Ron Fitch  
Interviewed by Daniel Nicoletta  
Model, sex worker  
August 2, 2005  

Transcribed: Loren Basham  

DANIEL NICOLETTA: It is August 2, 2005. This is Dan Nicoletta and this is an oral history of my dear friend, Ron Fitch, one of my heavily photographed super models. So why don't you introduce yourself and tell us when you were born, where you were born....  

RON FITCH: Okay, my name is Ron Fitch. I was born in Houston, Texas in 1961. June 4, 1961. I only lived there for 2 years and I live in Oakland, California.  

DN: What sign is that? What birth sign?  

RF: Gemini.  

DN: So can you tell us a little bit about your birth and your early years?  

RF: Well my parents didn't get along so they were divorced and she took the kids and fled to Oakland where her parents lived. And we lived with my grandparents for a little while until she got on her feet. Sometime, a few years after that, my father came and kidnapped my sister and I out of my grandparent's house in Oakland. And we went back to Texas in hiding. We didn't go to school for I think it was almost 2 years. I just remember my grandmother, his mom, a big old Indian lady and we just played in the yard a lot. She was really sweet to us. And he wasn't there, he just drug us out there. She took care of us. And then my mom got hip to what actually happened and came with 2 of her sisters and kidnapped us back one at a time. And so therefore we went back to Oakland and then I started elementary school. I think it was like the first grade by then.  

DN: Tell us the name of your mother and father.  

RF: My mother her name is Joyce Marie Delaney. She's Irish. And my father is English and American Indian. His name is Roy Fitch, Jr.  

DN: What tribe?  

RF: Cayuse Indian.  

DN: What can you remember about the interaction between your parents during those times when you were being tossed around? They must have been interfacing on some level.
RF: Right. I remember she would be home with us all the time being a housewife. But she would be, I noticed that she would be frustrated and pent up a lot because he wouldn’t come home a lot. It was because he was an alcoholic, a really bad alcoholic. The reason why, see I was premature. I was born 2 months premature. And the reason why is because he. I didn’t find this out until I was a teenager, he would hit my mom while she was pregnant. So that’s I think, that was the beginning of the end when I was born as far as they were concerned. And I just remember her cooking dinner but being just frustrated and not happy with the situation. I just feel that from her.

DN: Yeah.

RF: Because we have always been really close, my mom and I. So then we got to Oakland and she chilled out. She did. She got a job as a ticket person at an adult theater.

DN: Which one?

RF: At McArthur Broadway Plaza. It’s not there any more. It was a plush one. We used to be under the counter when she would be working.

DN: Tell me details of that.

RF: Isn’t that great. We’d knew some of the... We didn’t know what kind of place it was but we knew something was happening. She was always hush, hush. Sitting there playing. So she worked there for a long time. I guess she knew the owners or something. She got on her feet and we moved to Alameda for a little while. I think 2 or 3 years. She met my 2nd father, my stepfather. His name was Richard Howe (sp?) he was Norwegian. Not a very nice man at all, ever. So that didn’t last. It was doomed because he didn’t like the kids. He didn’t want them; he just wanted her. So that ended because he was abusing me.

DN: He was huh?

RF: Physically. He got home from work before her.

DN: ______

RF: “B” (???) I think it was kind of sexual to him. But it wasn’t out sexual. But I think it was to him. Because you see with me out, because I was a blond. My brother and sister are dark. I was littler than them and he just singled me out and he was just ended up going for everything no matter what it was. So finally when one day she came home from work early. Now there jeans, I came home from school. I stuck in the bath tub so I was bruised from my neck down. Really bad.

DN: Is that what he did to you?
RF: Yeah, really bad. And she said where is this from, and I said, if I tell you it's going to get worse. She said, is it Richard. And I said yeah. Well we've got a car and she took every item in that house one by one and broke it. She broke the windows, everything. Yeah, she was pissed. She didn't realize what was going on because she was working so hard. And then back to my grandparent's house in Oakland. We were there for awhile and then....

DN: What age was that that he was beating you?

RF: That was from the 1st until the 4th grade.

DN: The beatings occurred over a 4 year period?

RF: Yeah.

DN: And she was not aware of it because she was working very hard?

RF: She worked until about 8 at night.

DN: But she only saw the bruises that one time?

RF: Right. Because we would come home to a baby sitter. And then he'd come home. And then she'd come home around 8 at night and we would be in bed by the time she got home. So she would come and kiss us good night. She just didn't think of it. You never think of things like that.

DN: But you were concealing?

RF: I was. I mean he was just so mean and just awful to me. And it made things worse on me because I was ashamed of everything. Because I could do no wrong.

DN: Right.

RF: So finally she broke me out of it. She was so sorry. So we've always been very close since then. That's why I started to get into my own when she broke it off with him. Then we moved to San Leandro after that. Started a .... I guess 5th grade, 6th grade by then. I came out.

DN: About when?

RF: I think 7th grade, 6th or 7th grade I came out to them.

DN: To them...?

RF: My mom and my sister and my brother.
DN: Siblings then?

RF: Yeah.

DN: Tell us a little bit about your sister and brother.

RF: My sister is very, I don’t want to…. I mean she has always been very selfish and self-centered. That’s because she was _______. My brother is pretty spoiled because he is the youngest one and he always got what he wanted. I got what was left which was love and time with my mom. So that’s why we are so close. Let’s see….

DN: What is the actual ages?

RF: To me?

DN: And give their names.

RF: My sister’s name is Lorie.

DN: Give us her full name, like what her name is currently.

RF: My sister was recently married and it’s Silva. Lorie Silva and she is one year and 4 days older than I am. And my brother is 3 years younger than I am.

DN: What’s his name?

RF: Roy Fitch.

DN: Where is he?

RF: He is in Oregon now. He’s a single parent. He, I guess, he met a girl and they got pregnant and she didn’t want to deal with the child and so she split. And he said I am going to hold it up. And he did, he’s doing really well.

DN: How old is his child?

RF: I think he’s 5 or 6.

DN: What is his age relative to yours.

RF: He’s 3 years younger than I am.

DN: Let’s go back to those years when you were living in San Leandro.

RF: Okay. So I came out to them and I said you know I just know that I am different but its not anything to be afraid of or ashamed of. It’s just that’s the way I am. It’s not
anything that I have a choice over. I knew that from the get go. I knew that it was not a choice. That it just came to me, that it was part of me. Being attracted to men. So....

**DN:** Had you had sexual experiences?

**RF:** Not yet, not yet. I'm getting to that right now. After I worked in the mall, I worked for awhile at Montgomery Wards.

**DN:** Which mall?

**RF:** Bay Fair Mall in San Leandro. And it was, I worked in the cafeteria as a cashier. As a Cleag. (?) So I just rang up Jell-O and stuff like that all day. I met Daniel, my first boy friend. He'd come in and talk to me and ....

**DN:** Is that Daniel Samria? (??)

**RF:** Yes Daniel Samria. He was quite a handsome man then. He got fat later on but he was intriguing and interesting to me. But he would come in there and almost embarrass me he would be there for so long. My boss is like, hey, you're boy friend is here. I didn't even know his name yet. Because he knew I was gay too, so he was an alright guy. And so I agreed to go out with him and we went to the movies. And did stuff with him that way. This was about 16, 17 years old. That was it. It was late '70s.

**DN:** It wouldn't be late '70s. What year were you born?

**RF:** In '61.

**DN:** Sixty-one to '71. 10 years. So it would be ....

**RF:** In the late '70s, yeah. I remember it was platform shoes and ______ and all that.

**DN:** You into that?

**RF:** Oh yeah, I was totally into that.

**DN:** ________

**RF:** No, I'm not. I was at ______, cut school a lot and drank beer and smoked pot. So back to him. So I was intrigued by him and I met him and we went out a couple of times and we started a relationship and I did finally have sex with him. By the time we did have sex it was like, it was, I had already had sex with myself, but not with another person. It was, it wasn't all that I thought it would be. It was just, it was pretty normal. I guess we were both pretty nervous so it popped real quickly. So we gained the relationship and I moved out of the house. My mom's house it was with her blessing. At first it wasn't, she was okay with the relationship but she wasn't okay for me moving out,
I got arrested at work. I worked at Rickey’s Steak House, a sports bar in San Leandro. And the police came and took me away from work one day.

DN: For what?

RF: For being a runaway. That’s how she tried to do it. Okay. They took me to juvenile hall. I spent the night in juvenile hall. I went back to her house and she explained to me that she just wanted to make sure that I was okay. That she was worried and that she just wanted to be certain and that she didn’t think it was time enough time for me to move out. I talked to her and we talked and I think I stayed for another 2 weeks. And then she agreed that it would be okay. I was mature enough and then after she met Daniel and talked to him a couple of times, and I had had him over for dinner a few of times, that he was an alright person. She was just worried about that. I had this relationship with him for 6 years.

DN: Wow. You were together for 6 years?

RF: Yes, and it was hard because I had just come out and I didn’t know a lot of things about the way society was. He basically wanted a housewife, you know. When it came, after about the 3rd year I was fishing around, I didn’t like staying home all day. I wanted to get a job or go back to school or something. So I got a job and he was totally against it I mean to the point where we argued about it. And then I worked part time. I said want to better. I want to better myself. I’m going to go back to school and take classes somewhere and this and that. And that was the beginning of the end. He did not want that to happen.

DN: So did you get a job at that point?

RF: Yeah, I worked at a golf course, a country club in Oakland on Broadway Terrace.

DN: What’s ___ ? ___ ?

RF: I was at banquet, a cocktail waiter. Those sorts of places women don’t serve alcohol. And I cut wedding cakes.

DN: Do you want a piece of this?

