with a stopwatch to make sure we were on the same pace because we didn't want to have to open up the film or close it down because at that point you don't want to do that. So then we just put her narration in there. So yes, entirely scripted with maybe one or two minor, minor exceptions; she might have changed a word or two or something like that.

With Dan, it was much more complicated because – two reasons. First of all, the decision to use him as a narrator came fairly late in the process. Early on, it *was* going to be the "voice of God," the third-person narrator. Then, partway through, we started using Dan's voice, so we were going to have – like the Seldes film – two narrators: the objective narrator, the third-person narrator, and the main subject's autobiographical voicings. And then, the further we did that, the more it seemed like the third person narrator was irrelevant. It didn't have really a leg to stand on. And so finally we deleted it.

John: Because of who Dan was in terms of his personality or for other reasons?

Rick: Because of the way the film was going – that as Dan's first person narration, "I did this; I walked out of my safe with this" – as he told that story, he was such a compelling narrator. And not only him – that personality, but the text of what he was writing, what he was reading, what we put together from what he *had* written was much more compelling.

And then we kept chopping away the third person narrator to the point where there might be six chunks left of third person narration, and then it was kind of like, "What's that narration doing there?" You watch this film, and you've heard Dan say, "I ran down the hall, and a flash cable came in, and I did this, and blah, blah, blah; I did that." And then you had this third person narrator coming in 12 minutes into the film, and it's like "Whoa. What's he doing there?"

And finally, at the 11th hour, we decided, "No, let's just go with it." And so then we had to rewrite the third person narration in Dan's voice. And sometimes it was just a matter of changing the person.

John: *He* to *I* or something?

Rick: *He* to *I* – yeah, something like that. And I think we were generally successful. In the end, I would have liked to have had a little bit more time to process that whole approach as opposed to doing it at the last minute, but I think we did it successfully enough. So when there was a passage about, "McNamara did this," or "The Gulf of Tonkin was about that," we let it be in Dan's voice. And we let – so be it. It worked. It worked well enough.

But yes, it was scripted, but why it was more difficult with Dan but actually good – it's okay that it was difficult – was because we knew that he would not read anything that he didn't feel like came out of his mouth. So a lot of what we wrote came from his writings, from his books, from other things, but some of it didn't, and we had a – it had to pass muster with him because he would have just stopped and said, "No," and then *he* would have rewritten stuff.

John: Did you let him review it ahead of time?

Rick: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. We went through many, many drafts, and he reviewed stuff, and then he would rewrite stuff. And we tended to whittle that stuff down because you have to have a very – he would write more for

an article or for a book, and when you're writing narration, it has to be much more spare than that. I learned that from Sharon.

John: Tell me about the reaction to the film.

Rick: To the Ellsberg film?

John: Yeah. How was it received? I mean you were nominated for an Academy Award. What was that like?

Rick: Well, obviously, it was great. It was great to be nominated. We knew we were in the running; we knew we had a strong shot. So we were waiting that morning like, "When are we going to get the call?" And actually, we never did get the call. I learned from our PR agent-he emailed me the second the news become public. The Academy is supposed to call you.

But of course it was great because it's recognition, and you realize that it's going to propel the film. You recognize a couple of things. One is – I mean we had already gotten some good notice. We'd gotten an award at the Mill Valley Film Festival, and we'd gotten an award at IDAA in Amsterdam – a Special Jury Award. And oh, we got this big award from the National Board of Review for this – Freedom of Expression one.

So we knew it was resonating with people, and we got good reviews and stuff like that. But each time it's – and of course, the Academy Award's in a different category from everything else. It jumps you ahead, and it just pushes everything forward, so you know that it's going to get seen more; it's going to get more hype; it's going to get more attention, and that's what it's all about.

John: And has that been the case?

Rick: Yeah, it's been a very successful film in every venue that it's been – and it's been in theaters, on American TV, on foreign TV, American film festivals, foreign film festivals, educational films, home DVD, and now, as far as we know – and now it's on Video on Demand, and we haven't got the reports in for that yet, so we're just hoping that it's doing well.

