

note:

a recomposed version of pp. 63-68 (the end)  
which attempts graceful coherent conclusion  
may be read in substitution of the original

also, portions underlined in red (or sidlined  
in red) might be dispensed with altogether  
(they add up)

now in black  
from XEROX

TRANSLATION ↘

: Marjorie Tichenor

prospective title: PROFILES AMONG VIDEO

(?)

1.

# OPEN STUDIO VIDEO PROJECT

STATION HILL RD. BARRYTOWN, NY 12507 tel. (914) 758-6308

Ralph Hoeking and Sherry Miller Feb. 6, 1978 Owego, NY  
with Will ~~o~~ Sharp, George Quasha, Gary Hill and Neil Zusman, Paul Davis, Peer Bode  
Side 1 <sup>oughby</sup>

GQ I would love to see some tape. As I expressed on the way up, I feel personally very awkward without knowing some of the work, at least, because that's what's always interesting to go from.

WS Well, Maybe we can break <sup>this</sup> into a couple of different parts - your general thing first, then take a break, then see some tape and then go into a more specific thing

RH All right, where do you want to start?

WS You want to start?

RH I don't know where to start, so...

WS Well, why don't you start with where you..

RH I don't usually start these conversations..

SM They usually start this way

WS ~~ain Hoeking,~~ <sup>First,</sup> We want to find out what the particular situation is right here and now, on Feb 6, 1978. What is happening with you now? What is your main concern?

RH What's my main concern? I'm going on sabbatical next year. ~~in Hoeking's~~  
~~Ho.~~ Ho, seriously.

S You said something a few minutes ago about this time being sort of a crisis. You said this is a particularly opportune time to talk to you

RH Well, crisis is a common word and has been for the last 10 or 15 years, in education and in the arts to a certain extent. It's a common word in other disciplines and other areas, the simple fact that we don't have as much money as we used to have to do the same thing. What's happened to Cinema on our end is that there've been in generally

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cut back from what our size was and what our support was, and it came to a point of leveling off, We thought they were leveling off and they cut us back some more. It caused me to resign the chairmanship.

\*  
WS You resigned your chairmanship(\*chairman of the Cinema Dept. at SUNY at Binghamton)? When was that?

RM I don't know, when was that? As of the...

SM The 8th(of Feb)

WS Is this in light of the cutbacks made to some of the departments?

RM Well yeah. Their latest move was to take the secretary away half time. You know Marilyn, you know what she does for the department. She essentially is the thread that's been consistent through the whole thing and the administration's uh...

WS So they're giving you a lower level of support than you have to have

RM Yeah, that's what I've been telling them for quite a while. At the same time, their proposal for the next 5 years has to do with a static support system that recognizes only that we should exist. And the statement they made about this was terrible.

WS Maybe you should fill us in a bit about your position there, when you took it and what you do and that. We just want to know, what's your position? What are you resigning?

RM I'm resigning a chairmanship.

WS But you had a lot of video and built a whole video situation

RM The only video that was there was me.

WS What have you built and how long have you been there?

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RH In terms of video, I've been working in video since about '69, I guess.

WS There?

RH Yeah. Uh huh.

NZ As part of the Cinema Dept?

RH No. It wasn't part of the Cinema Dept. to begin with.

WS Tell about the background of that.

RH Oh good. You want to go through all that?

WS Uh-HUH. Quickly, just a few sentences

NZ Well how is it that video...

WS Wait a minute, wait, wait, wait, He knows the question. Now don't... I'm interested in your personal... just a few sentences

RH You want me to start where I started in a minute ago

WS Even before, even before.

RH Are you dictating style to me? What, this, Willoby, god damn it.

WS It's important to know you did other things before you did video.

RH Well, I did pottery, and sculpture.

SM And photography.

RH Right, And photography. I came to Binghamton after I'd been fired in the previous school I'd been teaching in.

WS In Long Island?

RH No, this was at Allegheny College in Pennsylvania. Actually, I wasn't fired, I just wasn't given tenure, which is a gentle way of easing you out, and legal.

WS You were teaching pottery there?

RH Teaching pottery and drawing and design and sculpture

NZ How did you get introduced to video?

RH I ran into Nam June on 57th street at the Faik Gallery in 1968.

He was having a show there. I was in New York with a group of students from Allegheny College. I just happened to wander into this gallery and there was this madman running with magnets and holding them up to TV sets. I said, what the hell is this? So he and I started talking, and he and I got along very well.

NZ Make friends with madmen quickly?

RH Well, I did with him. He wasn't a madman, slight exaggeration.

Seemed like a very interesting idea, using television other than what I knew about television which was just what comes over the air.

WS You hadn't used television yourself yet?

RH No.

WS So it was an inspiration in a sense.

RH I don't know whether it was an inspiration or not, but it was certainly curious to me. The whole idea was curious to me.

GH So your first relationship to it was in reference to TV and not, say, in reference to photography that you were doing? You saw it as the difference with TV and what you could do with it, and not what you could do with images?

RH Oh yes, it was attributable to TV. I had no sense of relating it to photography at all.

WS So what happened? Why was that important, your meeting with Faik? What did it change in you? What was the consequence of it?

RH Well, I don't know. Faik's the kind of a person, at least for me, anyway, that he made sense to me. I have no idea why. I couldn't logically delineate the reasons why Nam June and I made sense to

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RH cont... each other. So I went back to Alleghany College and sat there for a while and kept thinking about Paik. He and I decided to get together again in New York, So I asked the president of the university here if he would give me the money to fly to talk to Nam June some more. So he did, and I went and talked to him some more. Again, I had no idea what he was doing; I couldn't figure out what he was doing. But something about him made sense to me. So we kept doing that, you know, running into each other and ~~uh~~, you know, this is all very fuzzy. I think it was in Boston. I was hanging out with him at GBM and we were watching Jackie Casand and a few other people who were putting a show together, and he started talking about Russ ~~Conner~~ and the NY State Council on the Arts. By this time I'd come to Binghamton; I'd bought some equipment; I got the university here to buy some CV portapacks; I set up on campus, and got a B32, a good old B32

NEWS That's gone through quite an evolution.

RH Yeah. The thing I started doing was just gathering junk. As I said before, we had all this technology sitting around just trying to <sup>working for us to</sup> figure out what the hell to do with it. I'd had no background at all in electronics or anything except mechanical stuff, and I was making a few pieces that were related to ~~making~~ <sup>making</sup> mylar and sound that were sort of interesting to me. At the same time we were fooling around with television. I made a few tapes. I was lending equipment to students.

WS What year was it?

RH I think it was 1969 or 70

SM 3, 69.

NZ Were these pieces in mylar and sound inspirational?

RH We showed one of those in New York at one of Ken's shows

WS Ken?

RH Ken Jacobs. If you want to be sure about this, it was the first time he showed the shadow play, I showed that thing too. He keeps bugging me now. He wants to put it back together and can't figure how to get all the stuff together to do it.

WS When I was visiting you at the university, you said you had taken over a lot of obsolete equipment and turned ... how did you use the resources at the university?

RH Mainly, the way I try to use them is to sell them as much as possible and buy other stuff. Oh, and that's another thing that happened at the same time, ~~was~~ that when I first came here they were ~~was~~ building what's called "Educational Communications." They were just building the building. All the theaters and everything on campus now weren't there then. I kept looking at it and saying what the hell are you going to do with all this? There was a head of Educational Communications who said we were going to revolutionize the whole world through television, and the educational systems by having all these big machines, and not letting anybody touch them. Didn't make a hell of a lot of sense to me. So I finally convinced the other part of the administration to give me some money to buy some equipment that other people could touch. So I set off to find out what people would do with television. I think that, the original proposal that

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- RM cont... ties me back into this GBA scene. Nam June says "call this Russ ~~the~~ guy," so I call him and he says "yeah, come on down to New York and we'll talk about this." So I did and he said "apply to the Council for some money and see if we can get something for this idea of yours," and the idea was to open up a place in Binghamton that would have open access for people who wanted to see what they could with television. The rough premise was to take the artists and the educators and the rest of the public, those three sectors, and just see what you could do--as a very loose premise to see what they could do with television.
- NZ Did you document your activities of those years for Council applications and things like that or was it just ongoing?
- RM Some of it, yeah.
- WS So you applied for how much money?
- RM I forget.
- SM The original application, I don't know how much we applied for.
- WS What year was that?
- RM '70.
- WS But you got some money?
- RM We got \$50,000
- WS You don't know how much you applied for, but you got \$50,000
- RM Which knocked me out of course. I mean, my God! And the funny thing about that was that I didn't even have an organization. I wasn't incorporated, I wasn't even organized.
- WS You had the idea though, a \$50,000 idea.
- RM Well, I think it was probably politics to a certain extent.
- WS Russel got it for you?
- RM There was nobody working upstate on this at the time, and there's a tradition in the Council to try and spread the money throughout the state.
- GH Was that the same year the Video Freaks and Ken and everyone got their first grant?
- RM Probably. It was around that time, yeah. Well, Ken and the Freaks were in New York then and I was the only person in upstate to get any money that I know of.
- SM There was one, the April Video Co-op. I think they got one too, but they were very early. I don't know what happened to them.
- WS So tell us about as soon as you got all this money--a big shock and everything--and what did you do with it, and what happened then?
- RM Well, it was interesting the way they gave the money to me. WSKZ, our local television station, here, who, I think, was in about a million and a half of debt because the guy who managed it just stuffed it under and left. They had to find an organization to give me the money, so they gave it to WSKZ with proviso that the money go directly to me. So they just reuted the first check of \$4,000 to me and walked in and handed it to me. It was made out to me. I said, all right what do I do now? Do I leave or do I stay? So I went to the bank and opened up a checking account.
- GH When did you come across the name?

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RM We started out with the name, Community Center for Television Production, CCTVP.

WS When did you and Sherry meet in all this?

RM Sherry and I met in the middle 60s. She was at Allegheny College when I was teaching there.

WS So she was part of the organization from the very beginning?