RF: I’ll have a piece of that, yeah. So I learned a specialty from the maitre d’ it’s really hard, it’s a hard thing to do. Especially when they’re huge. So I did that, so I was locked into my job because of that talent itself. I met some good people there....

DN: You were locked into the job why?

RF: Locked in because of cutting of the cake. I was the only other person besides the maitre d’ in the whole club who could do that.
DN: I see.

RF: Was allowed to do that. It's a pretentious thing. It was a real specialty thing and you have to be real neat about it.

DN: Where?

RF: In Oakland. So I did that for years. I started going to this place in Berkeley to meet other gays.

DN: Where's that?

RF: For under 21, Pacific Center for Human Growth I think it was called back then.

DN: What year?

RF: I'm trying to think of that. Let's see, '85, maybe. Maybe it was even '83, something like that. And I met Noel, a Filipino friend of mine who I've lost contact with. He was a great friend. We were like brothers, gay brothers. We hung out. It was an affectionate thing. We would stay over. We had supper parties and stuff like that. And I met Kirk, my friend who I am still in contact with who lives over here.

DN: Last name?

RF: Kirk Selinka. (?sp)

DN: What was the name of the Filipino?

RF: Noel Sardinia is his name. I think he lives on the East Coast somewhere like the Carolinas or something. So those two were my best boy friends. And I had another girl friend who went to art school, she came from New York. No, not New York, Detroit. Her name was Teresa Smitra. (?sp) And she is a pretty renowned artist now.

DN: What is her last name.

RF: Smitra.

DN: Smitra ?

RF: Yeah and she's from Detroit. She works in the Holly Solomon Gallery in New York. She works for her, yeah. I'm sure she is still there. I give her a call once in a while. Great artist, great artist. And then I chose to go to art school after having met all these people. And so I moved to Santa Cruz, California... 

DN: You'd moved out of Daniel's house at this point?
RF: Yeah.

DN: Had you already or just moved to Santa Cruz

RF: Oh, I moved out. I never....

DN: Where did you live at that point?

RF: Lake Merritt. Above a bar called, what was the name of the bar, it was really neat. It had the black cat on the outside. Tin Roof or, I think that might've been the name of it. It was an old, run down, shabby bar. And it had 2 rooms above it that were like king sized rooms with bathrooms.

DN: Well that was your first apartment?

RF: Yeah, my first place. And I think it was like 2 something, $250.00 a month back then. There was this old gal who owned the place and she rented them. She just didn’t want any problems, she didn’t want to do anything to them. So it was okay, I think I lived there a couple of years.

DN: Are you coming over to the City at this time to have a gay life?

RF: Yes. I had started doing that. But I got put off at first because the first time I landed I went right to Polk Street. I was a young blond and cute. These guys saw me coming. You know, Not the hustlers but the guys that were looking for sex. I had a few good tricks, but most of them they just wanted to pound you and go, you know, back then. So I was put out by it so I stopped for awhile going over there.

DN: What aspect were you put off by?

RF: Just, it was very ? invited sex. Then I noticed the hustler, because Polk Street has always been that way.

DN: Back then though it was so give away and ?

RF: Right. So I knew what was going on. It was kind of intriguing but I wasn’t putting it out there. I wasn’t giving it away, I wasn’t selling it. So, let’s see what happened. What was next in my life? I met Mitchell and Michael and Mark and Rod. They had the House of the Golden Bull in Berkeley. 

DN: Where did you meet them? Can you give me their full names?

RF: Okay. Let see, Rod Coda was the owner of the house and had the orgies on the equinox and solstice, and Michael Pear and Mitchell Bower.

DN: Right.
RF: And we lived together as roommates for a long time.

DN: You lived at the Golden Bull?

RF: I lived there, yeah.

DN: What year is this?

RF: This was on it has to be late '80s still. We were pretty good friends. They, Rod and I were good. We were close, we were always fine me and Ron who started the parties there. But Mitchell and Michael, they were boyfriends on and off but they always treated me badly because I wouldn't put out to them. I had a rule that I didn't want to do it with roommates and they didn't like that. Because it was an orgy. The orgies were an annual, well not annual, 4 times a year. And the rest of the time it was just an okay, I mean an all gay household. And there was another roommate, Pat. I can't remember his last name. He was always last. He spent part of the year in Mexico because he was on Social Security for being crazy. So he'd sun bathe between the houses and driveway naked and the neighbors did not like that at all.

DN: I bet.

RF: On top of the parties. But those parties were 200 plus guys would come to those parties in the beginning, you know. And they were great parties.

DN: How did you become their roommate? What happened?

RF: Hanging out there and pot is a big thing there.

DN: Pot, did the sell or did they...?

RF: Yeah.

DN: Turning over ____.

RF: It was an open place to hang out and be yourself. So I went there a lot buy pot and smoke pot. We'd get high all the time. That's when it was up ____ or controlled or anything, we just ____ out, or whatever. So we became roommates and ....

DN: They invited you to come live there? ____

RF: And I moved in there. It was fine. I lived there for 2 years. And then I met my next boy friend who also lived there, Eddie Paine which....

DN: Paine or Vane?
RF: Paine. He was a bartender at the White Horse. And he was a model when we met. It was pretty normal. He came from Oakland.

DN: What age?

RF: I think he was just 2 years older than I am. He worked down there for close to 2 years, the whole time that I lived there. But he started doing drugs.

DN: He lived, worked where?

RF: He lived at the house too.

DN: But you said you worked together.

RF: No. I meant lived together. But he worked at the White Horse and toward the end of 2 years of our relationship he started doing IV.

DN: IV what?

RF: Drug use.

DN: What kind?

RF: Coke. He was acting weird. And finally he lost his job there because of that. It turned him into a big mess and it was a sloppy, ugly, ugly, ugly mess. And so he hooked up with a lesbian friend of his. I can’t remember her name. This black, heavyset black girl. They decided to go across country. And so he left. I haven’t seen him. I hope he’s okay. I saw, I just saw him spiraling down. I mean coke’s a hard one because it affects people if you don’t eat right. And it’s not a good thing, you get paranoid. Always high. He wasn’t understanding that.

DN: Can we back up for a minute? I would like to find out your perception on how it was for you, because basically it is the first time when you are more or less choosing the right to partners.

RF: It was.

DN: Even though Daniel was consensual you were a minor and so he basically chose you.

RF: Yeah he finessed it, he made up with it.

DN: Eddie is really your first selective lover?

RF: We had great sex.
DN: What got manifest, were you top or bottom?

RF: It was open, it was open. He was open to that. A lot of times we got to evolve, but not all the time.

DN: Which one?

RF: With the parties there was a lot of acid around.

DN: Right.

RF: And I hadn't done ecstasy yet. It was acid and occasionally speed. But at that time in my life I think I had only done it like 3 times, 4 times. Then I noticed that he was concealing. Eddie was concealing. He was doing lines of coke at work. Because the bartenders you know, I'm not saying that all of them do it, but some of them do indulge in that. And so I noticed... I wouldn't notice the drug itself. I would notice the way he acted. He was a pretty open person. So I never harassed [spell] on him for it at all because it's not my place. Yeah we had great sex and it was open. He did get a hold of John sometimes. Especially around those parties, he did not want me to go to the parties.

DN: So it was an open relationship and he worked with that?

RF: Right.

DN: Tell us more about what other aspects there were in that relationship like regards what attracted you to each other physically. Can you talk to me a little bit about how excited that might be for you? For the first time you are really sort of proactively pursuing your sexuality.

RF: It was the first time I'd felt like I wanted like attractive sexually. Because it's a hard transition trying to feel open sexually and being able to do whatever you want to do and trying experimenting. He was real good about that. He was very open about that. Of course you know how I love things, quirks and whatnot. But he was really open about that and that helped me out a lot, that made me very open. And then I realized that was some other stuff going on at the house. Mitchell and Michael, they were always doing "I'll be back in couple of hours." They had money all the time. I would sit down with Mitchell and I'd say, what's up with this. Where are you getting all this money from, you don't have a job. So he said, he told me he happened to be...

DN: Oh, right.

RF: So I wouldn't treat that. They always had lots of cash. And they were grabbers to meet because they would always go to the club, to the Stud. And it seemed that they held their own. Mitchell was... Michael couldn't control it very well because he'd get paid and he'd get high. And Mitchell wouldn't be like that. So they turned me. I mean they didn't turn me out, they showed me and told me how to screen people and what to look
for and just how to finesse it and use it as a job, as a tool. That’s what was getting up on
the sex work.

DN: So where was, what was the transition in between cake cutting and sex work? What
were you doing in between those? Not constitutes...

RF: Well I stopped working somewhere along there.

DN: People pretty much took care of you. Did you have to pay rent at the house?

RF: No, I had to pay rent. It was like not very much.

DN: It was....

RF: I did get GI in Berkeley and it was a collective thing too.

DN: Were you happy with the sex?

RF: We were helped each other out.

DN: [Several voices: garbled.]

RF: Everyone was in there, yeah

DN: _____ the other person on SSI at that point.

RF: Right.

DN: The rest of the people were either dealing, GI and couch surfing.

RF: And sex.

DN: And sex.

RF: Sex work, yeah.

DN: Were any of the other people in the building were doing sex work?

RF: Yeah, Mitchell, Michael. And there was another guy named Michael, he wasn’t
there all the time but he did sex work too.

DN: He was not paying for _____

RF: Eddie.... He didn’t do it until later on but he did.
DN: And what about the owner of the building? He must have been independently wealthy to have that household.

RF: The house was a gift to him from a former lover. It was all paid for. His thing was, he liked encounters and he had his little sexual encounters he had to have.