John: Have you attended screenings? Have you been like the filmmaker at the screening kind of thing?

Rick: Oh, yeah. A zillion, yeah.

John: What's that like to be able to have the dialogue with the audience, and there's your finished film, and now the audience is actually seeing it and thinking about some of the things you had hoped they would?

Rick: Well, it's great. And this part of it didn't totally surprise me because I always do films with young people in mind because I feel like – this is my own thing; I've never heard anybody agree with me, but for me, it's like people of my generation – I'm almost 60 – for people of my generation, if they see a film and they like it, it's like, "Wow, that was really good. That's really great," and they're back to their job, and they're trying to put their kids through college, and they're thinking about retirement, and it's not going to change their lives. When you're 50 years old – when you're 60 years old, you're supposed to be set in who you are; you're supposed to be comfortable in your shoes. That's what you're supposed to do. God, if my film changed somebody's mind when they were 60, I'd say, "What's wrong with that person?"

But when you're 20, you're not supposed to be comfortable in your shoes. You're *supposed* to be searching; you're *supposed* to be trying to figure it out. And so for me, if I speak to a high school or a college audience or even people in that age range, that's who I'm doing the film for. That's who I did the Seldes film for. That's certainly – *Everyday Heroes* for and that's who I did this film for.

So when we would go to the theatrical and even film festivals – but even more so the theatrical – no matter what we did – social network this, social network that, 90 percent of the audience is my age and older.

John: Really?

Rick: Yeah, no matter what you do. And so in a way, I kind of got bored with those Q&As relatively quickly. The same questions came up; the same comments came up. "I loved your film. I remember that era. I didn't know all the ins and outs of it, though, and this is good. And what about Afghanistan," and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Yeah, it was good; it was fun.

But for me, the real interesting interchanges are with young people. I'm going to be at Berkeley High Thursday, a week from yesterday, speaking to two classes that have already seen the film. So it's an hour with 100 kids and then another hour with another 100 kids. I've spoken at Marin Academy and several colleges and several audiences where it's mostly young people even if it's not at a college, and then you get a much more refreshing interchange.

John: What do the young people ask you?

Rick: Well, first of all they get right away that this is a film about the present and not about the past. They do ask some about the characters, about McNamara, about Ellsberg back then. They do want to make the parallels between today, Afghanistan or Obama, and what happened then with Nixon and Johnson and stuff like that, so we get into dialogues about that.

I try to, at least in some way, shape, or form, turn the conversation to the question of conscience and that what I see in our film as a contagion of conscience where Ellsberg gets this disease from Randy Keeler, who is willing to go to jail to stop the war. He says, "What can I do?" and then he leaks this thing, and then all these people – like we talked about before who have this crisis of conscience related to it.

So I try to engage in that, and I try to engage young people like, "What would you do?" and "What do *you* think about what he did? Was it right? Was it wrong?" and "What would *you* do, and what kinds of situations do you find yourself in where you feel like this – you can relate to these themes?" and stuff like that.

John: How is film, as a medium, an important way to change people?

Rick: I think what film does – just the filmmaking and this is not the exhibition of it – what film does in a way almost better than anything else – or can do – is it tells a story; it tells a story in a compelling way, and you can do it in a group. In other words, you can't read an article or a book in a group. You can have a book group, and you can discuss the book just like you could discuss a film. It's a little bit different because people read a book over – I mean I don't have to say how it's different; it's obvious how it's different.

So you can have a contained thing that you can watch in a half an hour or an hour or two hours, and then you can have a fresh discussion about it. There's something about that kind of dialogue between the creator and the audience that I think lends itself to having an impact, having a social impact, having a possibility of change or at least of thinking – stuff like that.

And I think – and this is the unfortunate part of when we live – is that we are more and more a post-literate society. So filmmaking I think is going to endure in a way that literature is struggling to. And any kind of the written word – even magazine articles, newspaper articles, essays, poetry,

for that matter – they're going to struggle to survive the less and less literate if we don't turn that around.