RM No, her boyfriend was part of the organization.

WS NO?

RM Her boyfriend was part of the organization.

WS Didn't know about that.

SM Gets very complicated.

WS We want to know the whole story. Go ahead.

RM There are four members of the board of directors: One is Sherry; one is me; one is my wife; and the other is Ken, Sherry's boyfriend.

WS Sounds like a great combination, a winning combination so far.

RM Ha ha ha ha

WS A winning combination so far.

SM When it finally got juggled around probably it was fine.

WS So what happened to the 34,000 dollars? You actually had the money.

RM I went down and found the place on Court St. and opened it up.

WS So with the money then, you found the place. You didn't have an office or anything.

RM I was working off the campus, so in order to tie the community into it I felt I should get a place downtown.

NZ Was there a stipulation in the grant that you do tie the community into it?

RM That wasn't a stipulation, that was what I proposed.

WS Rephrase the proposal.

RM The proposal, very roughly, was to take the artists and the arts, and education and the educators, and the general public, and look at those three things somewhat separately, but give them all access to video equipment, with no ties on that. Whatever you want to do is up to you. And we'd find out what people did.

WS Sort of like a CETA grant but much larger.

RM It was a curious thing at the time because the machines were expensive, as expensive as they are now; black and white portapak was around \$1500 or something like that. People would come in, we'd ask them what their names were and they'd say we want to use a machine. We'd show them how to use it and hand it to them and say bring it back soon because we need it. And they always brought it back, so things started to evolve from that.

PD Just a question regarding the money going through WSKZ as opposed to the university, what happened that the university got out of the circuit?

RM The university can't be given money by the State Council on the Arts, because they're part of the state.

PD I see.

RM So I had to set up this whole thing outside of the university, which wasn't a bad idea. The university thought I was crazy because I couldn't administrate anything, the whole thing wouldn't go anywhere.

WS They were wrong weren't they.

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RM They changed their minds, yeah.

GM What kind of events and people and things that happened made the transition from a community access center, you know, here's video equipment, let's go out and make a videotape, to the idea of controlling video images?

RM Well, that was part of the art. That was always there. That was Nam June.

GM In other words, that was happening at the same time.

RM Yeah, all this was happening at the same time. Nam June and I were always working together with ideas.

GM Was he up here a lot at that time?

RM Yeah, yeah.

NZ Did Ken Dominic serve as a teacher to enable people who live in the community to become familiar with the systems? Was he doing video art at the same time?

RM (Inaudible)

NZ Was he doing video art at the same time?

RM Yeah, yeah.

WS But you got off the track, now. You were saying...

RM Paik was sort of a motivating force for a lot of these things that happened. I mean that's what Nam June's good at. He's kind of a something that runs around from one point to another and causes things to happen.

WS What was Russel's input after you got the check and everything?

RM I don't remember, didn't get much input at all. Russel's position was that he was coming into the Council as the consultant on video. In fact, they didn't have a video section then; they were working on a special program. I'm not sure how all these things took place, but Peter got in there and everything was filmed up in film and video, Peter Bradley.

NZ Who is Peter Bradley?

RM Peter Bradley used to be the head of the film, video, and...

GQ Film, TV, and Literature Division. Just resigned.

WS Forced out?

GQ ~~man~~ He wasn't forced out, he just wasn't promoted. And he was insulted. We could have stayed as long as he wanted.

RM He wasn't terminated. He left.

GQ He left on his own steam, yeah.

WS Well,

RM It was made impossible for him to stay.

WS That's it, that's it. You said it better than I could. There's a lot of that, isn't there? There have probably been a lot of people who have gone through your organization who...

RM Well, it's sure to happen more and more now, because of the times. I mean, it's getting to this whole thing of economics...

WS It's hard to survive.

RM Well, it's difficult for the arts to survive in these kinds of times. They can survive, but it's difficult for them to grow.

WE're getting more and more pressure from the Council right now to do things that are more visible, i.e., put TV programs on the air.

WS Well, you know where that comes from? Jimmy. Jimmy wants that.

\* (Singing - 145)  
100 - 210



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- RM Jimmy wants to be on TV or what?
- WS Jimmy is a Democratic Populist and the justification for expenditures on ETC and any other non-profit organization, for him, depends on broadcast visibility. And that's what's happening. I was told that by Jimmy, in Washington.
- RM Well, you can see it's a lot easier in this state. We've been going through this for ~~wh~~, ... and this state is probably the most vital place for the development of video.
- WS Definitely.
- RM And I never really felt that any one on the staff or on the Council knows what's going on in video.
- WS No, they don't.
- RM Unless it's something that's fairly recognizable to them.
- WS They've been able to do pretty well in spite of that, haven't they?
- PD The problem is wider than that. It's the basic research-to-applied problem-solving problem.
- WS What do you mean?
- PD The times, the times that we're in saying that things have to provide immediate solutions instead of basic contributions to theory, ideas, as opposed to - make it visible, make real, make it do something now.
- RM It's less and less immediate solutions as it is understandable solutions.
- PD Reasonable things that aren't part of something bigger.
- RM Well, you run into a time when you no longer have the kind of benevolence either in education or in the arts which, within my sphere of understanding of this, ~~that~~ used to be there. When you have good times on the D.O.B., division of the budget, in Albany, they'll say, "spend your money ~~and it's not to spend it~~, and that's all we want to know." And now the Division of the Budget in Albany is saying "spend your money in particular ways, and we want to know how you're going to spend it before you spend it, and then we'll let you know if you can spend it." So what you've got is a situation...
- WS Control.
- RM Control by the bureaucracy that actually is the main accouter for the money
- WS And there becomes a diminishing return in terms of accepting that control because sometimes you just don't want to do what they want you to do.
- RM Yeah, and that's when you resign your chairmanship.
- WS So Ralph Hoeking, what's next, what's next? Where do we come at the end of a first phase?
- RM Oh, ~~I might never have left the university.~~ →
- WS He, but you anticipate leaving, don't you?
- RM My only problem is that I don't want to be a caretaker-administrator, and I also don't want to be caught between my faculty and the administration as the person who has to transfer information in between. I want them to call each other. If they're pissed off, let them call the dean. I don't want to hear about it, because I can't do anything except get the lining of my stomach eaten out a little bit more. So I'm checking out of that, and it's both sides.

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WS Do you think it's the nature of the bureaucracy that you can't deal with anymore, or is it...?

RH It's the current nature of it now. It's the tightening up business. There's another committee that meets once in a while, every couple of months. It's called the State Wide Committee on the Arts or the Campus Wide Committee on the Arts...

WS When I was here last time you were having them in your studio.

RH Yeah, right. One of the things we're studying now is this whole problem of current kinds of administration that are affecting the arts. And this idea of accountability is probably the biggest problem the arts are having. I think it's a problem in education too. It comes to a point now where you've got a liberal arts structure on this campus, and the liberal arts structure is starting to say, "maybe we ought to have a few more ~~guys~~ in ditchdigging because a lot of these guys don't get jobs when they get out," which is fine if you want to start a whole mechanism that relates directly to training people for jobs, but liberal arts has not traditionally done that.

WS I think you hit on a very important word, "accountability." I think you could spin a lot of very interesting ideas off of that.

RH One of the things that I keep telling the administration is, when they ask me if we train people for industry, I say of course we do. We train people for the art industry. They don't know quite how to deal with that. I don't think they really believe it. But how do you become accountable in the arts? It's a difficult thing to do. Especially when the accountability that's applied to you is the same applied to people who make popcorn balls, whether or not the popcorn balls are all of a certain size or have the same amount of fluid to hold them together.

WS In terms of your own accountability and the kind of dichotomy between doing all of this work and being a teacher and doing ETC with other people and doing your own work, how do you start trying to define other kinds of accountability, how do you balance out the different roles that you play? Is that a big problem?

RH I think there's a lot of things confused there. I don't know if I can deal with accountability of all of them. The major accountability that I deal with is my own accountability to myself. If I make sense to myself then I keep doing it. If I don't make sense, I don't do it. Then I do something else.

WS George was saying something about that in terms of doing a magazine, you know, feeling right about what you're doing. If you don't feel right about it then you can't do it.

RH Well, I think the main premise of getting up in the morning is to see if you can have a reasonably good day for your self and that's about as far as I want to go with it, really.

WS Are you happy with what you've done? Do you feel content as a creative individual?

RH I don't really feel content, particularly.

WS Do you feel discontent?

RH I think art has to do with tension.

WS So you try to maximize tension in your life?

RH I try to find an understandable, reasonable level to deal with. There are limits to it.

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WS Say more about that, ~~tension~~... Specifically, what you mean about that in terms of making your own stuff.

RH Well, no, it's a concept I apply to myself and try to give to my students and to other people in different ways, but I've always felt that change and tension and creativity are things that are always mashed together, and if you don't have these elements working around in some ways, then I tend to throw out need. I don't think need is a particular issue. I guess I could define need as being something that a person would need to do ... a person would need to recognize need if they had to have some other outside force to cause them to do something.

WS You have more of an inner force to tell you.

RH Yeah, in some ways. There's something inside me that wants me to do these things. I've got some insane tapes of my beginning students ... They'll watch something on television that perhaps one of us has made and say, "well I can apply that to a program like 'Star Trek' and that would be really good." So they have to come up with something applicable to the fame and fortune area or the profit area in order to get an understanding of what this thing could be. I'm trying to get away from that. It's the old hacky cliché of Art being communication. I go through this every semester with students, and I have to tell them that I'll accept that premise as long as it includes masturbation. If it's masturbatory then I can deal with the idea of communication.

NZ Then communication is self-indulgent, is that what you mean?

RH If it's a communication to yourself.

WS I always felt that my own work was basically self-therapeutic, and I wondered if that stimulated anything in you. Obviously, one's own video work is very personal.

RH I wouldn't call it therapeutic, no.

WS What part of you does your own video work satisfy? What needs?

Oh the tape's run out. I'll get another scotch.