DN: ------.

RF: That was his thing.

DN: A really very tight arrangement.

RF: Right. That was his thing and he said, and he sold the pot. He was the dealer. He just financed it. Right. Mitchell or Michael would do, or myself I think, would come up and do the deed. It was actually a pretty good scheme we had going on because they would do it at rush hour. So the police are busy. And it would be from 4 to 8 no ....

[End of side 1 of tape]

[Tape 1, side 2]

RF: .... Simply just pot and acid and mushrooms.

DN: But the household was in a sense some of the very radical fairies of the radical fairy movement.

RF: Right.

DN: Do you remember, because those parties were based on the solstice, can you tell me a little about the aesthetics of the folks you were living with? Where they connected with you and where they differed. Because you're not really a radical fairy.

RF: No, no. We did connect because we were all open. We did all have our certain things like I had one secret that I didn’t want anyone to and I never did. And that did create problems toward the end. We closed down the house. And it just got... They felt, I guess, betrayed not by me, just because there was no more House of the Golden Rule. So Mitchell really got, he was really hurt by that. But it was inevitable for them to stop.

DN: What year did it stop? Do you remember?

RF: Let's see, probably '88. '89.

DN: It was in '88 when you were living at the house. ------.
RF: Yeah. That was the beginning of the end right there. In fact I would say in '89 maybe.

DN: Did Richard move out before the actual Golden Globe house closed?

RF: Yeah. Yeah he moved to another Golden Globe house.

DN: But they didn’t have parties.

RF: Right.

DN: The house in the ______ is where the parties were.

RF: That moved. Other people.

DN: Oh, different people.

RF: They took over the parties from Rod because Rod had died by then.

DN: From?

RF: AIDS.

DN: So he was an early AIDS case?

RF: He was the first that I knew. And it tore me up. I was, one of the, to watch someone go through that. Not knowing what’s going on with own body. Because it was quite fresh then. It was hard because you really didn’t know, we didn’t know whether it was a gay disease or what the… You know go to the media… We just knew that our friend was very, very sick. And he tried ozone, he was a trooper. Do it all. He was a great guy. It was just a very hard thing to watch. But we all, we took turns. We sat with him. We didn’t want him to be alone, everyone else would shun him and we would not condone that at all.

DN: So there was a sense of family among you?

RF: Right.

DN: And then there was larger sense of community in the sense that those queers that would come to these parties were out to set up a movement.

RF: Right. They would come over now and again for pot or whatnot and then the puppies too. We did sell puppies.

DN: Oh did you?
RF: That's where I got my first little....

DN: Who started raising the puppies?

RF: Mat did, the owner of the house. So that was adding extra money and it was fun. The dogs were great. They were really good dogs.

DN: Is that your first exposure to dogs? I am wondering why you had such a great love of dogs, did you have dogs when you were growing up?

RF: I always was. We had pets. Mostly dogs when I was a kid. Let's see where we were. As far as Rob when he died.... We didn't know the what the capacity of HIV and AIDS then. You know, deep down inside I thought well there is something to that and if I do down that way that it's not for any reason that it would be the way history, the course of history would be. And I knew it wasn't a 'gay thing' because there was little trickles of information coming out. It would be it's a skid row thing. I was told that was something was that materialized in, what do you call it, a laboratory to weed out the queers and the skid row IV drug users in America. I think there is something to that. I don't know if it's true or not, but it did impact those cultures. Very much so. I let that, well, if it happens to me, it's going to happen to me and I can't control it. We still didn't know where it came from or how you .... Well I had an idea, I thought it came from sex. No, let me back up. It came from what we thought, we talked about it. Mostly just Mitchell and I trying to figure it out. We thought well Rob was a big old sex pig. He did not want to have safe sex ever. So we thought maybe it's to an extreme, if you push a body to an extreme and have dirty sex without any condoms or anything for long, long periods of time that that might be part of the key to what's going on with that disease. Which was probably true in a sense. Because when you're dealing with long durations of sex and drugs. Being not privy to where it's coming from and still having unsafe sex, that was the beginning of it, I think.

DN: Right. Now, 2 things. Can you talk about your own status and when you found out? Actually you're posture is fine you don't have to be right on top of the mike.

RF: I think that deep down inside, I knew that I would eventually get it. I did know that. Not because of the gay thing, not because of IV use, because I have used IV drugs lots of times.

DN: What were you using?

RF: Speed was the main one. But then later on I turned into a heroin addict. So, then I thought well its, it could be the sex or it could be the IV drug use. Or it could be both. I knew that if I stayed in this life style eventually it would come to me. And it did. I was right. I was ready for it. I have no regrets about it. I did have firm rules about IV drug use. I never have ever shared a needle with anyone. And it was always, I sort of liked that part, I liked getting high or something like that, but during the deed itself I have always hated it. I've seen people just go over to extremes when it comes to that. The
blood and poking yourself. So I was in and out and I'm done and put it away. And that's a cleaner way of doing it. Because, who knows, that was seeding virus could have come from something like that. I always had those thoughts in the back of my mind.

DN: In other words you were hygienic during....

RF: And I thought, well, what would happen. How did I find out. I had a checkup 'cause I got hepatitis.

DN: Which one?

RF: B I think, there's 2 of them?

DN: It probably have been B because....

RF: It was B. Right, it was B.

DN: It could have been A.

RF: I would cough it up....

DN: Really it was in existence back then. We're still talking about the late '80s?.

RF: I think it was.

DN: When did you serum convert? Do you know what year?

RF: Nineteen, um.... When I had HIV?

DN: When you became aware of it, that you had it.

RF: It was 1990.

DN: It was in the '90s.

RF: Yeah, I didn't know....

DN: It was actually 1990 or after.

RF: The first document I have is 1990.

DN: And that was through Tom ______?

RF: Right. I knew that, earlier before that, I probably I thought I probably do have it, but I had no symptoms of anything. At that point I did have random sex and unsafe sex.
I just knew that eventually it would because of the drug use for one thing. That’s okay too, though.

**DN:** We need to backup a little bit. So you, were you living at the Gold house when you started sex work?

**RF:** Yeah.

**DN:** Okay. And then what year was year of your sex work experience?

**RF:** The date?

**DN:** Give or take, yeah.

**RF:** I want to say ’87, ’88.

**DN:** It’s definitely ’88 because that’s when I hired you.

**RF:** It could have been even ’86.

**DN:** Okay. Now you were actually one of the first and only people to advertise using State Boy, Kendall (???) and for years nobody else figured out. And of course now it ubiquitous. So in a sense you were really ahead of your time.

**RF:** Right.

**DN:** Can you talk a little bit about what that was like to be a little beastie boy?

**RF:** I used that a lot. I used a lot of different, ah .... I thought that I would keep it like marketing, using marketing techniques to keep that ad to have a constantly have a good turnover. And it did work. It worked very well.

**DN:** What kind of numbers are we talking about at this point? Your early years were, you were really into it....

**RF:** I didn’t do that at the time. I never....

**DN:** Well how many clients a day?

**RF:** I would never do more than 2 a day. But my voice mail, back then it was voice mail, there was no pager or anything like that. I mean it was always full.

**DN:** Right.
RF: You just have to screen out the calls. There's a lot of motion, a lot of men whacking off on the phone, you know. So there's ways of screening that out. But I would do, it was easy to do 500 a week.

DN: Dollars

RF: Dollars a week.

DN: You were charging for ...?

RF: I started out, what was it, it was 100 in and 120 out.

DN: So even though you could do 2 in a day, you were only doing maybe 5 or 6 a week?

RF: Right, yeah.

DN: So you were kind of having a life?

RF: Yeah. I would go to the Stud.

DN: You were getting into ___, not really __ into sex work?

RF: Right.

DN: It was component of your life?

RF: Right. But then you have to, you really do have to separate the two. Not physically but mentally because the sex work a lot of times is not your part. I mean it's not...

DN: You're not attracted to the people.

RF: Right. Not into what the action is itself. But you're willing to do that anyway for the money and because that's your job.

DN: Right.

RF: So I had, I mean I was able, there's not any kind of sex act that I hadn't done, haven't done and was not afraid to do. That was the attitude. That was a plus of mine in my what do you call it, my career as a sex worker. Because I did have a following. Guys call me up and say I always want your ass. I'm a fan. And I even had a couple of girls calling and say, hey your eyes are real fresh. I had a talk on the phone and these people are very, it's really interesting. Because I didn't think of that right away.

DN: Did you know these girls?

RF: No, no.
DN: Because you know you're pretty much homosexual?

RF: Right.

DN: Did you ever have a sexual experience with a girl?

RF: I tried twice. In my early years in high school. And it was just not happening. It just, I've always been attracted to men. But I gave it a go. I gave it a school boy try. It was not pretty and it was quite embarrassing on my part. The one girl was like__'s daughter. Her name was Jeanie, I can't remember her last name. But I mean she really had it hot for me. And she would follow me and I gave in and went for her. For her sake because just because I felt bad. It didn't happen. None of it was right. From the smells to the touch to the taste. None of it was right. All of a sudden I said, I've got to get out of here. Oh, my God. And she was upset. She was crying. I said, it's not that bad. You're going to have a boy friend that you want and like and that you're attracted to. It's just not here. And so we stayed friends. Because I said that, because she was mad. I'm a gay, it's not going to happen.

DN: Well you can believe it.

RF: Right.

DN: So you know what your mind is.

RF: So I just knew. And I tried it another time same thing. Well I'll try it again just to be sure. And I did it and I couldn't even get it up. Girls are a different creature. They're, well now days, they're much too understanding now, but back then.... What attracted me, what turned me on was firmness and you know, guy stuff. Sweaty guys.