But filmmaking doesn't suffer from that, and in fact, it's almost become more of a cultural center now than it's ever been. Both television and films are like this cultural center where everybody can talk about – how many things can everybody talk about? Occasionally, there's something in the news like Greece, but even that – a lot of people say, "Greece, schmeece – I don't care about that. What does that have to do with me?"

But you get a reality TV program, a *Lost* or something like that – everybody's talking about it, and there are films like that, too. And I think our film to a certain extent in a – not a mass, mass audience – but people could have that dialogue. And I think there are a lot of films in New Day where you bring it into a classroom, and it's made for the classroom, and it's made to stimulate dialogue. I don't know – did I answer the question?

John: Yeah, absolutely. And that's a good segue to talk about New Day. What inspired you to get involved in the New Day community?

Rick: When I finished *Tell the Truth and Run*, I guess one of the first places my film was shown and I got an award was at the National Media Market, which I don't think exists or it has a different name, but it used to be in Oakland – National Educational Media Market or something like that.

And there was a panel, and there was somebody from New Day on the panel, and I didn't know what I was going to do. I had just finished the film in February, and this panel was in April or something. I didn't know what I was going to do to distribute my film, and I had explored some distributors. And there was somebody from New Day, and we talked, and I just was totally taken with the idea of – here was a group of social issue filmmakers; here were people distributing their own films, and I wasn't ready to let this film go. You know what I mean?

John: Why?

Rick: Because I felt like *I* wanted to see what audience it got to and how it got to the audience and have these kinds of interchanges like we just talked about with audiences. That wasn't a film that was going to have this kind of theatrical life that the Ellsberg film did. It was in a bunch of festivals but a bunch only, not a zillion. And then what was going to happen to it? It did appear on TV a year or two later, again, in a certain market. So what was going to be my relationship with the film once I was done with it? It could have been nothing.

And I think that's typical of filmmakers. I think that's changing now, actually, even beyond New Day, but it can be typical of a filmmaker. You're done with the film, and you give it to a distributor, and that's it; go on to the next project. And there's a lot to be said for that. I'm having a hard time now – what is it – 15, 16, 17 months after we opened in Toronto – getting on to my next project because I'm still tied to *The Most Dangerous Man*. But I don't think I'd have it any other way.

And like I said, I've got this thing at Berkeley High next week. I'm going to be speaking at – it's being shown at MoMA as part of the New Day thing.

John: So you're going out there?

Rick: Yeah, I'm going to go to New York. There's another thing in the Virgin Islands like the following month that I'm going to be doing. So I have these speaking gigs still, and POV is setting up a couple of speaking gigs for us still in conjunction with our contract with them. So it's a way to stay connected with the film, with the audiences, and with the themes that you spent years working on.

John: Tell me about your first experiences at – did you go to an annual meeting or a mid-year meeting first when you first became a member?

Rick: Mid-year meeting.

John: Do you remember that experience – what it was like, what you thought about the group?

Rick: Yeah. Okay, now you're taking me back again. I remember it was in November; it was here in the Bay Area – out at the Headlands, I think. And there were six of us – six new members and the steering committee. It was good for me because I liked the new people that I came in with; it felt like – I don't know. I guess I was kind of looking for a community. I told you I with was the Berkeley Free Clinic where you have – it's this kind of post-Vietnam collective. Collectives were really big in the '70s.

So New Day's not technically a collective, but it's that sort of feeling, and the Free Clinic *was* a collective where you're – it's a non-hierarchical thing that you've all engaged in the same undertaking; you "get" each other, and you're on this journey together and sharing this – it just felt neat to be in that community.

I can be a very loner type guy in the filmmaking process or be in my office alone. I don't go to a workplace where there's 20 other people there and you sit by the water cooler and talk about *Lost*.

[John laughs]

Rick: So it's nice to have that connection and that camaraderie. So I think I – you're talking about something from 14, 15 years ago; that's my memory of what the feeling was. And then the actual work was good. Like I said, I wasn't ready to give up the film, so it *was* a lot of work to try to figure out how to sell this thing. It did fairly well – at least in my first couple of years.