WS A human being is a very complex person who needs a lot of different things and I think you've been able to bridge kind of a wide level of activities: You're a teacher; you have a non-profit organization that you work with; you're an individual artist, so your experience is a lot wider than a lot of other people's. And you probably make a division there between when you know you are doing your own work, and when you know when you are working with students, and you know when you're doing something else...

RH Well, I'm not sure that I do. But again, it goes back to the idea of getting up in the morning and seeing what you can do.

WS It all overlaps?

RH Yeah

WS Well is that all right?

RH It is for me.

WS You don't ever get jealous when people make demands on you and you want to do your own work or...

RH No. I tend to do my own work in things I know I can do it.

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WS Do you think you sacrifice doing your work for teaching?

RE This again: My own work is all these things. See, that's the problem.

WS You have a very mature attitude towards it. Some people don't have a division in their lives. They go to work and do work, and then they do their art.

RE I decided a long time ago when I was working in the factories that I didn't like this idea of working in a factory and then going home and trying to play. I wanted to find something that made a lot of sense to me on all levels, and it happened to come out being art. It certainly wasn't thought of at the time, but the concept was there.

WS What concept?

RE The concept of finding some way to live your life that was sensible.

WS So your aesthetic embodies your whole life?

RE I don't know how to answer that. My visual aesthetic is part of my life. I have many aesthetics. I guess, basically, I have an aesthetic of living, of how to go about living.

WS So that has to do with the decisions that you make on an ongoing basis.

RE Yeah.

NZ Is that specific to Ralph? I'm not sure why you asked about Ralph's ongoing process of decisions.WS That seems to be what life is about. Making decisions.

GH I'd like to jump a track.

WS Please do.

GH I'd just like to hear more specifically what went down between you and Nam June when you came up here, essentially, your first video tapes...or some dialogues you had with him.

RE I don't think we talked too much about video tapes. We talked more about the idea of getting people involved in video, and getting video to a point where I think I could define it better than Nam June did in some ways. We wanted to find out what video was. I could speak English better if nothing else. At the time Nam June was having horrendous problems. He's much better than he used to be. He had a passion and a sense for what he was doing, and even being as inarticulate as I was then and still am, I could find some ways to make it happen. Nam June's good at this. Nam June gets an idea and he makes me build it for him, which I've done many times: Charlotte Mormon's Video Cello; the Video Bed; the Experimental Television Center. I think these are all things that Nam June wanted built.

NZ Your building that doesn't give you claim to having created that.

RE No, I don't want claim.

WS But you got satisfaction from doing it because you chose to do it.

RE Yeah. I like to build things. At the same time the Video Bed was thought of by Sherry, and I built it, and Nam June took the credit for it. It all works out, see.

NZ Do you feel slighted that Nam June took the credit?

RE I don't feel slighted. I paid for all these things too. In fact, the eyeballs that Charlotte had, I paid for those, and Nam June built them rather than have them built, and he took credit for them. It's a curious relationship. I don't feel badly about it at all.

WS He has twenty monitors

RE That's that bunch of old TV sets I paid \$5 a piece for.

Ralph Hocking and Sherry Miller interview 2/5/73

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- GH Was the first ? built at the center?
- RH No, it was built in Tokyo
- GH Was that the same situation, was the idea generated by Nam June and designed by . ?
- RH Yeah, ~~Aber~~ built it and Nam June . ? and irritated ~~Aber~~ and found ways to keep him happy and give him enough money to keep him in the states for a while and make his life as comfortable as he could through whatever moneys I could raise. (laughs) It was all the way around that way.
- WS What are some of the developments of the different identifiable phases of the ETC? How did Sherry come in?
- RH Sherry came to live with Ken and was looking for a job. I think she applied to Ken Dominic.
- NZ (to Sherry) What kind of background do you have?
- RH Neil, you didn't let me answer, do you want me to answer or not?
- WS Maybe Sherry should answer.
- RH I do this to Neil all the time, two or three times and then he shuts up for awhile (laughs). She was looking for a job in, I think it was in psychology and (to Sherry) you couldn't find anything, or the things you found you didn't want.
- SM I was overqualified.
- RH You were overqualified. And then I had a secretary, Linda, or one or two inbetween, and you decided to try that, so you cued into it. So (to others) she came in and took over, kicked me out. Sherry has a background in psychology.
- WS Sherry, could you say something, personally, in your own words, about what Ralph has just said; how you came into it; what you thought about it; how you wanted to develop it; and, you know, what happened the way you saw it?
- SM Sure, I came into it. I was somewhat interested already 'cause of knowing Ralph, and obviously I'd been down to the center many times before I actually started to work there. I had no background in television at all- I'd never seen small format television, had never even conceived of myself as ever wanting to have anything to do with any machines like that. They scare me. I had no idea how to run them; I couldn't run a tape recorder; I didn't know how to run a film camera, or projector, or anything like that.
- NZ But in studying psychology, did you come across studies which involved analysing some specific mental function with, you know, looking at the wave form ?
- SM Many moons later
- WS Your question is ~~taking~~ <sup>her</sup> off the track, it was a bad question.
- NZ Well I'm just curious. You said you were afraid of the machines, but taking psychology to the masters level, I would just guess that you would come across, you know, the scientific process would bring you to, you know, some kind of initiation with the kinds of technology which now seem to be filling up the experimental television center.

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- You were trying to figure out a way to fuck her.*
- SM Well I tend to have an analytical framework, I think, in the way that I think about things, but I didn't know enough at that point to really understand how that kind of way of looking at things could make any kind of contribution to the Center.
- WS You realize you must have felt that you had a contribution, that you were needed in that situation because you went into it with like a total energy.
- SM Yeah, and one of the things that initially interested me, personally, was working with kids in video, and I did quite alot of that.
- RH I thought you were trying to figure out a way to fuck me. (laughs)
- SM (laughing) I'm much more discreet than to say that.
- WS She was trying to work with the kids, Ralph, you got it wrong.
- SM Actually I was interested in accruing power, haha. No, I was interested, really, in the kids, and working with kids, and seeing what kids could do. But I'd also, through school, taken alot of art courses and was very interested in art, and met Nam June at the Center and was very interested in that specific aspect of it. And as the Center tended more and more in that direction...
- WS So what was the first tangible thing that you did when you started to make a commitment to the Center? What did you start to do?
- SM I typed (laughs) and filed.
- WS So how many years have you been working together, then, on the center, what was the year that you entered?
- SM I started about '71.
- WS So that's '71 to '79, that's like seven years. What were the exciting things that started happening? I mean, that must have been a very dynamic thing when Sherry came in and you started having a real organization.
- RH Well Sherry didn't cause the organization to happen. We always had a real organization.
- WS But she brought alot with her.
- RH Well I don't know, not initially. She just came in and started typing, and taking care of the correspondence.
- WS (to Sherry) What do you have to say about that?
- SM It's not a very romantic point of view but it's accurate.
- WS (laughing) Well, I guess we're in a post-romantic period. Well what were some of the highlights, I mean, what was the sense of collaboration? You put it in a very blatant point of view, but there must have been a sense that something was, as we have a sense in trying to get a possible magazine together we have a sense of alot of energy and alot of possibilities opening up together, mutually. Did you have that sense?
- SM We still have that sense.
- WS Well say something about that.
- RH The idea of the Experimental Television Center is that it is an experimental television center. It's a place to experiment and to evolve in and deal with ideas. It has always been that, ever since I started it, and it always will be that or else I'll close it.
- WS It will close, it will close, it will close.
- RH I don't want it to turn into a service organization like Murk, or something like this that hands out equipment. That was never the premise.

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- WS Could it go on without you, Ralph?  
 RH Uh, it won't.  
 WS Could it?  
 RH It probably could, yeah, but it won't.  
 WS The strength of an organization, it seems to me, is its ability to go...  
 RH This isn't really an organization, it isn't a group.  
 WS No?  
 RH No, this is my goddamn sculpture, you know. This is part of my sculpture. It's a very personal thing to me, and if it changes radically, I have enough control over it and I can just shut it up, dissolve the organization, it no longer exists.  
 WS I think George would take exception to that point of view, wouldn't you (to George)?  
 GQ Why?  
 WS Well, I don't know, there seems to be alot of, you know, I don't know, I wasn't trying to force my...  
 GQ I absolutely don't take exception to it. The important thing is that one be clear, what it is that one is doing..  
 RH That's right.  
 GQ And I think there are no rules in that respect.  
 RH And I've always felt myself to be a ~~dictator~~-dictator, and that's exactly the way I feel about the Center. *→ benevolent*  
 GQ The most just form of government.  
 RH I think it is. I'd love to live under it, if we could find one.  
 GQ It has only existed in very tiny little situations.  
 RH It's the only thing that gets anything done in reasonable ways, in ways at least that I find reasonable.  
 GQ It's an alternative to beaurocracy for sure.  
 RH We discuss things, and quite often Sherry makes decisions about whatever has to be done. If there's some basic decision I feel I should get into, I'll get into it and I'll shove everybody else out of it. I'll listen to what they have to say but I'll do what I think makes sense. That's upfront, everybody knows that's the way it is.  
 GH Like what kinds of decisions?  
 WS Give us an example, a specific example where something is happening and you felt that you had to enter and change the situation in terms of the direction in which you felt it was necessary to go.  
 RH I don't remember them, I just do them.  
 SM He's not in that radical a position, it's never that radical. It isn't really quite that complex.  
 RH This sounds radical, hahaha.  
 GH When you found out you were out, say, you know. I mean it seems like I remember you had a meeting about whether you should do so.  
 RH Tell us about that.  
 RH We're still doing pretty much what we were  
 WS Your aspirations for the organization of fulfilling certain goals from the beginning have, from my point of view, as an outsider, been radically revised, and you should say something about that.  
 RH All right, well let me give you some definitions of what I think the State Council--oh, it's all mixed up. Let me just start and see what comes out. First of all, I think the State Council of the Arts--

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RH (cont.)...yeah I've been thinking words, I really think that words define things to a great extent--the State Council of the Arts, to me, is a place that is counselling or is a council of, and has to do with, the arts. I see this as a fairly definitive statement, and in the case of television, I don't think that what is known about television particularly relates to the arts. I think it relates to entertainment, and I don't think it's the State Council of the Entertainments. And I would like to see the moneys that they have go toward the idea of funding places and people that are going to specifically have the impulse, urge, and need, or involvement in, the arts. And it's a political organization, and they have traditionally tried to figure out ways to support a lot of things that I consider are outside of the arts, and I'll go further as we go and try to define some of what I think art is in terms of video. It's broader than most people think I think it is.