DN: What is your type? What, what was the only sex work when you determined that he was your type, what was that?

RF: It would be young, someone close to my age. I go toward the opposite side, maybe darker hair. But I like smaller guys. I like guys of my same size. And open sexually. Not closed minded sexually.____. It puts me off right away. Its just you are at a café or something and they start to say stuff like that, you want to go, oh wow.

DN: Let's go back to what it was like for you when I flirted the front doors.

RF: Okay.

DN: 'Cause you're the one that proposed to me. I left it together and do this again ....

RF: Yeah.
DN: That happened the first time, so tell me what your thought were.

RF: Oh, yeah, I was attracted to you because you were one of the first people that called me that were attractive and not just into some weird thing. You were open about what you wanted and what was going to go on. And it was intriguing because you had it all together. And that's what I liked about it.

DN: We had been in a photo session that day.

RF: Right, yeah. It became a friendship and relationship.

DN: So just tell me, tell them what you said to me about that.

RF: I said that we had a good time. What did I say, oh that I would be interested in doing it again. It was okay, that I wouldn't charge those, those clients. That we were having a good time. And that I was intrigued by you. I think it was a good thing to say that because most of the time it was just I love the pay check, close the door. You know. But no, it was more than that. Because it opened me up. Even that during the photo shoots and stuff, it even opened me up more. Not so much physically but mentally about how... Because I have always been, I had low self esteem. And that really did help me out a lot.

DN: So did any of your other John's photograph you prior to that?

RF: I'm, no, I don't think so. Maybe 1, maybe with Polaroid's you know. But, yeah 1 photo, some truck driver.

DN: Now you continued to do sex work. We remained friends, we continued to do photographs. Talk about that period.

RF: Okay.

DN: Because I see, I was an outside interest to some of your regulars, such as Al and George, and .... Talk a little about the regulars. And your early years of sex work and also ...

RF: George.

DN: ....you were doing dope at that point.

RF: Yeah I was. Well I met Al in Berkeley. I think through Rod at the house.

DN: Do you know his last name?
RF: Al Decosta was his last name. He was it for me, I thought. You know because he was okay with the sex work and we became good friends. Over the course of years we had a good open relationship, you know.

DN: You lived with him, didn’t you?

RF: Yeah, we lived together for a while.

DN: In Richard’s house or...?

RF: Yeah, after that, after that. He cultured me as far as European culture and third world culture.

DN: His profession was?

RF: An architect.

DN: And you guys went to Europe together?

RF: We went to Europe and Mexico a couple of times.

DN: What places in Europe?

RF: Portugal, Spain and France. And Mexico twice. Because it was quite a culture shock, him and me, because they don’t teach you much about cultures in white, white bread American schools. Like in San Leandro we knew nothing about, and you know nothing about the real history of the world is, they don't tell you that.

DN: What was your level of education when you complete it?

RF: I graduated high school. And then I did the art school.

DN: How many years of that?

RF: Two years of art school.

DN: Was it a 2 year program?

RF: No I just did 2 years...

DN: Of a 4 year program?

RF: Right.

DN: At which school?
RF: I was called, it was a private school called the Art School of Santa Cruz. And I got a full scholarship. It was, it was a private school. It was pretty good. They guaranteed only 7 people per class.

DN: And your leanings were toward 2 dimensional ____? and drawing?

RF: Drawing yeah. I was always was good at that. Eventually I guess something, the earthquake happened in Santa Cruz and I moved back away from there. But then I got interested something else. I declined culinary school and I dropped out of that though. But I still worked in the food service as a prep cook and stuff like that. I kind of got away from doing sex work. I still did, I still had regulars. I had my number but I didn't put the ad up for awhile. Did regular you know worked a full time job and stuff like that.

DN: Very clean. ____?

RF: The Country Club in Berkeley

DN: Right.

RF: And French Albert's Place in Berkeley, the Egg Shot in ____? the Betty's Ocean View Diner.

DN: Right. In the kitchen basically? In pastry or in ____?____?

RF: That was one of those deli prep. Slicing meat and stuff like that. And then after that, I quit Betty's because she's just dangling the carrot and never really wound up. I said I want to move up from being a prep cook and it just never happened. So I worked in a bakery as a supervisor. I still, I was still seeing Al on and off again....

DN: You were sleeping with him at this point?

RF: No, I was living with him at that point

DN: Why did you move back?

RF: Because he had a roommate that was his first lover. they were together. He, it wasn't that we didn't get along. He was, I don't know because we are friends now. I mean I call him once a year. something like that. He just didn't want Al to have anyone in the house. He just wanted him to live with him there at the house. So it wasn't a consideration.

DN: Are they still live in the house?

RF: Yeah.

DN: ____??
RF: Yeah.

DN: ___?

RF: Right at that point he did. I can't remember the year now, it had to be '91. It was probably '91 and I helped AI, he went through a 2 year struggle with AIDS and he was still young then. I took care of him.

DN: You actually moved back in for awhile?

RF: I did to take care of him, yes. It was one of the most, I don't want to say hardship, I don't want to say that. It broke my heart to watch the one person that was good for me for the rest of my life. And then he got sick and died. It was just real hard. And then the way he had to deal with it when he couldn't deal with it very well either. Because he was dying and he didn't want to, you know, you don't want to die. When it's before you. And so the end. I mean we were both high, we were both doing.... I started doing heroin by then. He was doing dilantin. (???)

DN: Right.

RF: So we both....

DN: Did you do dilantin?

RF: No he was just taking it orally. He never shot it.

DN: But he had a scrip for that?

RF: Yeah. But we were both high all the time because we didn't do anything but.... What did we do, we fixed up the house, we made it un-saleable. We took out like a $70,000 house and turned it into a $350,000 house. In the flats of Berkeley.

DN: So it was still gorgeous but it was too high priced for that area?

RF: They couldn't sell it, they could never sell that house.

DN: ____?___ house worth now.

RF: I know, but he did what he wanted. It was like, the roommate didn't like that at first, but he finally agreed that....

DN: Who was the address by now?

RF: It was 12, 12, 1226 Compton, I think. And it's by San Pablo and Compton. But he wanted to do what he wanted to do. He didn't just want to lay around, he wanted to fix
up the house so that's what we did. Other than taking little trips, side trips, to Napa or Mendocino or .... We took one trip to Europe. We got there and we had to turn around and came back. Because....

DN: The AIDS thing?

RF: Yeah.

DN: Came right back?

RF: We made it, I think we made it to Portugal and turned around and came back because it was too, the weather was too much for....

DN: Too hot.

RF: ...It was too hot, yeah.

DN: So he observed you doing heroine and he is basically okay with it at this point?

RF: Yeah, he was okay.

DN: Can you talk about the history of your needle use, where that sprung up and why?

RF: Okay. That sprung up, the first time I tried it I was 16 years old

DN: Do you remember....?

RF: Speed. And I was with my cousin in, where, it's down there by Fremont. What is that. On the north side of Fremont, she lived on, I have forgotten what the city it's ______. Well anyway, I did it and this guy, a friend of hers, a straight white dude, did the deed for me for the first time. And I thought, oh my God, this is amazing. It's almost like a transition that a vampire would take. Because once you do it itself, your vision, your hearing and everything is changed. You have a different view. A different picture of life or your surroundings from then on. And then I thought, wow. This is what starts now. Not leaving the house and doing this and that. ______. And then I started going tricking out and going over to San Francisco more because of that.

DN: Right.

RF: And so....

DN: So you’re 16 living with Daniel at this point?

RF: No, at that point, when I was 16 I was....

DN: You’re still living with your mom?
RF: I was still with my mom then, yeah.

DN: Okay.

RF: I was really hush-hush about it. No one knew that I had....

DN: So you went to the city out of your mom's house and not out of Daniel's right?

RF: Right.

DN: So when you went to Daniel what is your drug history there.

RF: Just speed and pot.

DN: Speed and pot.

RF: Occasionally I'd be....

DN: But most frequently....?

RF: It wasn't so frequently at all. It was like I kept it a very, very hidden thing. I didn't want anybody to find out.

DN: And where were you living then?

RF: Let's see. My cousin out there in the East Bay and then I was connected over in the City to a couple of people and then the cute, you'd meet someone and they would have it.

DN: Didn't you go to the baths in this era?

RF: Yeah, I did. I went to the baths a lot before I got sick.

DN: Which baths?

RF: Eighth and Howard. That was my favorite one I think. San Jose at the Water Garden.

DN: Really. So there was some needle use around that?

RF: Well you never do anything to _____. But everyone was doing it.

DN: Right, right. So tell me where that trend, that sort of periodic use transitioned into you becoming addictive behavior....

RF: And not just heroin.
DN: Heroine actually...

RF: Heroin was when Al died.

DN: ??

RF: During, I really clutched onto it.

DN: Where did that come from, how bad...?

RF: The heroin?

DN: Yeah, where did you find it or...?

RF: I found through someone I met in Santa Cruz. Well actually I met Dan English in Santa Cruz. He was just a chipper then which was someone who does it now and again.

DN: Right.

RF: At that point, see, he couldn't find a connection and so I found a connection in Santa Cruz and that was the beginning. I'm just about dating the use of heroin.

DN: For both of you?

RF: Well no he wasn't but he did get the disease now that I think about it. I was the first one, that I.... But he had done a prior.

DN: Where were you living at this time, in Santa Cruz?

RF: Santa Cruz.

DN: ?? I knew you back then. So you fell in romance with Dan English...?

RF: Yeah. And Sy.

DN: That basically was part of your heroin?

RF: Right.

DN: You instigated it?