John: What's different about New Day's collective model versus, say, the Free Clinic, which was also a collective?

Rick: Well, New Day's not technically a collective, and the difference is that we're a co-op; we're a business. We're literally – we have come together in a literal sense for the purpose of selling our films. And to that extent, we are still separate entities.

John: What do you mean?

Rick: Well, New Day Films is – it's a co-op; it's an umbrella; it's not the whole ball of wax.

John: Because you all also have your own production companies?

Rick: Well, it's not only the production. I'm talking specifically about the distribution part of it, which is why we're all together. But I'm distributing *The Most Dangerous Man in America*. Nobody else in the co-op is distributing *The Most Dangerous Man in America*. I'm distributing my films; everybody else is distributing their films. Yes, we do come together for a common purpose, and yes, some people work on the website, and some people work on new members, and some people work on the catalog. We work on tasks together, and we have an annual meeting where we discuss business together.

So yes, that's similar to, say, the Free Clinic, and that binds us together, and it *is* collective-like. But the other part of it is where you're on your own and doing your own film. And in the end, it's a business. Now it's easy to fall into it not being a business in the sense that you get a lot of goodies from sharing all these experiences with these other people.

John: Like what kind of goodies?

Rick: You're talking about filmmaking; you're talking about – people go home to their wives, their husbands, their spouses, their companions, their whoever, and half the time they don't get it. And then you come together with these filmmakers and it's like, "Oh yeah, I get that. I get what being poor is about and being rejected in grants or having to travel around." So there's that. There's – specifically, people have gotten editors, camera people, sound people through the New Day collective – co-op I mean.

John: So you share referrals and resources?

Rick: Oh, yeah. No, I mean each other. There's Shirley Thompson and Elizabeth Finlayson; they've been editing; they *are* New Day members and they've been editing New Day members' films forever. And Jim Klein, too – and he's actually mostly known as having produced so many films, but he's edited a lot of – so literally, we're working on each other's films, and we get that. And then you get all sorts of resources about distribution and about filmmaking from each other. So those are the goodies that I'm talking about – and the friendships, the friendships.

John: What's something that New Day does well?

Rick: New Day does well – we stick to our mission of getting social issue films out in the community, out in the educational community. And when I say we do that well, it's because the structure of New Day, I think, encourages each of us to keep doing those kinds of films.

And then also the structure of New Day – we're a successful distributor. I mean educational distributors are really getting hit in the chops now. It's really hard out there for – you go through Icarus and Women Make Movies, California Newsreel, and Bullfrog; they're all suffering. And we're suffering a little bit maybe, but actually, business-wise, we're probably doing better than the others. And I'm not exactly sure why that is, but I do know –

John: What's your best guess?

Rick: My best guess is that the ingenuity especially of – I say, "the new members." Almost everybody is a new member. I've been there 14 years. I think of anybody who's newer than me as a new member. But the people who have joined in the last five, six, seven years I think bring such a sophisticated understanding of social media, of new trends, of the changing face of filmmaking as well as the changing face of distribution

and how you advertise and how you get out there that it may be that *we* benefit from that kind of construct more than others because they're run – the other distribution companies tend to be a lot of firing people and hiring new people every day, which would hurt them in another way, so they're being run by the same people that have run them five years ago, ten years ago. I'm not saying they're dinosaurs. They're probably very hip, and they're probably very hip to the new trends and stuff like that, but you know what I'm saying?

John: Yes.

Rick: Somebody who's joining the co-op this month has just gone through the filmmaking experience in the last two years – just gone through. So they've been using the Red camera; they've – using the Flip camera. They've dealt with – because there's other distributors out there. What's happening with Netflix, and what's happening with VOD and how do you – these are discussions that every few months we're getting new blood from people who have just gone through the absolute latest. So probably that keeps us ahead of the curve or at least with the curve.

John: But there's also some concern in New Day that you are taking on too many new members –

Rick: People have said that.

John: – and that you've grown really fast in the past couple of years.

Rick: We've grown extremely fast in the last several years – that's right. In the last five or six years, our membership's almost doubled.