WS Well say something about it now since you're on it.

RH Um, well, shit, I keep losing the thread.

GQ Let him, let him know, he's doing fine.

RH I'm fragile man, you can see that. Let me go back to the State Council of the Arts thing for a minute. I was on the panel for about two years and was fighting all the time not to give money to organizations that wanted to do something that didn't relate to the arts. In other words, they just needed money to put a program on TV, or to do something that didn't have this kind of spark to it, or feeling to it that somehow would help, again, this creative process, or thinking, or ideas, or something that would lend itself to the growth of video as an art form. And I quite often lost those issues; a lot of moneys went to, I think, some of the most ridiculous projects I could think of. But what happened out of that was that I kept saying these things, and then I had to think about them, and say, what the hell am I doing with this TV Center? If I'm going to take money from the State Council of the Arts, then I'd better start thinking about what I'm doing with the TV Center. And I finally decided that, and it was a good time to do it because we didn't have enough money to do everything that we set out to do. Ideally I would do all of those things, I would have a wide open operation. But I couldn't, so I was taking State Council of the Arts moneys, specific moneys from this specific place, and decided I would narrow down the concept and deal more toward the idea of the arts, arts and video. I could see this as at least a three or four faceted thing; one would be processing, the kinds of stuff I'm dealing with, the kinds of stuff Gary's dealing with; another would be documentation or documentary, I think a very valid form of video art, a third area might be dealing in the conceptual area with television as a tool, pointing examples I suppose you (to Willoby) and Peter Campus, I suppose to a certain extent...

WS Wait a minute, maybe not me (laughter...)

RH And in the fourth area, I still see television as sort of a sculptural thing that has mass and sculpture to it.

WS Could you elaborate on that?

RH I just did

WS Yeah he did....and now the fifth category of all the things you didn't



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WS (cont.)...mention.

RH All the other things I didn't mention is the problem of the fifth category of nonexistence, or something. But I think you can come to that kind of a decision, like, first of all, documentation. It took me a long time to figure that one out. It seems to me that you can go about gathering information in particular ways, and somehow it comes up as an understanding in the person who is gathering the information, hopefully a clear understanding of what the information is, of the event or the experience--I keep going back to the idea of experience through television or through the video camera or whatever.

WS And that happens differently in these different categories because the content is different.

RH Well I think the most abused category is the documentation area. So many people are making snappy little entertainment shows and calling them documentaries.

WS Where is the line for you between art and entertainment?

RH A thought. It has an intensive thought . . . . .

WS An intensive thought-- what do you mean, intensive thought?

RH I have to use examples of it, I suppose. I think somebody can take my machine and make something pretty, slap a sound track on it and run off and sell it, which may be the reason that they do it. Or, I think somebody might use my machine to develop ideas, visual ideas that are important to them and important for them to understand. I think there is a different intent there, there's very little sock carried to the first one.

GQ That makes alot of sense to me, that art differs from other forms of call it, what, " "discourse, (read communication if that's what the prejudice is) in that it is intentional and conscious, And it's the quality of consciousness that arises out of the engagement with the medium that differs from the assumption that one is doing something for an audience or for an effect or for an idea

RH Or to make a living

GQ Or to make money, whatever, for, for, for whatever.

RH The same idea, I think, call it stream of sciences, is something that . . .

WS What do you mean?

RH Well I think a scientist or one who deals with science who is curious about what they are doing, directly convoluting within themselves these problems and processes, is doing exactly the same thing that the artist does.

WS How's that?

RH Just the way I said it, I mean I don't know how . . .

WS That quality of mind that he brings toward the problem

NZ Intention

RH Intention, yeah

For the sake of the problem, in solving it, or for the sake of raising a dollar in going on to the next big project in building the empire. Scientists are clearly identified, I mean, the people who do it just because it's there-- mountain climbing because the mountain exists or mountain climbing because there's a guy waiting at the top with a Bolex to take your picture for National Geographic.

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- WS That's what Carl André said about mountains. He said the reason he climbed them was because they were there-- and that's the artistic in him, too, I suppose. And the other intention is to climb them because of something that you get from getting to the top.
- NZ The problem is is there a reason to get out of bed in the morning
- RH That's a little bit unclear, uh, part of the reason to climb the mountain is to feel what it's like to go up the mountain. If you're climbing the mountain only to get your name in the paper or to meet the man at the top to take your picture, or something like this, then I think that's a different intention. But the artists, or the arts, or the sciences, I think are very well <sup>sluggish</sup> over this.
- WS Art intention is very un-goal oriented, it's self satisfying.
- RH It's incredibly goal oriented. The goal is to find out more about what you're curious about. It's a hell of a goal, as far as I'm concerned. (laughs)
- WS And that relates to experimental because it's a kind of correlation there.
- RH Yeah, yeah.
- GQ There's always the residue of the old debate between art for art's sake and art for a purpose. And those are such crude terms in which to state the case, that when one is forced to one side or the other it appears, always, as though one is reviving an old point of view, so that Ralph's point of view could be read to some extent as an art for art's sake point of view and then seen in the context of a cultural history. On the other hand, the issue as it was raised when the art for art's sake point of view was hotly debated, was not very subtle in relationship to the whole question of what a medium is, and what the potential for dialogue within a medium is. I think this is the distinction that's very hard for people who haven't worked dialogically with a medium where you actually feel yourself in communication with something that's coming up within the medium, and you're listening hard for the clues that come from the medium itself rather than a system of ideas or a set of outside assumptions.
- RH The art for art's sake thing--I battled that one in the fifties-- it never made a hell of a lot of sense to me
- GQ Well it depends on who is saying it and what they mean by it
- RH The idea of anything for its own sake is ridiculous to me because you're always being affected by and affecting the entire culture
- GQ But the kind of art from which that point of view arose was not as solipsistic as the presentation of the point of view afterward made it seem. I mean something was happening and it was happening within language or within whatever it was, whether in paint or whatever it happened to be. It's like the point that you made about what you called masturbation-- the larger category is auto-eroticism-- that the very act of being involved in it is in itself an excitation of the living possibility of being there doing that. And that's not art for art's sake. It's as though when you say art for art's sake you're building a case around your activity.
- WS Art for what's sake, Ralph? You do art, and for what sake? It's not art for art's sake it's art for something else's sake, so what sake

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WS (cont.)...do you do it for?

RH I do-it because I choose to do it.

WS Self-sake-, the self is what you do it for

RH I suppose. It's the only thing I have to deal with really, is myself, as we all do.

WS What does Peer Bode have to say about all of that?

RH I don't see myself as an isolated point. This is part of the difference.

WS Who said you should? or would?

RH I see myself as a part of society. I think art for art's sake, quite often that argument related around that idea of living in garrets and

GQ It's a sociological distinction, really.

RH Ralph is in a situation, though, where he does his own work and many of the people around him, students and people at the television center, benefit by the fact that he's doing, you know, art for Ralph's sake.

GQ But that would be true of any human being who had contact with any human beings. If the activity were a lie, or if the situation of students is a fact and a truth in that...

WS That may spring into an interesting question about who do you think you are doing your work for besides yourself?

RH Oh I'm doing it entirely for myself

WS Totally for yourself-- but there are people who benefit from it

RH Wait wait wait. Let me get back to my work, I keep getting confused. You're talking about this video stuff that I'm working with upstairs here and putting together-- ideas in video. I'm primarily doing that for myself and Sherry's sake or whatever. At the same time, I know that it is a collaboration. I know that at the same time there are a lot of other things that happen with that because I get ideas from that that then cross over to other areas. Neil says he sees things that I do that make some sense to him, but I don't particularly set out to do that, except once in awhile I do-- like the other day. I'm trying to teach a course that's very interesting to me right now because it's a course in video that has nothing to do with using machines, but it has to do with all of it in concept--working entirely in concept and with other materials. And one of the things I'm trying to teach is how to key. So I've outlined things on the blackboard, I've showed particular things on the screen, and I couldn't quite get this idea across. So I came home that night and got myself a drink, went upstairs and made a tape to give to the students the next day of keying and what they could see. And when I got up the next morning I still had a few more ideas so I added those on, walked in, and put the tape on. And we all watched that and then talked more about it, and what's happening out of it is, and I was talking to Paul about it the other day, it's blowing my mind because I'm getting across all of these ideas and not using the machines at all.

WS Except you used, with your words, with talk...