RF: Right, yeah. And then other factors in Santa Cruz, there it would be about trying to score. They didn't want to get arrested or anything like that. Because it was real hard to find a dealer.
RF: Dan English and I started doing more heroin and I started bouncing back from the Bay Area to Santa Cruz. At that point Al had started to die and then we'd get along and I'd suddenly take off, take a minute and go off for the weekend because he'd, the mood switches would set in and ???. I knew what was going on but he didn't. And it was hard, that was the hardest part dealing with the mood switches and stuff like that. But the way I took care of that was that I just go up to Santa Cruz for the weekend and then I met Dan English and all those people. Bonny, I don't remember Bonny's last name ....

DN: ??

RF: I think he was back and forth too. But those people, and they were fun to hang out with because they were partying all the time. Not so much drugs, but....

DN: Where did you meet, at the Blue Lagoon?

RF: I don't know, I was trying to think about it. No, I met Dan, he was a waiter in that place called Crape Place, in Santa Cruz. I think I met him there and he was still seeing Michael then.

DN: Where were you staying when you went to Santa Cruz?

RF: At a gay hotel. I had a couple of friends that I would stay with now and again, but it was awkward for some reason, I can't remember why.

DN: Did you hear of ....

RF: That wasn't a problem. They were all getting high. Getting high, it was some weirdness about that. But I didn't know him very well, that's what it was. I can't even remember his name now. But he would .... But then there's cheap hotels. $20.00 hotels in Santa Cruz.

DN: How did you get there?

RF: The bus.

DN: Where are you in terms of sex work at this point?

RF: Let's see.
DN: Cause George....

RF: George, I met George, oh yeah. I was doing heroin and I was only seeing regulars.

DN: Why?

RF: Because I, they knew, kind of knew what was up with me. I'd put the ad in now and again just to drum up a little more business, but it was mostly just regulars. David....

DN: David Clayton?

RF: Yes. From the baths, which....

DN: From the baths, you mean the owner?

RF: Yeah, the owner of the baths. And he was a really dear good friend to me. It was sad to me that he passed on. But he was a good guy, he was always very, very good to me and if I needed money, And we'd talk about problems. He'd help me out. We'd sit down and talk about stuff. And he was like a father influence to me. He was very good about that and set me straight about stuff. He was real good about that. I loved that man.

DN: And George gave you a job?

RF: George gave me a phony job where I could just do nothing all day.

DN: Right, but talk to us about the job.

RF: I was working in a toupee company.

DN: What did you...?

RF: Oh, my God. I had a _____ it's a scary place. I brought everyone up there though.

DN: You mentioned the baths.

RF: It did, ____

DN: But you also started to have certain reservations.

RF: Right. Yeah, I did. I guess I wasn't eating right.

DN: __?__

RF: Yeah ____ George told me that. I don't know where he is now but who cares.
DN: What was his last name?

RF: Benedict. But he, you know, he had a small business at his house.

DN: He was in a restaurant.

RF: Oh, yeah, big time.

DN: He had like a whole gaggle of people that were using ___?____?

RF: Right. He couldn’t put ___?_____ down, not even to keep his business afloat.

DN: Speed or drugs?

RF: Speed. It was speed. But the toupee company I worked in the lab and I mixed conditioner and shampoo and I bottled it in narrow bottles for Master Touch, that was the name of the company. And the glues. I made glue and then the adhesive remover to take the glue off. So I bottled all that.

DN: What was the name of the company?

RF: Master Touch. Because he owns ____?____. And so the reason why he gave it to me was because I would have been a threat to him because he was a bottom. I mean I could still play it out and scare the hell out of him. But then he knew then he wouldn’t die. But it’s just such a fine line in that community. But he lasted, he just dropped everything because of the baths, because it was me.

DN: Wasn’t there a bust of some sort?

RF: At the store or at the house?

DN: He had some legal problems somewhere along the way.

RF: I think that... Oh yeah, okay he had this friend named Damon, Damon Hart, who came out of jail who was trade. He was Polk Street trade. He start...terr...that was the beginning of George’s end. Because George would rent car’s for him and they would never be returned and he would buy this car and wouldn’t bring it back for weeks, and like that. Or wreck it. So that was the decline. And then he himself started not really carrying, just wanted to be high all the time. Not even going into work. And I be into work go in and open it up.

DN: Where were you living at this point?

RF: Let’s see, I had a little studio in Glen Park. This German lady. Where the 280 in a framer house, it was over by George’s house. It was across the freeway from his. It was cheap and I was living there, but it was so... Late at night forget about going home.
because there was no way to get there. Glen Park is like another world. So what was going on. George, I noticed that he just didn’t give a fuck anymore about anything except band. I don’t know what happened but he was losing it and I was getting myself, I was turning myself into a paranoid freak. What did I do. I took a job at Boston.

DN: That’s right.

RF: I did a geographic.

DN: You can talk about that.

RF: Okay... .

DN: What year are we talking about here?

RF: It had to be ’90. Was it later than ’90? Let’s see...

DN: In ’92, ’93 something like that? Because that was really the end of your sex work.

RF: That’s right. It’s the last straw. Oh my God, he was a freak. He started to turn on me. I didn’t know what was going on. I trusted the man. But because of all his paranoid delusions he thought that I could then... So therefore I stopped. At that point I thought, oh my God, what’s going on really. So I thought I needed change and I took a job in Boston over the phone.

DN: Really.

RF: Yeah, I met the owner of that. It was called Strutter’s Vintage Clothing Company. On Newberry Street. I was to take over the warehouse management part of the company and downsize it. Eventually closed it over a 2 year period and that was the contract.

DN: And how did you meet the owner?

RF: It was through a skater guy named Todd... before I, before the House of the Golden Rule. I live in El Cerrito with this guy named Todd. He was a skater. This was a group of straight skaters that I hung out with before I came out. I mean I came out before I got into sex work and stuff like that. Before I got Mitchell I was hanging out with skaters and skating around. I would be doing my own thing. And Todd was skater guy. I would say he’s asexual, not even bisexual. And we clicked. We had a good time so we were roommates. What was it...?

DN: That thing about...

RF: Todd....
DN: Todd is getting you the word about the job in Boston. You were friends all those years.

RF: It was a friend of his, a girl friend of his, and ex-girl friend of his. She called the house all the time so I talked to her. So she got me the hook up. She said, well, I have this friend who is looking for someone. Think about it and I did, and I thought well I may as well try it and I did. It was successful the whole thing. I did get money wise and my life was in control.

DN: So what happened to ___?___?

RF: I think the rest of it was on pot. That was about it in Boston

DN: So you quite cold turkey?

RF: I did, I did. The attitude....

DN: At this point I am harassing (?) on you.

RF: I was doing....

DN: I'm in recovery and I am telling you need to....

RF: Before I ____?____ up until the day I left. And I knew that and there had to be a means to an end. So I did that. I mean I turned my back on everything. Everything, at that point I was living on Dolores Street and I let heroin dealers move in with me. And in the flat that I was subletting.

DN: Where was the house?

RF: It was cheated by what I call hard core pot or shit. And I was scared of them but they me. they wrote me off because I let them move in. So I basically giving....

DN: What do you mean wrote you off?

RF: Getting free dope. And it was just getting worse and worse. And I remember times of... 

DN: So they would giving that without ____?_____?

RF: Yeah he was. But he was going to buy it. but there was something about him I didn't trust. I didn't like.

DN: ____?

RF: Yeah, there is all that.
DN: ___”___

RF: I mean that’s time, you don’t want to bust those people. But they were good to me....

DN: What address on Dolores was that?

RF: I can’t....

DN: What’s the cross street?

RF: Twentieth? Somewhere around the left corner of the park. So I....

DN: Was that one of the nasty modern buildings?

RF: No it was an older flat. And it was though a friend of George’s who, he was getting foreclosed on, so he let me move in and took the flat. I just gave him a little money every month. So I let the heroin guy move in with me. What happened? I went to the guy and I said, look I let these guys move in. I am introducing them to you. They’ll pay you rent but I’ve got to go. I said, my life’s too crazy. I lived like that, a bag, a jacket, a few clothes and turned my back on it all. And that’s when I went to Boston.

DN: Were you sexually engaged with that guy? So there was a sex...?

RF: He had a girl friend.

DN: It was just because of George referral?

RF: Right.

DN: So you refused any rent money? It was foreclosed?

RF: So this house had some ___”___.

DN: Was this the mid-’90s at this point?

RF: Yeah. Somewhere, mid- to late.

DN: When did you meet Jamie?

RF: Oh, yeah. I guess over the year.

DN: So what year?
RF: After I came from Boston, let's see... It's got to be. I want to say '80, I mean '90, '97, '98, somewhere around in there.

DN: Late '90s?

RF: Yeah.

DN: So you liked it your time in Boston?

RF: Ah-huh.

DN: You did communicate that?

RF: Yeah.

DN: And you seemed to be doing very well.

RF: I was good there.

DN: I tell me about Jamie, to talk about that.

RF: I met Jamie in....

DN: His last name is?

RF: Ray. (sp) I had a different boyfriend before that. Gary.

DN: Gary Comena?

RF: No. Pacheco.

DN: Pacheco.

RF: Yeah, I haven't had any contact with him in years.

DN: He's the one you told me about?

RF: He followed me out here. I mean he's sweet.

DN: Did he come out on his own or did he...?

RF: He did come out on his own once and then he went back. And then we had a breakup and I came and he came shortly afterwards.

DN: What was a brown man.
RF: He's Portuguese.

DN: So then ....

RF: Then I met Jamie.

DN: What was the moment of that?