John: What do *you* think about that?

Rick: I'm not as worried about the numbers. To me, if the quality of the films stays high and the energy of the new people stays high and – like I said, I think there was a transformation about five or six years ago in not only the – not so much the quality of the films, but the energy of the new filmmakers, and it just propelled the co-op forward. And I think we still enjoy that, and I'm not so worried about taking in too many people because I think that we're benefitting from anybody who's got the energy and really contributes, and then two, three years from now they're going to be on the steering committee, and they'll contribute even more.

The one thing that's a little bit unwieldy is the annual meetings become more unwieldy each year, so I'm a little bit concerned about that. But in

the scope of things, I'm not on the side of, "Oh, let's put a cap on the number of people that join."

John: Why do you need a facilitator?

Rick: Because we wouldn't be able to run these meetings by ourselves.

John: Why?

Rick: Because we don't have – the amount of time that – I just came off the steering committee in June. I was three years on the steering committee. It is an intense amount of time, and we're all volunteering that time. There is nobody on the steering committee that has the time, number one, to do what the facilitator does. They have to prepare for the meetings in a way that – over and above what Johnny and Marlene, the co-chairs, have to do – or any of us – not me anymore but any of the committee heads would have to do – steering committee people.

Again, you get people that are good at what they do – I'm not saying that right. We hired a facilitator; this is only the second facilitator we've ever had, and the other was a team, Arlene and Don. You've probably heard of them.

John: Um huh.

Rick: Okay. And then Elizabeth – and she came in – I don't know – seven or eight years ago it seems like. I'm not sure. They were hired because of what they do; they're good at facilitation. If it was somebody from our midst, you would have to pick from among the eight people in the steering committee who are there because they're good filmmakers, not because they're good facilitators, and they don't have the time to do it. They don't have the time to prepare, and it's not fair – wouldn't be fair to expect them to do it. It's already not fair to expect the steering committee to do what we do, but we do it.

So yeah, to me, it's a slam dunk, and the history of it is something that you can get from somebody else. But they were in a total mess when they then eventually hired Don and Arlene.

John: Yeah, it sounded like it was really a crisis in terms of the organization **[inaudible]**.

Rick: Right, and they didn't know how to make sense of it. And I think Don and Arlene – and especially Arlene – came along at a time – and she brought

the skills to the co-op that were critically needed at that time. Could they have projected that she was the right person? I don't know.

But the left, if you will, or the alternatives or this whole kind of collective culture – it's littered with organizations who went through the rise and fall *of* – burned out. And a lot of it is because you don't realize you can't just do it because you'll enjoy each other or are together for a common mission. It doesn't work that way.

John: What's something that New Day could do better?

Rick: Something that New Day could do better. That's a tough question not because there aren't a lot of things that are clunky, but – cut down on the emails; that's one of my pet peeves.

John: Too many emails?

Rick: Yeah, way too many emails. That we do better – I don't know.

John: Do you want to come back to it?

Rick: Yeah, let's come back to it.

John: What's the biggest challenge that you're facing as a company?

Rick: I think the biggest challenge that – I think – and this is a projection – I think the biggest challenge that we're facing – going to face – is right now and for the last however many years, we've distributed on 16 mm film; then we switched to VHS; then we switched to DVDs. DVDs have been the currency for the last five or six years at least, solidly. It's going to change soon. Nobody knows when, and everybody's a little bit amazed that it hasn't happened yet. But when it does, that change is going to be quick. And I don't know how we're going to survive.

The people who have been in the forefront of New Day Digital – I give them all the credit in the world because I actually believe – and I didn't believe when they started, but I actually believe they have the vision, that this *is* the future, that these discs – that's just – they're not going to be shipped through the mail five years from now. So what's going to happen?

I don't know what the business model is for New Day Digital. I don't think there is one in place, and I'm not sure there is one that exists. And so to me, that's the biggest challenge because we have a lot of product,

and we have more product every year. How are we going to economically get that product out to where it needs to go?