RH That's the first time I've done this tape business which I'm probably going to do more of. This is probably going to relate to what we're doing next year and this idea of putting together some sort of book. ~~now~~ I think I'll also put together a set of tapes which

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- RH (cont.)...may go along with some of that.  
Ralph, do you perform your artistic activity ever thinking that people are monitoring your activity as you go?
- RH Start over again  
— You perform your activity as an artist. I'm just curious if you're...  
RH Well I'm getting really tired of, well, go ahead ...  
— I'm just curious if you ever act with the fact that there are people who are monitoring your activities-- your students, or the New York State Council of the Arts...  
WS Your public, your public  
RH I'm not a performer. I'm not a performer at all. I have no intention and no ability as far as that is concerned.  
WS But this is a performance, Ralph, right here you're involved in a performance.  
RH I'm sitting here in front of my fireplace, and I'm sitting here shitting the shit with you...  
WS But you've got an audience. We're here.  
RH I have an audience every place I go, man.....  
— This is a dialogue.  
RH And I'm not performing for them.  
WS But it's more than a dialogue because there are more than two people involved.  
GQ Well who's the audience, but who is the audience. It is a non-constant audience.  
WS We're all everything at once.  
GQ Right, but in a performance one thinks of a situation in which one person performs for an audience, or a group of people perform for.....  
WS No, a performance can be multi-peopled...  
RH That's right, and it can be intended to be a performance, and this is not intended to be a performance.  
GQ Right, well that brackets it; that frames it; that frame isn't here.  
— Ralph I remember an evening when you invited me down to the center along with a bunch of other people and showed some of your work in progress--"this is where I'm going, this is what I'm doing, this is what I'm interested in"-- was that a performance?  
RH It was closer to a performance except the thing that's happening to me is this idea of teaching has got me to force myself to come to a point where I try to logically structure things for people who don't know what I'm going to say, who may not be involved in what I'm about or what I'm talking about. I still don't think I'm dealing with performance in the classic sense of trying to....  
WS Performance with stigma  
RH No, in the classic sense of trying to take something from one point to another. I'll loosely structure a situation or an idea, and then I'll go into it and hope something happens. I never never never have anything on paper or anything to remind me of anything.  
WS How about a more general category called communications  
RH Well, you could use that. I'm trying to communicate right now, yeah, I agree with that. It's very broad.  
WS But there are different levels of the task, and I want to get closer, I want to define...

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RH You want to define communication?

WS No no, I want to isolate different areas of communication that you may go through as a creative individual, from when you get up down to when you go to sleep. And there are different qualities of communicating, or different situations in communicating, and some of them are personal, some of them are performance, and I sympathize with his trying to force you into a position where you acknowledge a certain change in intention, or an accommodation to a situation where you get into what I would call a performance situation, too. And I want to qualify that by asking you about different levels of how you see yourself as a communicative individual.

RH Let me try another tact on that; maybe it'll make sense, maybe it won't. I try, consciously, to deal with myself and deal with other people as easily and simply and forthrightly as I can. I don't have any sense of politics, usually. Once in a while it crops up, but normally I can get that out of myself. I try to, again, get up in the morning and do something that makes sense to me. It's really that simple, and I'm striving for that kind of simplicity.

WS I think a lot of people have that feeling, too. I have that feeling.

RH I have a hard time talking in front of a group of people. I have a less hard time than I used to have because I've done it more.

WS Is what you've just expressed something that is happening now, are you talking in front of a group of people now?

RH No this is much less formal than what I had in mind.

WS When you refer to that situation?

RH Right.

WS But it's not a dialogue, it's more than a dialogue, it's a quadrupologue, or something. There are a lot of people in the room and a lot of people are being quiet for awhile...

GQ A dialogue implies two or more because it means the space inbetween.

RH Actually that's an interesting idea because that's exactly the way I conduct my classes. I mean I don't get up and just lecture for an hour and a half and then say all right go home and think about it. Everybody's always interrupting me, always interrupting me, which I want them to do because I want to know what I can do for them and what they can do for me, and get a dialogue or some kind of communication process going. ~~and~~ Then we've got TV and, you know, change channels, and that's about what you can do.

Ralph, I have to tell you what that was that I brought up a minute ago, for me. For me that was a demonstration of where I am. It wasn't performance, it was a demonstration.

An exhibition

No I wouldn't call it an exhibition, it was an exhibition in performance, but it was a demonstration. Here it is; a demonstration in the sense of a chemistry; a guy getting up and saying "well here's how you make nitroglycerin." That's a demonstration. This is how I'm doing what I do.

RH In fact I'm dead if I can't do this dialogue thing. I'm dead. I've come to a point in classes where nobody will say anything and I don't know what to say. And I say, "hey, why don't you go home?" and close it down because it doesn't make any sense to me

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- RH (cont.)...to continue.
- WS But you can have silence, too. You can have a few minutes of silence there.
- RH Yeah I accept that, too. And we do do that, that does happen. But you do come to a point where you feel that if you don't get get some stimulants, then you're not going to come up with anything.
- GH Speaking of stimulants...
- WS What kind of stimulants...
- SM Yes?
- GH I thought maybe we could break and look at some tapes.
- WS No no. Well wait, I just want to ask one more question... (inaudible joking)...there's a little bit of a lopsidedness about it all because Peer has something to say and you're trying to say something. I'm interested in trying orientation, orient the dialogue a little bit more comprehensively by asking you specifically what the stimulations have been in terms of doing what you've been doing. What are the high points? What are those things that have been really integral in the development since, uh, 71-73? What are the high points?
- RH Well Willoby you're thinking along the lines of television and...
- WS No I'm thinking in terms of memory, of highpoints
- RH Let me finish what I'm saying. I don't tend to think of high points, I don't tend to think of--relate this to television. I think television has this problem of trying to find a level of orgasm to stay there, and I just don't think you can do that. I've had so many high points and so many low points and so many middle points that I don't remember them all. And I don't really find these things that some people do find, and I just don't know if I'm capable of this.
- WS Does Peer Bode, would you concur with that observation? Is your experience in what you've done together, or would you say that you could define high point, that there are certain things that are, you know, that you could point to as being important?
- PB It's difficult for me to answer. It almost gets onto another conversation, like me dealing with my situation and my involvement.
- WS Well, if it's a dialogue it ought to be open for everyone to say something in, and if you want to answer the question you ought to be able to. If you don't want to answer it then you don't have to.
- PD Well say something about high points. A high point is an artificial sort of a freeze in time. I mean you don't see Neil walking into the TV Center and referring to smells and so on. In other words, this nostalgia kind of TV--really--says-it, it's the kind of thing a guy who's making a documentary does. It's a very artificial approach to nailing something down in time. It doesn't want to be nailed down.
- UQ Not necessarily, I mean, I'm not defending his question about high points, but I think it's interesting that it came up, because I think that it's exactly what video is not about. So when one is asked to state what high points, one feels a resistance coming from that which creates the thing that we're talking about, maybe. A high point is a peak experience. It's something that stands out of the course of life by its separateness from that. One point of view might say as

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- GQ (cont.)...someone as long ago as Alfred <sup>Sutt</sup> said, that all experience is exceptional and that we are trapped in a network of created language in which we don't notice the exceptionality of everything that is, and so we make them less exceptional exceptions, ordinary legal kinds of realities (laughter). And by the elimination of, and I mean I am now inserting this, by the elimination of the expectation of high points, one moves away from sex for the purpose of orgasm or something for the purpose of getting to this-- whatever it happens to be which is also the end of it, also the death of it, and moves into the area of a live middle, of a medial region in which exceptions are everywhere-
- WS Finish what you're saying
- PD Let me ask you a question
- WS No don't ask him a question, let him finish
- GQ Go ahead, go ahead
- PD You bring up sex; sex is a good way to discuss high points.
- GQ Right
- PD Do you remember the best sex you ever had?...probably not, I mean...
- GQ Well see, you're asking me for a high point view of sex, and when you ask that question, um, I mean I can remember extravagant kinds of experiences, but then if I ask myself what is it in the nature of sex that compels me to want to think about it a whole lot, uh, it's not that. In fact, as I grow older and I hope deeper in my awareness...
- RH Wisdom
- GQ Wisdom, whatever, I lose my interest in that kind of excitement and deepen my interest in something that comes into play.
- PD What's a high point? A high point to me is an abstraction of thought not "gee this was really a great day, 1976..."
- RH High point is a really lousy description of...
- PD It's really bad
- RH ...and this isn't, I'm not trying to attack you or anything
- WS I'm going to defend myself, don't worry
- RH NO, in terms of high point, I think you can find, if you want to talk about specific issues in specific times, the idea of pivotal point, perhaps, makes more sense to me than high point.
- WS It's similar for me
- RH I can find things that have changed my life in particular ways.
- WS Okay. Rather than defend my high point position, let's talk about your pivotal points.
- RH My pivotal points...The problem with my pivotal points is the same problem as my high points. I don't remember my last orgasm, nor do I...
- WS That would be a problem, I would say
- RH Well it isn't to me, at all. No, there's no sense in trying to remember them; I just want to have another one. And I also can't remember the last time, except I suppose I can remember the last time I was; no I can't. I've been so damn depressed lately I can't remember the last time I was depressed either.
- SM You (laughs) asked the question in a bad time.
- RH But I've had orgasms and depressions in the last few days and I don't remember either one of them. So I don't deal with those extremes very well; I tend to put them....I want the extremes, I'm after them all the time, but I....

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- NS I don't want to carry the conversation into my domain but I feel very strongly about measuring my life in terms of very high points and low points, and I keep a pretty careful graph on them. You can throw me a day in a year in my life and I can give you an estimate of where I was on that...
- RH I'm amazed at people who can do that, I just can't do it.
- PD Why do you do it?
- WS Because I have a very strong sense of my development and where I am from day to day, and I just remember.
- PD I guess maybe that it's just a difference in- I would measure it in terms of an integration, and where I am now is the product of all of those things.
- RH If you take the question, what you're asking me is whether or not, perhaps, I can answer a question that's important to you, and I can't.
- WS Well that's why I'm sitting here, 'cause I have the questions that are important to me and I wouldn't be here unless I wanted to ask them.
- RH Well that particular question I can't answer, is all I'm saying...
- WS Right, well we should go on to something else
- RH Which has nothing to do with good, bad, or indifferent...
- GQ Let me taste that scotch, let me taste it
- WS But actually I was trying to get something out of you that related more to your situation than anything out of me, because I would like to know, in the period between 1971 and where we are now, what some of the more, don't say high points, pivotal, memorable, you know, what has been accomplished in the last seven years of work? And when I say work I don't think of your specific work, I think about the work...
- RH I'm not trying to dodge this but, again, I've got the same damned problem, and Sherry'll tell you, that I don't remember things very well, and I don't really think in the past at all. I think in the now, and I don't often think very far in the future.
- WS But it's good that I asked that question because you could tell us that way of your thinking, because some people do think differently.
- RH Yeah, your questions are fine, I'm not objecting to those.
- WS Maybe someone could ask you some others.
- GQ Well I would like to see some tapes, too.
- RH Okay
- WS Sounds good.
- NZ A lot of what has happened over the last seven years has been: you've created a space here and supplied people with the tools, and given them psychological space in which to experiment. And you, as an individual, can not always, you know, you just can't keep up with it. I mean you gave the space...
- RH Well it's not my nature to be able to keep up with everything that's happening. Again, my problem with memory and my problem with recording things, writing things down or hanging onto things... the few things that I do have are probably on tape--sound tape or video tape.
- SM I think that what Neil has said is really--when Willoby talked about accomplishment, that's the accomplishment, is to have set up and then to maintain that space and those tools for people to come in and to work with.
- NS And works without anybody, in a sense
- SM No it doesn't
- NS It worked with you (laughs)