RF: The moment I met Jamie was, I'm trying to think. I met him at Gay Pride in Boston. He was the first like skin head, like gay skin head type around there that was halfway normal that I met in Boston. So I was intrigued by him. So we became real. I mean it was a really hard core, to die for love. But we did have some sort of admiration of each other. We had a pretty good relationship.

DN: Did you live together?

RF: Briefly for a little bit. He a big old house in Boston and a really nice arboretum.

DN: Did he ...? as well?

RF: No, he was a school teacher.

DN: What level?

RF: I think it was junior high school or early high school. He is in the Mission now. So we stayed .... There's some aspects of the relationship that I didn't like sexually, so I ended the relationship but we stayed friends. To this day he is a good guy. We get along very well. But it is just different sexual desires to each stone.

DN: Right. Well he was really a member of your ??? He considered you a lover.

RF: Right.

DN: And you presented as a lover. So for awhile you guys were hot on each other, right?

RF: Yeah.

DN: It stopped and then you moved back here, right? We have to talk about that. Tell me about what the process was when you moved, when you go from city to city.

RF: I finished the job, executed the job in Boston and they gave me a $400.00 bonus and that was it, it was done. over. I closed it down. I because of their employees, they saw what was going on and I had to leave. Not because I was going to get hurt or anything.

DN: What do you mean, you saw what was going on?
RF: I was hired to down size.

DN: Oh. The guy was closing shop?

RF: Yeah, for 2 years. We did it slowly. The queens in the store, they weren’t having it.

DN: Was it a co-op or something?

RF: No.

DN: How did they have a stake in it?

RF: Well their stake was that it was a really cool store. Like __?

DN: Oh. So that was an interest factor.

RF: So that took them down a notch as far as their scene. They were hating me towards the end. That was when I was hired to do and I never told them that. I just did my job, pushed, pushed the merchandise at them so they’d sell it. So that ended and I came back and ....

DN: You stayed with us for awhile.

RF: Yeah, I did. I stayed with you guys for awhile. And I couldn’t leave the stuff alone.

DN: Right.

RF: And then I got George back into my life. I think, didn’t I? It just got messy. that’s all I can remember.

DN: Where did you go from my couch. what was your next apartment?

RF: Did I go over to Oakland at that point?

DN: You did eventually.

RF: On Park.

DN: You had a boyfriend, a Latino boyfriend over there, didn’t you?

RF: Oh, yeah I did. I can’t remember his name.

DN: __?
RF: Yeah. Antonio. Leone. (sp?)

DN: You guys work together a lot?

RF: Yeah, we’re good partners, we made a good pair. But he was pretentious. I can say that loud and clear.

DN: You really liked him though.

RF: But ...

DN: You like his ____?____?

RF: But still, there’s, he could. I was going the full nine yards and he wasn’t going there. He was holding out for bigger and better.

DN: He was like shopping for ____?____.

RF: He was looking for bigger and better. He was into the money thing.

DN: What was his profession?

RF: He was an architect, so he knew AI.

DN: I thought he worked at the box office at U.C Berkeley.

RF: No. He works for the University of California in the architecture department.

DN: Oh.

RF: He’s still there as far as I know.

DN: You did live there, you actually lived with him?

RF: We lived together for a little bit. He wanted other encounters and that’s why it didn’t last.

DN: Now you’re HIV positive at this point, now where are you in terms of treatment at this point. You’re not getting any medicine at this point.

RF: I was just putting fires out, I guess.

DN: It wasn’t full AIDS?

RF: No I never actually....
DN: So you have been lucky in the sense that we didn't have to do meds but we were, happened to be fairly healthy.

RF: Right. And it wasn't showing up then. But it was all involved. Then Mitchell and Michael died, within weeks of each other.

DN: What about where you used to do that?

RF: I can't remember. I'm thinking maybe '90s.

DN: Early '90s, because I'm thinking....

RF: Because I had already turned.


RF: Yeah, then he died. God. That was within 2 weeks of each other. I think, 3 weeks of each other they died. I knew that I'd better, I needed to do a change or I could put the stuff down, I could put the speed down. And I knew that if I didn't, if I stayed on that road, I'd be gone, like that.

DN: I vaguely remember it was more heroin for you at the time.

RF: Yeah.

DN: So you would come to the studio ___?___.

RF: I'd say yeah.

DN: You were hanging out with Dan English still?

RF: Yeah. I knew that....

DN: He lived in San Francisco?

RF: Yeah at this point he lived on Gough Street. I lived with him on Gough Street.

DN: Right, right. You were both ___?___?

RF: Fucking wasted all the time. I mean....

DN: At that point, you remember the thrift store and what were you doing at this point? Did you have SSI yet?

RF: No, not for... I think I was doing some kind of bus, busboy work or something somewhere. And I was waiting to take a job at Brain Wash.
DN: Right.

RF: It just got, it started to get sloppy I noticed. Because at that point I had already over dosed 3 times. And I knew that if its that bad that I was doing that much it would eventually kill me. By which I mean, sooner than later. So I just had to change. I had to stop them I turned my back on it all.

DN: You did quit cold turkey?

RF: I did.

DN: Can we talk about that? When did that happen and what your ___?

RF: Well, Mitchell and Michael, everyone was dying around me. Well not physically dying around me but they started to go. That was the big dramatic change for San Francisco gays and gay society itself. Because you do notice that thing. You notice that Polk Street looked a little shabbier and there wasn't as much action going on. Castro Street toned down. I just knew that there was going to be some sort of a change, something major in my life if I wanted any kind of longevity. So therefore I would have to give up the one thing that was sacred to me was the heroin. So I did. It was the hardest thing I've ever done in my life. Because I did it cold turkey. I did it by myself.

DN: Where?

RF: I rented a room somewhere and it took 2 weeks. It was all okay. I mean I was sick, real sick. But it served its purpose. I learned from it. I'm not going to lie, since then I have maybe done it twice. I mean the love for it is still there, but I know that I can't chase it because it's too hard and it's a very expensive habit. I got up to $100.00 a day. And that's a lot of dope.

DN: What did you do to support that?

RF: Tricks, I guess. But I had regulars still. I definitely was on ads.

DN: David Clayton would come over.

RF: Well, get cards from him maybe a 15 in it or something like that. He was sweet about stuff like that, really nice.

DN: And George?

RF: George and then, oh yeah George because I was look up Master Touch now and again.

DN: Anyone else regular? Any other hunky daddies?
RF: No. That was about it. There was a couple of other clients that I still had seen. I mean I could call them up and say hey, some time this weekend, blah, blah, blah. And I would sort of set it up. So that worked for awhile. But obviously I wanted to stop. Because AIDS had a really big impact on gay society and I just knew that my sex work would have to end.

DN: ___?__ makes you asexual too.

RF: After a while, well at first it makes you not sexual, but after a while it turns you on. Its like a 2 week lull. And then having sex. It can do the same as speed. I have seen so many guys whacking their limp dick with the speed. Including myself. I felt ashamed.

DN: We used to talk about our drug experience. When I first met you I was actually just coming off being ___?__.

RF: Yeah right. I remember.

DN: You may not even know that day I came to see you. I took some light ___?__ that had been sitting around the house. But I didn't do it because I wanted to get high. I did it because I was fatigued and I wanted to make sure that I had enough energy to drive over to the East Bay and do the photo session and get back....

RF: Right.

DN: ...Without falling asleep. It was enough ___?__ that I must have a little buzz, but really it was just to kind of maintain.

RF: Right. I was just....

DN: About the beginning of my second phase of music just at that moment.

RF: Wow.

DN: So it really didn't show up until much later in different permutations but I remember by the time we started hanging out we were doing acid together. We were doing photo sessions on acid and ecstasy.

RF: Yeah. yeah.

DN: Maybe even cocaine.

RF: I know it something.

DN: I think my last cocaine use was....
RF: You were social.

DN: I think it was acid and ecstasy.

RF: I think it was acid.

DN: That's what 1493?

RF: You were down there, yeah.

DN: And we did photo sessions in the garage?

RF: I was always high.

DN: And why is the drag you up to the studio and the different tests. Because you were always trying to hit me up for money. Sitting there clowning in front of the camera.

RF: Right, I remember it. God have mercy.

DN: It would be ___?

RF: You have a ways to go.

DN: ___?

RF: No, no. That would be like ___?___ to me.

DN: ___?

RF: That's why I had to stop. Oh, my God.

DN: We should probably jump ahead to the back....

RF: Can we stop for a second?

DN: Yeah.

[Tape stopped]

DN: Actually one of the things we get which is a sort of good way to wrap up, if I remember correctly your mom passed away ___?___.

RF: She did, yeah.

DN: Can you talk about that in the context of what happened just chronologically and then also what it meant to you.
RF: I hadn't seen her as much as I usually did. Didn't give her as much time as I had in the past.

DN: Where were you living at the moment that you stopped seeing her?

RF: I can't remember.

DN: Oh yeah the Gold house at that time.

RF: No it was later than that. I can't remember. Well, anyway she, all her kids were doing their own thing. She got I guess boyfriend that was into opiates. And Pedro, he over dosed her. It was quite harsh. I was working in Berkeley and then I could have been in ____?____. My brother called me at work. I was a waiter. I had a good job in the place.

DN: Can you tell me the year, give or take?

RF: It had to be '86 or 87, or something.

DN: I think she was dead by the time I got here.

RF: Right. My brother called and said, mom died. I said, don't fuck with me. I've got a station full of people, click. I thought he was playing games with me on the phone. He called back and he told me mom got drunk and she died. I went to my boss and I said, w Ralph, I said, you got to take my station, my section, my people. I've got to go and see my mom passed away. And it just started to hit me because never, ever, do you think about your own mother dying. Because as close as we were and she was a young woman. She was a young mother.

DN: What was her age compared to you?