And I use the analogy of the newspapers today because they faced that crisis about three or four years ago, and they didn't face it successfully. The crisis was people are getting their – they had bam-bam-bam – like three blows in a row. *Craigslist* was the first one – took away classified advertising, their bread and butter. The Internet starting to – *The New York Times* on the web, the *L.A. Times* on the web, everything on the web. That was number two – couldn't figure out how to use their advertising to pull in the dollars.

Three – the demographic. I grew up – 7 years old – I was out on the front stoop picking up the paper, reading the sports section. I've been doing that for the last 50-some odd years of my life, and I'll do that until the day I die. But people in your generation – hardly anybody does that. They don't go out and read the paper in the morning.

John: I read it online.

Rick: You read it online. Okay, exactly. And a lot of people don't read it online. They read *The Huffington Post*, so they read whatever.

John: Or now they're getting it through Facebook, and they're linking.

Rick: I don't even know how that works. That shows what a dinosaur I am. So all I'm saying is – without digressing too much – is they were hit with the perfect storm of, "How to make your business model not work," like, "Exactly the ways that it couldn't work." How do you exist? Classified advertising. Let's take that away. And other advertising. Let's take that away. And new demographics. Let's take that away.

Before that, it was like people would read the evening news. Then the evening news was broadcasted, and then the evening newspapers went away. So for us, I'm amazed. It's like, "Okay, you guys were selling your films for like $275 for half an hour film. Well, now it's VHS, and it costs pennies to make it. How the hell are you going to stay in business?"

"I don't know. Somehow, we're still charging $200 and something – VHS. DVD – same thing. Somehow, we're still charging the money; somehow, people are still buying it." But it's going to come to an end because the perfect storm is going to hit us, and it's going to hit us soon, and I don't know why it hasn't hit us yet. When I look at my statement every month and Ellsberg film – it's on New Day Digital. I get one $5.00

sale to New Day Digital, and I get my 10 or15 or in a good month 20-some sales on DVDs. That's going to stop.

So that's the biggest challenge that we face. That's an economic one, and I don't get what's going to happen. Other than that, I think one of the challenges *is* our size as you bring up. I don't dismiss that this is a challenge. I don't want us to be eliminating, or I don't think it's like a critical thing that we have to limit the number of members. But I think it is a challenge that we're not 30 and 40 active people anymore. We're 70, and that's a difference. How do you make that work?

John: We're near the end of the interview. Is there anything that you would like to include that we haven't talked about, or have you thought of anything that New Day could do better?

Rick: It's just not jumping off my mind what New Day could do better.

John: That's fine.

Rick: If you were to propose some things – "These things have been brought up, and what do you think about it?" I might comment on them, but off the top of my head, I can't.

John: Well, I'll just throw one thing out. One thing that's come up in recent interviews is a concern about the lack of diversity in the past around race and ethnicity. Are those concerns that *you* share? Or is that something that you see that would benefit the community?

Rick: It's been an issue for such a long time. I would say that right now it's not an issue for me, and I'll tell you why. It's funny because I joined in 1996, and Deborah Chasnoff joined in 1997. Before she joined, there was not a gay person that we know – well, maybe it was, "Don't ask; don't tell." There was not a gay person that I know of in the co-op. There was not a gay-themed film in the co-op.

John: In '97 there wasn't?

Rick: No.

John: Wow.

Rick: *It's Elementary* – that was the first one. And I think it was because of Deborah Chasnoff and who she is and who she was in the community that

suddenly – then Andy came in with his film, and Johnny came in with his film and –

John: Leo.

Rick: – boom-boom-boom. Yeah, and Leo came in. And then boom-boom-boom-boom-boom – and suddenly, of all the distributors, with I guess the exception of Frameline – I don't even know that much about Frameline – we're probably the identified distributor for gay-themed films – that whole thing.

And yes, it's true. We've had hardly any people of color in this co-op, and we tried to address that in certain ways that white co-ops address things. I'm laughing because we faced this at the Berkeley Free Clinic. And in the end, we're actually more ethnically diverse now than we've ever been, even though it's still obviously predominantly white. And I think that's absolutely all to the good.