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- SM It doesn't work without people  
 Much more than the rent, and it's much more than...
- SM No
- WS Well say what you want to say
- SM The way that the Center is structured is one that very definitely needs people, needs very particular people with very particular interests. And I think that one of the threads of interest is a commitment to make that space and those tools available to other people so that other people can do their work. Now what I look back on in seven years, and say that was important and that was important, is only my perception of that. Ralph may have a very different perception; Peer has one; Neil has one, and they're all different. I don't think that that's really, really the issue. I mean I'd be glad to sit down some other day and talk to you about what I think was interesting to me.
- WS Well you're talking about a collaboration that has a kind of a seamless quality, right? I mean there's a kind of general continuity that seems to absorb everything else. It's very interesting because I'm very different from that way of thinking. I delineated things very specifically: I have dates, times, moments where the peak experiences happen. I measure them; they're recorded; they're documented; I put them out of the culture; I identify myself with them taking place and my participation in them, and you're approach is very different and it's interesting to me to uh, I'm interested in you talking more about it.
- RH Let me put it this way, perhaps. I'm not interested, very deeply, in most people--individuals. I'm interested momentarily in them, but not in an ongoing way. I'm interested in ideas. I'm interested in the TV Center as a place that gives the space and everything that people are talking about, but I'm not interested in finding out what happens there after it's developed. And I think it should be able to develop in its own kinds of ways individually. I'm a great champion for the individual and I don't...
- WS You let him do what he wants
- RH Exactly. And that's a very difficult thing to get funding agencies to understand. (laughs) I think that our operation is perhaps one of the best ones in the world this way. I mean we really do not sit on people's backs. And we do not participate unless they want us to in particular ways. And we won't do a fucking thing for them, usually, unless they need some help. And there aren't too many places around that do that, none that I can think of, really, because video especially; uh what's her name, *Lucy Castelanitz* was up here the other day, kept referring to us as a group. I mean she wanted to see group tapes, I think, or she wanted to see what the group has done...
- WS Pat *Vous?*
- SM Lucy Castelanitz
- Well how has that misrepresentation been allowed to develop over the years? Or, you've never really pursued a public...
- RH Well no, I've said what I'm saying now many times, but it doesn't fit into the logic, somehow, of those people who run these things. It

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- RH (cont.)...just doesn't seem to compute. I believe in education that way, too. I did the same with my students. I'll go in there and I'll do what I can with them for the time that I'm there, and then I expect them to pursue their own interests. I expect them to pursue them in ways that I may not know about.
- WS Maybe you're asking too much, Ralph
- RH I am. But I'm going to keep asking that because I think in the long run, that's what makes sense to me. And it's a difficult thing to do right now because all of my students want me to tell them what's right. And I don't know what's right so I can't tell them that and tend to confuse the shit out of them. But maybe they need at least one person to confuse them.
- 3/4 tape 2  
 In how to be a student, or how to go about constructing, you know, visual works, or how to pursue knowledge or how to...
- RH I'll give them the same framework that I give people at the Center. I'll give them the tools to work with, or I'll critique the ideas, I'll talk to them about the ideas. But ultimately I'm not going to run around and say "oh that's horrible" or "oh that's great". It's very level, usually. I'm more likely to say "that's bullshit" than I am to say "that's great." If greatness occurs then that's what should happen. If shit occurs then I'll be more critical about that than I would be about the greatness. So does that make sense?
- It makes sense because of my experience
- RH I'm not the student's father, I never have felt that way.
- WS I think that's general in teaching. I mean students look for that and never get it from teachers unless that teacher is out looking for somebody to...
- PD I think Ralph and Sherry have given students particular individual kind of space where they're free to pursue things on their own...
- NZ Well that's the responsibility of everyone who teaches. (edit)
- PD But it's, well I don't know...my experience at the Television has been unique, in my student experience, that I was never given as open a space in which to explore my own individuality in regard to the tools
- RH Paul, I think it's common for people who teach to try to make sure that the student gets that right. And that quite often gets to the point where they will do it for them.
- PD It depends on what you're teaching, but yeah, it is common. I have to say that I remember being under the influence of a certain mentor who would say "It's not your job as a teacher to say okay this is right or wrong. It's your job as a teacher to supply information and leave the decisions about the goodness of that information to..."
- RH No I think you can take it one step further. I'll tell people what I think, and I'll fight like hell for my position. But I won't fight to the point where either you think my way or I'll fail you.
- PD Well you clearly say "that it's my position," it isn't the position of this university.
- RH That's right, but that's different <sup>from</sup> what you're saying. I'm going to add in my own feelings about this, my own thoughts about this. I mean it's not as clear and clean as laying out, you know, the stuff... PD Oh there's nothing clear and clean about it, no doubt about that, but it's, uh, teaching, whatever.

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- RH ... (trying to find place in tape...)
- PD Can you reproduce tape footage counts on that? Can you actually get away with-- I've never been able to use a footage counter on...
- RH If you use one machine then you can use a counter
- PD I've never even been able to do it on one machine
- WS Even sewing machines are not compatible--same serial numbers, no...
- PD Do they make them on the same serial numbers?
- WS 1800, 2600, 2950...  
(machine hum and rumble...)
- WS My high point is a low peak, you know, I'm going really downhill. I like to put alot of energy into it for a short period of time and then relax. But you don't, so you can, you know, carry on.
- GQ I like alot of time. It takes me alot of time to really get what he calls the intent of the work. Generally it's very very important...
- WS We have two approaches. One of them can go like that and one can go like that, and catch more that way.  
(more hum and burble...)
- WS (cont.)...no but I agree with you.
- GQ I mean just to respect the work...
- WS Sure, you're point is well taken. I have to over-emphasize it.
- GQ Well Ralph, does that tape have a name? I mean I'd like to be able to refer to it in my mind.
- RH It's got a number
- GQ What is the number?
- RH Wait, it does have a name-- the Legs tape--"Legs Tape II" or something like that.. Will somebody get the light?  
(after the tape...)
- GQ "Legs Tape II" we're talking about...Gary--go...
- WS Leg I, Leg II...
- GQ Owego (laughs)
- RH The first Legs tape was called "Scrambled Legs", unfortunately.  
(laughter in chaotically inaudible conversation)
- GH You've been working with the human form, and controlling, dealing with grey levels of an image, and what seems like a contrast of a human form, biomorphic form, generated. And for me, there seems to be... I'm just wondering how you feel about that very large area between the generated forms--in other words, the very hard lines and that very curved line and...
- WS Highlights along the grey tone scale?
- RH The first tape that I showed you which had the generated image in direct relation to the human image is very confusing to me right now. This tape has, I don't really see the shapes as being other than treatments to the basic structure of what she is and what she, how she reacts and what she does. I don't see it as a different thing.
- GH In other words, the intention there is not with forms but the interaction of movements with control.
- RH The intention is both, is for Sherry to realize what she's about in terms of making shapes, and for me to realize about how the machine structures things so I can structure at the same time.
- WS It's a collaboration
- RH It's a very collaborative thing--most of our tapes are.
- WS Do you feel, Sherry, that it's a fair collaboration, do you feel that you are satisfying yourself as ...
- SM Oh, absolutely.

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- WS It's important to understand that in terms of words, because I don't think that comes, necessarily, across to me in the tape.
- RH Well there are alot of problems that people are having with the human form, particularly when men work with women's forms. There's the tradition of using the woman as an object, and I don't think that at any time either one of us is considering that as part of what we were doing. Often Sherry will sit still in something, but sometimes that's because she likes to get into that shape, or perhaps she doesn't know what she's going to do.
- WS So you monitor out what...
- GQ Can you see the video screen?
- SM Always.
- GQ Always, I see. So it really is a dialogue in that sense.
- RH Oh yeah, that's part of the whole project, that's what video can do.
- WS Are you looking at the same monitor or two different monitors?
- SM There are two different monitors
- RH They're set exactly the same. They are both trinitrons of the same model, they look exactly the same...
- WS But you and I know that what comes across is different
- RH Well I don't accept that at all, no. I think you can set up two monitors very close and very equal
- WS But not exact because they are two different things
- GQ That's not relevant to this question
- RH Yeah really, you're splitting hairs
- WS Yeah, true, true
- GQ I mean they are different people also
- RH Right, I mean, my brain computes differently than hers does
- GQ We don't know what "same" means in two perceptual systems anyway
- WS But this is a system that's in a rectangle
- WS One of the things that I find interesting about video is while I've always posited that what I see is the same that everyone else sees, I've recently lived in an environment with two television monitors (Doug Schweneger gave me one) and I've started playing them together. And I realized that those two situations-- one was a nine inch Sony and the other was a very large Panasonic-- and what I was seeing-- I was watching a film-- were two totally different experiences...
- RH Very different. But my point in this is we had two twelve inch trinitrons...
- WS You're right, I was splitting a bit, but I think alot of hairs could be split, but not in this conversation
- GQ Could we return back to what you were doing there (to Gary)
- GH I had more or less finished that, but I have another question which gets real specific, and I don't know--
- WS But that's good
- GQ Yeah, go, please...
- GH I may be wrong in actually how it was done, but I noticed that where this question arose, as far as the electronic forms and the biomorphic forms...
- RH The sound and the...
- GH No, not the sound, but was where...it looked as if you had an oscillator locked to horizontal sync, you know, the vertical bars. And you were then controlling the oscillator, which was locked with a spike

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GH (cont.)...which created that...