RF: Let's see, she was, she had just turned 50.

[End of tape 2, side 1]

[Tape 2, side 2]

RF: The guy, I mean the guy who had been her boyfriend rolled against her and they used foul play. He stole everything out of her house. ____?____ to kick him out.

DN: In that older house?

RF: No it was a student (?) apartment. The guy left ______. My sister was so angry, my brother and her were going to kill him. I said, just don't. I said this is enough to deal with right now. He'll get his, come back around and come back down to the ground.
Just let that go. We’re not going to turn it into a mess. So we buried her and I didn’t stop crying for a month. Because it hit me so hard. Let’s see...

DN: So you really didn’t know your mom using pot?

RF: No. She, in the past I knew she had downers.

DN: Right.

RF: Her whole life she used downers.

DN: Prescription downers?

RF: Prescription.

DN: Or black market?

RF: Prescription. She always used it.

DN: Was it Valium?

RF: More like Chloral Hydrate, really. Thorazine. Hard core downers. She had at least...

DN: Was she an alcoholic?

RF: No, she didn’t drink. Well early on when I was in the 5th grade she drank a lot.

DN: So she basically maintained.

RF: She maintained.

DN: She did break down but she wasn’t not a knock down drag out alcoholic.

RF: No, she ended up she took Demerol every night.

DN: She was on welfare. She didn’t have a job?

RF: Later on she got on welfare. But she did work.

DN: What kind of work?

RF: Waitress, waitressing. And then she did the downers, she always had enough. And when I started, I started one time in the ‘60s, I think was asleep for 3 days. She was like I have to take you to you to the emergency room. I had to fight. No don’t take me to the emergency room. I took one of your pills.
ON: She was ....

RF: She said, ask first. She was offended, you have to keep me .... I didn't know what was wrong with you. I was worried. I said, I'm sorry. She said tell me, don't be ashamed or afraid to tell me anything. Just as long as I know what is going on.

DN: What was her political bent? Was she sort of progressive or...?

RF: She was progressive. She was very open minded. Let's see....

DN: Would you characterize her as a hippie?

RF: No, 'cause maybe some of her openness and stuff like that, she had been on the lines of like, she's a shit kicker, she's a cow girl. She liked her country and western. But she was very, very open. She wasn't like, whose that guy, she wasn't extremist that is what I mean, one way or another. But she did have her certain values.

DN: And your dad was missing in action this whole time _____?

RF: He showed up on Christmas once in awhile.

DN: Up to California from Texas

RF: Yeah. Even of Rhode Island also.

DN: What do you know about him today?

RF: My sister said that he came up for her wedding and he said well its either go drunk or stoned. ______. Its okay for him to do it in her eyes, but boy if I took a beer....

DN: But he was functionally present but border line. She has good memories.

RF: Right. So he'd get more drunk than obvious.

DN: _____!

RF: She said I want to be around him. She goes well, he really wants to talk to you and I said, if it happens, if an encounter happens that's fine but I am not going to set a date.

DN: Really.

RF: And she got really hurt by that. I said, don't be hurt ....

DN: Was this recently, or ...?
RF: Yeah this was recently. I said, don’t be hurt by that because I don’t mean to hurt you. I said that’s our relationship, mine and his. It’s better that we live with boundaries I have set with him. Because he’s with his wife after broke up with my mother when I was 10, and he’s back with her. Since then he’s broken up with her and moved here and there and something wrong. And so he’s back with her and he’s trying to function but ___?__, and she goes yeah. I said, well if it happens, it happens. I am not going set a date. And so she was sort of blown by that.

DN: Did you go to ___?___ wedding?

RF: I was back in Oklahoma.

DN: Did she find you?

RF: No she didn’t.

DN: Did she even know about it?

RF: No.

DN: You knew about it when you came back?

RF: When I came back, yeah.

DN: It was the second husband for her?

RF: Right.

DN: Did you ever go over there at all?

RF: I didn’t see her new place, no. Well actually she moved in with the husband.

DN: So you haven’t her or the kids this trip?

RF: No, I haven’t seen. I’ve seen her. I haven’t seen the kids.

DN: Where did you see her?

RF: She came over and had lunch with me with the husband. I met the husband too.

DN: How was ___?

RF: He was very nice. He’s a cop. That’s the only thing that I know. He’s....

DN: Is she still working?
RF: Yes, she works for Kaiser now.

DN: Kaiser Hospital.

RF: She's good. I want to say transcripts, but she doesn't do that. She transcribes doctor's tapes. For insurance reasons.

DN: ____? transcribe.

RF: That's ____? Guys who have copies of it. So its for insurance reasons she works for Kaiser. The reason why she has it is so she can have health insurance.

DN: Sure.

RF: Because she was just diagnosed with MS she told me.

DN: I'm sorry to hear that.

RF: Yeah.

DN: I've always heard....

RF: ____?

DN: What's her age?

RF: I want to say 21 or 22 and maybe 24.

DN: And these are boys, if I remember correctly, you really bonded with, you used to baby sit.

RF: I loved to sit and talk to them, but they both, one of them moved down in Santa Barbara, the younger one, and the other one is getting married very soon. The younger one already is married. So that was amazing. I would like to see him.

DN: Did your brother have any kids?

RF: He has the one boy.

DN: Right, that's right. So you came fast forward to ____? ____? You came back to San Francisco and where were you, let's talk about your mom.

RF: I can't remember. I remember we were talking about the inner panel. Right.

DN: So you cut yourself loose. You were still chipping for the other thing, pot still.
RF: Yeah, pot still, you don't have that element.

DN: Now where at this point do you meet Razor? Is this the point, you came into my domain and you guys started to proceed and moved in together, I think.

RF: That was over at Scott's house, we were with Scott.

DN: And it was probably late '90s, give or take.

RF: Yes.

DN: And I know a lot about that because I was right there with you.

RF: Right. I didn't know lots of reasons.

DN: You talk about it because that period of the '90s is a very magical period. I'd like to have your perspective about it.

RF: It was 2 and 2. I loved that. I really did. I was pretty. I'll be honest with you. I was high on dope then. I was home a lot. I was messy. But she called.

DN: Describe that you were in fact romantically involved with David and you worked at a place called Tea Room which was a little cafe in Hayes Valley. So kind of embellish that.

RF: Okay I fell in love with Hayes Valley. I fell in love with Hayes Valley. When you ask, I really did. I fell in love with the uniqueness of it at that point in history. Because that's gone. I was a very magical point. And I picked up on that. I had my moments. I wasn't totally clean then, but I was on my way.

DN: What were you using?

RF: Speed now and again. That was about it, pot.

DN: Speed is usually connected to sexual encounters. Right.

RF: Right. And then pot.

DN: He was too, right?

RF: Yeah, me and Raymond. Yeah.

DN: But she got clean right away.

RF: She tried, she got sloppy a couple of times. That was very brief, the alcohol. That was very brief because I was, I can't do that.
DN: So you moved out of Scott's into the place of ____?___?

RF: Yeah we all rented that house. We had ____?____. That was brief, I don't think that lasted more than a year, that whole household.

DN: Right.

RF: Because ____?____ and Theresa Baca. (sp???) they moved out from New Mexico but Theresa immediately did an about face. She saw, she didn't like it. I don't blame her, she was a pretty girl. And I don't think it was more than a year. She did that and then I guess Brian moved over to the Mission. Raymond did.

DN: Where did you go?

RF: I want to, I went to Tommy's. I met Tommy.

DN: Oh, that's right. Tell us where you met Tommy, what his last name is.

RF: I met him at the Wooden Horse.

DN: Okay, that's a gay bar on Polk Street.

RF: On Polk Street. It's one of the oldest gay bars.

DN: He was a bartender...?

RF: He was a bartender there. I was walking by and there was this guy up on the bar.

DN: Tommy Byer.

RF: Well its really Walter Byer, but Tommy is the name he goes by.

DN: He was up on the bar...?

RF: He was up on the bar in a jock strap, leather jock strap and boots. Lip-synching Rocky Horror. I had to turn around and go back because I love Rocky Horror. And I thought, what is this queen doing, or my God. There was no room in the bar, it was shoulder to shoulder. He had a packed house.

DN: Like ____?___

RF: No, it was mixed. I mean the bar is no bigger than this space right here. You ever been in there?

DN: Yeah, once.
RF: And they loved him. He had a following. He had a great following.

DN: He was doing that on a regular basis.

RF: Yeah, yeah. That was his thing.

DN: He was a bartender but he would perform?

RF: Yeah.

DN: To a DJ or a juke box or...?

RF: It was a video I guess. DJ. Yeah. He would do that and then he moved up to, its called Lost Loves now.

DN: ?

RF: What was that bar called back then? That was a great bar at one point. He got...

DN: I’ve been up there. He was a bartender?

RF: He got a job there after the Wooden Horse closed. And he was still doing the same thing.

DN: He was lip-syncing?

RF: No, he’d sing it out when he was up there. But we had already moved in together by then.

DN: Which was down there? You lived together? You lived down there right.

RF: Right.

DN: Was the bus company (???) closed at this point.

RF: Yeah. it has been closed for years at that point.

DN: Flat had already been run back?

RF: Yeah., yeah.

DN: He was open to the right power scene?

RF: Yeah. I didn’t know the extent of it then. So we went round and round about that and then he got sicker because he has a mutated version of cancer which is a pseudo
cancer, not a real cancer. Neither my Social Security kicked in nor his did and we got behind in rent and so we had to move.

DN: What were you doing to pay rent at that time?

RF: He was....

DN: He was a bartender and you were....

RF: House cleaning.

DN: For Scott?