The reason I'm not that concerned with it – and I don't think there needs to be a lot of effort into it other than continuing to do the outreach to every community of filmmakers, and that means black filmmakers, Latino filmmakers, everybody. But other than that, I don't think we have to do special programs or this or this or that. I think – actually, this is a much bigger discussion. I think culturally, we're beyond that; we need to be beyond that I think in every aspect of our life. But that's a much larger discussion.

I think the thing we need to do is really address who's making films out there of benefit for social change. And a lot of them, by the nature of what the social problems are out there, are going to be people who are dealing with immigration stuff, people who are going to deal with poor people, people of color. I mean those are the films that are going to be out there. So if we're making an honest effort, and I believe we are, of inviting those people in and saying – then I think that's great. That's what we do. I don't think we need an affirmative action program, that's for sure.

John: Two final questions and then confidential demographic questions.

Rick: Okay.

John: What's your favorite aspect of being a documentary filmmaker?

Rick: My favorite aspect – oh, the liberty to be creative during such a high percentage of my working life. I consider myself lucky, and I'm even

making a living as a documentary filmmaker, and that's probably not true of even everybody in the co-op or maybe even half the people in the co-op. I consider myself fortunate that I can come to work every day and have –at least when I'm making films – have that be creative and energizing. That's a blessing.

John: Nice. What's your favorite aspect of being a New Day member?

Rick: Right now I would say actually, the camaraderie. That wasn't always the case with me. I mean I always liked New Day's thing, but I didn't necessarily feel close to the – but that's changed over the years, and I think it changed when I was in the steering committee, too. It was kind of like I got more embedded in it. So yeah, it's the camaraderie.

I remember when Magic Johnson got AIDS and he was asked, "What are you going to miss most?" And he said, "Being with the fellahs." And that always resonated with me because I think no matter who these people are – they're actors or basketball players or filmmakers or insurance salesmen or whatever – whatever you do, there's something in the social nature of – we're social beings. And that's both the thing that I get most out of New Day – and I think if I were to leave New Day, that would be the thing that I would miss most – being with the fellahs.

John: Nice. Okay, so final confidential demographics.

Rick: Okay.

John: Age?

Rick: Fifty-nine.

John: Race?

Rick: White.

John: Sex?

Rick: Oh, white Jewish – I don't know. There ought to be a box in there because I think there are a high percentage of Jewish people in the co-op. Sex – male.

John: Gender?

Rick: Male. Oh, what –

John: Sexual –

Rick: Okay, did we miss one?

John: No. So far it was *age*, *race*, *sex*, *gender*.

Rick: Oh, sex/gender?

John: Sex, then gender.

Rick: Oh, okay. You're – it's a finer line there than I would have thought to make.

[John laughs]

Rick: Okay, I got it. I got it. All right. I got it. I'm still old school.

John: Sexual orientation?

Rick: Hetero.

John: Religion?

Rick: Jewish.

John: Occupation?

Rick: Filmmaker.

John: Vocation?

Rick: Vocation? I'm not sure what's – occupation/vocation – filmmaker.

John: Okay. Highest level of education completed?

Rick: Well, I got an A.S. degree from Napa College, so I guess – I'm not sure what one says. I did three years of college, and then I came back, and I did like two years at a junior college and got an A.S. degree. So whatever you want to put in there. Not a B.A.

John: Okay. Annual income range?

Rick: That's a – boy, that's a really good one. Annual income range? I would say $30,000 to $80,000. It's that much of a range, yeah.

John: Okay. And percentage of income annually derived from documentary filmmaking?

Rick: Almost 100 percent.

John: Okay. Thank you so much, Rick.

Rick: Yeah, I'm just trying to think – is that really right? Yeah, I would include my work as an editor because I often work as an editor, and it has been almost exclusively documentary filmmaking for the last 15 years now. So yeah, I'd say almost 100 percent.

John: Great. Thank you so much.

Rick: You're welcome. This was fun. You're a good interviewer.

Duration: 90 minutes