RH Former synthe.

GH Right, <sup>←</sup> And that became almost like a third element. I sort of got confused at that point. It became like a third element which I almost wanted to see more clearly because it was a very interesting element for me and that's where the question...

RH Those lines are edges, actually, they are not lines. Those are the edges of each of the panels that are set up in the switcher, so that the panel, itself, the whole shape, is actually moving

GQ The whole what?

WS I think this is really interesting. I think we should get it into a depth, but I think you should describe the system that you set up so we can understand what the reference point is in terms of his analysis of it

GH I might be able to clarify it. There were two areas where that was taking place; one where the shapes sort of happened like this (gesticulates); another where it really whacked out

RH The lines bleed through sometimes in the keying process

WS Explain so someone can...what is the keying process?

RH What is the keying process?

WS Yeah, for somebody who doesn't know anything about technology, explain it

RH I spent days doing that to my students

WS Well we know something about it. If you were explaining for me how the system was set up...I can understand that...

RH I had two keyers-

WS You had two keyers, what kind of keyers?

RH Jones prototypes

WS Modified?

RH Modified many times

GH You should have a look at it.

RH Every time he looks at them again he modifies them again. Yeah, they're prototype structures. They have no beginning or end.

WS And what do they feed into, the three cameras? You had three cameras?

RH In that particular setup I think we had three cameras, yeah

WS Okay so the three cameras fed into the two keyers, you split the signals?

RH Not necessarily. They may have fed into the switching process also, and then into the keyer. I don't remember exactly how I set it up, but basically what the structures were were two keyers and two switchers-- one sent the horizontal, one sent the vertical sync-- three cameras, and one or two channels going through the Paik-Aabe colorizer. I'm not sure whether...

WS What about the sound?

RH The sound came from a synthe.

WS You just plugged it in? Straight?

RH L generated the sound from the synthe, and there were two leads from the synthe going to the control points on two of the oscillators I was using to control the switches, and then the sound goes directly into the audio inputs on the deck

Willoby, is your concern with Ralph's patch...

WS I'm just trying to understand it from a technical point of view

RH You won't understand it unless...

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- WS I know it's hard, I know it's hard, I know it's hard. But you've given us some clues and I understand it better now
- GH If you not familiar with that kind of imagery, like keying...I know you're familiar with that, but I just want to make it more clear... even the bars and the different grey levels can represent keying, although it won't look like what one normally thinks of as keying, you know keying this in front of this, it may not look like that and you may mistake that for something that's not keying; it's just bars generating
- WS Well I was totally mystified. I didn't, I couldn't...most of the things that I know I can reconstruct the systems of, but my level of technology isn't...
- Did you stop seeing the tape upon your being mystified?
- WS No, I watched, I watched.
- RH There are a few basic elements, that is, three signals going into it--an A and a B channel, and in the center of the channel you can think of it as a clip. The clip is what carves out the shape. So quite often the shape is being carved out by her...
- GH Which is one of the A or B
- RH Yeah, or maybe a third
- WS So you made a decision to move from one to another kind of choice
- RH It's an interesting question in some ways because I don't do any notation on any of this stuff, so I couldn't go back and do that again if I wanted to
- WS I understand
- So you couldn't recreate that?
- RH No. And I don't want to. I could if I decided to develop a notation system, but I don't want to do it
- GQ So you're actually moving away from any possibility of a vocabulary that's static or stable
- RH Um...I'm moving away from it in what I'm doing here, and moving toward it in...
- GQ Right, that was the next question. How do you work together there if...
- RH I sit there and listen to him and he listens to me, and he goes and does what he does and I do what I do (Paul Davis)
- (laughter)
- GQ But you don't make use of a stable vocabulary in composition
- RH No. Well the only stable vocabulary I have is what I learned to teach in terms of design
- WS But it's a kind of intuitive thing, isn't it? The choices are made at the moment, like that, and without a preprogram, it's intuitive
- RH Right I'm approaching the thing the same way I would approach ...
- WS Talking to us--basically a normal life activity response
- GQ But on the other hand, Ralph, because of your familiarity with the machine, obviously, there is an accuracy in the memory of your actual practise with it, and you don't feel that you need more than that to...
- RH I know my paint
- GQ You know your paint, you know your materials
- RH I don't want to do what he's doing. I have no intention of doing what he's doing
- WS What's he doing?
- PD I don't know what I'm doing (laughs)

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- RH You are representing, as a computer, a control, uh...  
 GQ Right, movement toward consensual vocabulary that can be recognized on repeatable...  
 RH Not necessarily, really, it's...  
 GQ That "not necessarily" interests me very much  
 RH We have such an open ended system. And, you know, I've been thinking about the computer, that it would be almost impossible to reproduce unless you set up extreme parameters in your initial notation. It would be almost impossible to reproduce anything anyway  
 PD I don't think you want to do that. I mean I don't think you want to set up those extreme parameters  
 RH I don't want to do that, no. Woody's moving toward an idea of post, uh...  
 PD I think that's a foolish idea  
 RH I don't think so. I think it's a different idea  
 PD Well different but foolish from the point of- that it's...  
 GQ But from what you said earlier, his systems are sort of adhoc. They exist for the circumstance of a particular representation, and then he goes on with a new problem, so that it's opened in the possibilities he presents to himself  
 PD Not in that short a time, though. I would say that what Woody and Stan are doing are the kind of systems that last three or four days and stop there. And maybe if you resurrect it again in a month or two...  
 RH George, I can give you a clue on this, maybe. If you take a system, say, we'll take Woody's system. Woody's system is a self-contained system that generates all the signals, and that's extreme. I'm not, it doesn't do that, but it can do that, perhaps. It can generate all the shapes all the characters and all the things that you need within the system so that you don't need to plug anything into it. In fact, there's no place to plug anything into. Two people who build systems this way-  
 WS It's a weakness  
 RH It's locked off. It's called a piano. Or it's called a locked off system where you can do only with what you have there. The systems that I'm working with are so opened that I could not go back and reset the camera in the position I had it in in order to reproduce what I had before. So I'm not worried about this stuff  
 GQ Right  
 WS Is Woody's a one-way situation?  
 RH Is it one way? I don't know what you mean by that  
 WS Well I was trying to take it from what you said. And yours is a two-way system. I was trying to...  
 RH Woody's, I'm using it as an example, is really not that way because you can't...  
 WS I know, I understand what you said but I wasn't trying to hold that to categories. What I was trying to make was a differential understanding between what you're...  
 RH I think there are places for both of these systems  
 WS I was trying to define the two systems by saying one-way two-way, and then if that wasn't true, trying to find other words  
 RH It depends on your approach to what you're doing. A piano is an opened system in the fact that...

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- WS It's one way
- RH It can hit this with that kind of touch, then you'll get that kind of tone. If you hit 'em both harder, then...
- WS It's an input system
- GH It gives, maybe not to the degree of other things, but it still gives you a physical sensation...
- WS Is a piano a one or a two-way system?
- RH I don't know. I think my machine's a one-way system because all I come up with is one signal. That's all I come up with. A piano is a one-way system because all you come up with is the sound it produces. Everything is a one-way system that way
- GH Yeah but the piano has feedback
- WS Yeah well you have to talk to...
- RH No, the question you've proposed is interesting because it all comes out with one thing. It's always a one-way system
- GH Yeah but I think what he's talking about, I think, as far as two-way one-way systems, is the process of what's happening before the sound comes out. In other words, maybe working with such a complex machine is a two-way system, but a piano, to me, is just a lower degree of a two-way system, as far as feedback goes. But it still does have a feedback
- RH Well you hear it, yeah
- GH You hear it, but there is the feeling of the feet when they press down on the things, the hands, the body as connected to the piano as an extension
- RH First we're talking about signal flow, which is what I understood Willoby to say, and now we're talking about something else and I don't quite understand
- WS That's what's interesting about the metaphor of a piano, because I can throw it out there and you can think of it in one sense and he can think of it in another sense
- RH Well you can throw dogs out here and I'll figure out whether they shit and eat, too
- WS But a piano is a better metaphor in what we're dealing with than dogs...
- RH Okay, but I don't know how it relates at all
- WS No, well I didn't say it was great I just threw it out
- GH I can elaborate on that. The only reason I threw that out was because I was trying to clarify what you were saying about two-way systems. ~~Now~~ I think you were talking about the process, not what was at the other end and what came out
- WS Right, add on to that
- GH I think what makes a machine like the video machine located upstairs more of a two-way system is ~~because~~ the feedback and the two-way system process of making decisions, and everything is more complex. It's more sophisticated than a piano. It has more variables
- WS I'm thinking also of a return, there's a return. If you measure systems, you measure them by their efficacy in terms of their... one way of measuring them is by their return, and I'm interested in input, I think that the piano is a two-way system. I don't think there are many things that are only one way systems. I think most things are two-way systems because everything that goes in goes out. So then you can measure everything on a line, and I'm interested in ~~the feedback~~