RF: For Julian. Scott, the 2 gay guys over here and Meredith and you. I already did that with you and .... I still ..... so we stopped doing that. I still had a few. And then I realized we were talking about it. He said I don't want to be on the street and be sick. I said we'll just have to go. So he said, let's think about it and we were going on.

DN: Had you started HIV meds at this point?

RF: Yeah, I think I had.

DN: Had he?

RF: No, he hadn't even....

DN: He was really sick with cancer?

RF: Cancer. He hadn't turned HIV until later on. Until let's see, 5 years ago.

DN: So you guys moved to his grandma's house or something?

RF: He had relatives, an aunt, 2 aunts in Illinois, the part of Illinois that's very close to St. Louis and it was okay. I mean I liked it. There wasn't even a stoplight in the middle of town.

DN: Was it that good for him because there was no place to be standing?

RF: No, he liked it too. He liked to relax. There was time.

DN: ______?

RF: We stayed there. I think we stayed there for 4 years. maybe 5 years and then the building got sold and they wanted us out because I guess they wanted our apartment for their daughter or something. So we thought let's move to St. Louis itself and he goes, well let's go to Oklahoma. And I said....
DN: He had relatives ...?

RF: He had a uncle down there, yeah.

DN: And that was a bad point?

RF: It was.

DN: ____?

RF: His uncle was, his uncle got clean and paranoid and delusional. We were okay to deal with it because we knew what it was about.

DN: You guys were trying to stay clean?

RF: We were clean, yeah. It just got, we just fed up with it because the guy, she wasn’t policing it. So we said to her we’re gone. So we went to a public shelter in Oklahoma City. We had to stay for like 3 days and then the gay version of the AIDS Foundation there guys lived in Park Wood.

DN: Right.

RF: So Russell, I think we stayed there for 2 years. now.

DN: And then you ended up doing the couch tour?

RF: Yeah. Oh my God, yeah.

DN: It’s a catchy situation. I remember both sequences.

RF: I think like 6 months of that.

DN: Right. By virtue the fact that he or both of you continued to ____?

RF: Right that’s what happened.

DN: That is why you ended up on ____?

RF: She ...

DN: ____?

RF: I would get my check and I’d try covering the bills and the rent. right. And he would just go blow it. Eventually they put us out and then what happened. What happened? We got the apartment we were living in, the buildings were mismanaged and
we were having, not good terms with the landlord or the company that managed it. So we actually booted ourselves out. So that put us on sometimes a couch and then he started more. I think I used a couple of time. I was able to balance halfway stable but let me know where you could get drug users.

DN: And you’re smoking at this point?

RF: Selling it, smoking it, yeah.

DN: What happened? The fact is in the picture as well from some of the other people, right?

RF: I think I was around but I knew it was there.

DN: ____?____ Not the gay culture necessarily.

RF: No, straight.

DN: Heterosexual.

RF: Heterosexual, she couldn’t figure it out.

DN: There was something about....

RF: ____?____

DN: There was something....

RF: Cooking, cooking dope and the other one was selling.

DN: Right.

RF: But there was a murder recently before I moved.

DN: Right.

RF: I have a friend, I have a dear friend named Marne Coombs in Oklahoma and she was bad. She wrote bad checks so she got, she’s not in jail now, but she got it for writing bad checks. That was her thing. She was out shopping. But her boyfriend was a drug dealer and he got murdered by people that were supposedly his friends. And it took, she was in jail when it happened. And it tore me up because he was a good friend to me. He would be the only person that would come up and say, I heard you were sick, do you want anything from the store? The only person out of all of my friends. Armand got it. It was ugly.

DN: It was a bad drug deal?
RF: It was a drug deal. It was his friends that wanted free drugs.

DN: So it was a kind of ______.

RF: Basically, So now they're just being caught. I just found out the other day that they are finally getting on, they're going to be in jail. Because he was a good guy. He wasn't like your average drug dealer. He wasn't ______.

DN: What kind of drugs?

RF: Speed. But he wasn't like. I mean if he knew you didn't have the money for it, he wouldn't front you off. Because he is not going to step over you in the gutter. He's that way, he's not going to do that.

DN: What's front you off mean?

RF: Get it done, give me something on account.

DN: Do you think he's going to do that?

RF: No, he wouldn't do that. If he saw that you were not doing something financial he said no here but I'm not going....

DN: There was no prompting?

RF: That's it, right. No straighten it up. And it was all good. He was a stand up. He was a good guy.

DN: It was because didn't tell that to these people, they killed him.

RF: The only thing, they got less than a quarter off the dope.

DN: How did they kill him?

RF: A gun. They shot him, point blank.

DN: So these are people that have guns?

RF: Right. And there were girls. Four guys and 2 girls. And one of them was so desperate and his girl friend, my friend Marty, they were just friends. She was the best friend and her best friend and he got up and he walked out of a hotel and he would not come back.

DN: Why did he not come back.
RF: He had been shot, he tried to get away.

DN: Oh, got him in the back?

RF: No he got shot in the chest. But he got up and got down to the end of the corridor in the hotel. And one of them, I guess they were leaving, trying to leave or something and noticed him. They walked him back to the room.

DN: Oh, brought him back?

RF: There was a blood trail.

DN: Oh. Interesting.

RF: But they’re getting theirs’ now. I knew that would happen ______ pot. I mean if you get to ______, you’d better leave.

DN: Yeah.

RF: And they didn’t.

DN: Right.

RF: So they’re not very smart people.

DN: Right. Wasn’t Tommy involved in some sort of state, like a state’s witness? Was that this case or was that something else?

RF: That was something else, I think.

DN: Sure you want to go back there?

RF: I know what to expected. I know what’s going on and I keep my nose clean. Yeah. It’ll be okay. We’re just going to figure out what to do next. We’re not going accept it for any duration.

DN: What does Melvin think if it gets really bad there you come back here and try again?

RF: Yeah. I’m not to let that happen. Because there’s certain elements that I know like I know and my good friend’s out of jail and she’s clean and sober.

DN: She’ the one I talked to briefly at one point. What’s her name?

RF: Marty. And then my other friend Rodney. He’s pretty stoned. He’s calling me up. You okay? Then just to help those 2 is a good thing.
DN: You basically came here to try and get medical care ___?___ which is where you’re from.

RF: Right.

DN: And you discovered that San Francisco is hugely expensive and not very user friendly....

RF: Right.

DN: You are now going back to Oklahoma City to result of that experiment. I just wanted you to talk a little bit about what your philosophy is in terms of knowing that even though you are moving, you can always some back and try again. Are you aware that in fact it ain’t over yet. Going back to Oklahoma City just means ....

RF: Yeah.

DN: It’s one more permutation away; the same set of problems.

RF: I know, yeah. What I’m thinking is that in my life, for the rest of my life, I know that there’s got to be some sort of, in Oklahoma City or somewhere that I will be able to maneuver and live comfortably on the little money that I get and prosper and just so that I have a good life and not be stressed out. As you know there’s got to be that somewhere. And that’s what we’re going to do and we try to figure out. What us figures did Oklahoma and it’s just that right now this stress, the added stress and just the expenses here. I mean it’s just terribly expensive and it’s just too much on my system. It’s not a good thing for longevity’s sake. So even going to Oklahoma which is a very slow pace, cheap place to live. For the month in Oklahoma City. And then we’ll figure it out. It will probably mean I am still account for somewhere and we’re going to get that.

DN: When you say “we” you mean Tommy ___?___.

RF: Yeah. Marty might, she might come. Because she has bad memories because of Rodney getting shot. ___?___.

DN: Right. So you think that you’re perceived as family and....

RF: Yeah.

DN: One other thing that occurred to me throughout the years that I’ve known you is you’ve always have this amazing ability to face reality, to find a place, nest and survive and it’s been heart breaking to watch you try do that and have it not work.

RF: I know.
DN: It's really a true barometer of just how far San Francisco has come for people I know.

RF: I know. I have a clue.

DN: Well, we talked about it. We came up with ....

RF: ??

DN: ??

RF: I have all the documents I need from the doctor I go to. I talked to my social worker, case worker in Oklahoma and he's lined up someone who's more on top of things, medically. So I think that....

DN: So why don't you wrap it up by talking about what kind of mark you want to leave on the world in terms of you as an artist, you as a human being, you as an out gay man. Just kind of talk about that for a minute. But talk into the microphone.

RF: Okay. I am going to start out on, I mean I am going to begin this ending with something my mom told me: that, just as long as you're happy and you feel free and you're alive. Maybe the people around you will be happy with you. You don't necessarily need to please people or do things up to gain any kind of friendship in life because the friendships that you evolve, the friendships you evolve in your lifetime become the true, the true friendships that you do get will always be there and they have just been evolved and its just a test of time. That we're all here to live and learn and grow. That's what I think that we're here on this, we're put here on this planet for. We're not here to do this or that; this chore or that chore. We're here to evolve and learn and not.... I think that America is hung up on doing the same thing over and over again and tripping herself up and not learning from that experience. History repeats itself a lot here in America. I think that there is something there because you need to learn from your mistakes and grow. There's nothing necessarily bad or good in your life or your lifestyle, it's just that you need to learn and grow. And we haven't yet.

DN: Can you mark a gay aspect of your life. Can you speak about what philosophically it means to you to have been a gay man at the junction in history where civil rights for gay people were sort of violated.

RF: Yes. I think that, I guess I learned right along side the next gay man or evolved. As a same sex person, a gay person, just along side of any San Franciscan that, its been a learning experience about rights and being a whole person in this society and not being a cast-out or shunned because of what you like to do in the bedroom. Because that has nothing to do with anything. That's your own. That's the way, what this country was founded on.

[End of Side B, Tape 2] [End of recording]