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- WS (cont.)...the different stratifications of what we're talking about  
 RH When I started talking about this, what I was talking about was a closed system and an open system, which is different than one-way two-way  
 WS But I'll slide into talking whatever you want to talk about because it's fascinating; closed and open systems or one-way two-way systems, I think they relate  
 RH The only thing about closed systems is that, usually, you can't put external devices into them  
 WS Like this piano  
 RH No. Yeah, like the piano  
 WS Right, and that's what I'm coming back...there's alot here  
 GH But that also comes in, I mean piano, for me...  
 WS No, not the piano, the ~~video~~ piano, we're talking about, not the piano. We got to pianos because you made a reference to the word, to his box as a piano  
 RH Well let me tell you, let me carry that a little further. What ~~David~~ started out to do was to take all the knobs off his machines so that he couldn't enter or control his machine except through the computer. That was his idea. In fact, I can remember long conversations with Woody and David to the point where...  
 WS David?  
 RH David Jones, to the point where he would build him a thing that didn't have any kinds of knobs on it at all. So David said "can we have ~~knobs~~ (where you put a screw driver down and twist something just to set things up.) And Woody said "no, darlink, I don't think we need that either." So Woody's ideal, at that time, was to develop a box that had just control from wherever you control the computer from; that's usually the keyboard, and that was it. But, in fact, what he's done is he's got the most opened pile of shit up there I ever saw in my life and it's going all over the place. Now it's conceivable to me that you can develop a situation where you're generating video signals, or you're generating signals that can be used by video in a box that has nothing else put into it. And I think this is a reasonable way to go for certain circumstances, particularly in terms of teaching and learning things about the stuff. It's less confusing.  
 WS I think you clarified it alot better and I understand alot more now, after you said that, what you said before. And we have to almost go through all this piano thing to get that clarity of...  
 RH Okay  
 GH Do you think that's so? Because in that sense, more, there are no knobs. It's there and the only way you can reach it is through a language. And that's why it's better for teaching because language, then, is a shared language  
 RH No I don't think that's particularly true. In fact, I probably wouldn't even use it for teaching. I'm just saying there's a possibility it might be easier to use for teaching  
 GH Well I'm just making, you know...  
 RH Notational idea in video has been one that... Walter and I have talked about for years, now. And I can see it through Walter's view-point, but he really wants to perform with video, so he would like to

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- RH (cont.)...go back to his original settings and sense of putting it together and whatever. David wants to perform. You, I think in some way want to perform
- WS Come to our performance at the ETC
- RH I don't have any affinity for that viewpoint. What I want to do is find out what parameters I can, and then try to use them in some visible sensible way. And what I find myself doing is throwing out more than I keep in terms of what the potentials are. I've got so damned many possibilities that it's just...
- WS Every creative artist does that
- RH Yeah you do the same thing in poetry
- GQ Yeah, except anything involving machinery as complex as a synthesizer or whatever where you're able to produce an incredible number of effects. Your problem is a problem of exclusion rather than inclusion. I mean your strategy is to cut away what you don't want. That may or may not be true in a situation of poetry, certainly in certain kinds of poetry like Jackson MacLow's poetry. There arises a certain situation and it's very hard to define how it really relates, but there are situations where exclusion is the strategy. I think that's one of the things that's interesting about this is that you're pulled in two directions; one is the direction that you might call intuitive and playing your instrument as you are in terms of where the skill or the technique is in your familiarity with the machinery; the other is in the direction of a consensual language that will produce situations one way or another. And even within those two there are obviously many possibilities. I mean Cage's use of a computer is not like anybody else's use of a computer. It's a particular strategy, it's very personal, actually, in this case
- RH Well I'm trying to get all the possibilities of running that I can so that we're supporting and funding and running this whole computer thing. At the same time I'm not even involved in it. I'm getting more involved because I'm getting a little curious about it, but I'm sitting up here doing what I can do with what I got
- GQ Right. I mean interesting minds will produce interesting things with computers, whether it produces an ideology of a kind of language....
- RH Did you ever see Jackson's tapes? His tree tapes
- GQ Yes I have, his tree tapes, terrific, yeah
- RH He made that in Binghamton
- GQ He did, he made that in Binghamton
- RH Ken Dominic helped him make that
- PD It's terrible that nobody knows he made it in Binghamton
- RH Yeah that was made from the old ETC
- GQ Jackson, of course, is very serious about that possibility
- RH Jackson's son was in there..
- SM Mordechai was terrific
- GQ Oh he's fantastic, Yeah
- RH He's doing some incredible stuff, he picked it up so fast
- GQ Oh yeah, he's amazing. He's a whizkid
- PD George alot of computer software is being treated, if this is a reflection of how it's, you know, actually created, as authorship. and people who write programs with computers are encouraged to get copyrights for their works just as authors, poets, and novelists are encouraged to get copyrights

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- GQ What's the point. I'm sorry I missed the point  
WS That's a commercial announcement  
PD No, no it came from the writing of computer programs. I wish I could play my tape back, but..
- GQ No, we weren't talking about writing computer programs as such, though  
PD Well legally there's a real bad problem with that in that you change one character in any one thing...say you have a computer program and you say it's copyrighted. If you change an A to an N then it's no longer copyrighted because it's totally different
- WS Good point. It's not really possible to copyright anything  
GQ Let's not have that conversation  
RH Bury yourself in tar (laughter)  
GQ I'd like to take back part of what I was saying about the exclusion thing. I think that's true- I think that's an overall problem that maybe alot needs to be said about- an art form by exclusion, or a strategy by exclusion. On the other hand, I think that if you're using an intuitive approach, and I think you have to be to some extent, even if you're setting up a complex system there's an intuition built into the system and the intention is on that level, or I would agree with you, it's probably not an art work, you're following something. You may be strategically excluding things, but you are following...
- RH The reason to exclude is important to me and usually I think this is consistent throughout most art forms or almost anything else. You've got so much to work with, if you're going to learn something then you start in the simplest possible ways to learn it. So you go back and exclude, back to simple stuff. You either get a pencil and a piece of paper and learn to draw, or you know, a simpler structure that you can start to understand and then you expand the structure
- WS I think that's one of the difficulties about the jump of a creative artist into video because video is not easy. And it takes a certain kind of leap for the imagination to even land in the domain of trying to think of how to use these very complex systems. And I think that there has to be a very strong sense of, and I feel committed to this as a creative individual, that of artists today there are media that have different risks. And video is a very dangerous, a very adventurous medium. I always respect almost any video artist more than some other artist because even if I'm repulsed by what's there, I realize that it took an awful lot to get it there
- RH No, that's a funny thing, because one of the reasons that it's difficult to get funding for process-video like we do is because most of what people see is notated as or called "moving wallpaper." And the reason they call it that is because it's pretty thoughtless stuff--stuff where you have some kind of imagery moving, or some kind of colors moving, and you put some sound behind it and it all comes..... I've done this with my class. I've got a tape that I made years ago of a cop on the corner directing traffic, and he's, you know, he's good. And the reason I made the tape was because I was interested in him, and he's a friend of mine now. I showed him the tape after he directed the traffic. But I'll take that tape and take the sound off it, and I'll take the radio and I'll put the radio on any station, and everything he does comes together at the exact point of any rhythm that you want to put into it or any structure you want to put into it.

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- RH (cont.)...The easiest thing on earth is to take video in colors and in shapes and put some sound to it of music or anything you want to. This is a thoughtless process.
- GQ This is exactly the issue that I was driving at before. Actually...
- RH That's what most people see and that's why...
- WS There are very few people that do it well
- GQ But the real problem is to develop perception and attention to a point where you have a situation of complex languaging where it's accurate. There's an accuracy that arises with--how do you deal with the condition of accuracy that keeps the attention alive? When you have that vast number of possibilities, I mean this is the question, not the fact that it can't be done or is not being done, but this is the question which I think someone on the outside of process-video has to ask. A composer friend of mine, Elie Yarden, spoke of sound synthesis as a field in which very little of importance had happened because he felt that the possibilities were so numerous, that essentially one was giving over all the time to very easy choices so that the attention or the consciousness did not rise to a level of what was interesting.
- RH Well let's say you start to apply what you know about visual schemes that you're used to. Normally, you're working with a two dimensional surface, so you start to say, all right what are the constructs that I'm dealing with here?-- implied three dimensions, I'm dealing with color, I'm dealing with all those very basic things that people have dealt with for years on a two dimensional surface, and I apply these to them and try to find a way to come up with the additional problem of time
- WS Do you see yourself, Ralph as a traditional artist?
- RH I don't know what that question means, Willoby
- RH Well I'll clarify it by telling you that Davidson told me that he was a traditional artist and that his inspiration came from a certain identifiable part of art history. He had certain references that he felt were traditional, and he felt that that was a strong part of his work and he was a traditional artist. and I had not thought of video and tradition in those ways before, but he stimulated me to think about it and I thought I'd ask you
- RH I'm a product of my prior knowledge as we are, which is a terrible answer, but if I... let me go a little bit... I see myself living with some stuff that's not traditional, for me at least, it has no point of...
- WS Do you see yourself as a pioneer, as the start of something new or the end of...
- GQ That's your high points, right (laughs)?
- WS Right, yes, I'm into peaks. You can avoid the question and slough it off, but I'd like to-- I want to understand whether you feel you're the end of something or the beginning of something
- RH I think I'm somewhere in the middle of the beginning. I have fantasies about what the kinds of thought I have could; how they could effect the world
- WS That's what I'm interested in. what are they? Tell us
- RH Well yeah I think basically television can be a visual understanding, a visual realization as painting has become for a lot of people, instead of a representation of something that was. It can be an experience in

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RH (cont.)...itself

WS Both the end of something else and the beginning of something new, it has both

~~WS Both the end of something else and the beginning of something new, it has both~~

RH You see the thing that interests me about what Davidson said was: he related to the painting. He talked about nineteenth century Hudson Valley, and you just made a relationship to its...

RH I don't have that sense of continuity. I have a sense of having learned some certain things from some things I've seen in the past, but I don't have a sense of being a part of a continuing of greatness or anything like that

-MM Well I think you're referring to...

WS Not greatness. Greatness had nothing to do with it. It was just a tradition, a tradition. It wasn't a value...it was just... he saw himself as a part

RH If you see yourself in a tradition then you're seeing yourself in greatness

WS Yes, yes. No, no. You can see yourself in a tradition of drunken failures

RH Well...

GQ I don't think that's a tradition

WS Well (laughs) you don't know my family (laughs alot)

ED Who is this Davidson?

RH What Davidson are you talking about

RH Davidson C... Is that pronounced right?

WS I don't know

PD Davidson ? I knew a Daniel Davidson, and I'm just trying to figure out if this is the guy

WS Well this is a reference that's understood

PD I don't understand

GH Can I...what I thought was important about that question or why it was asked was because when you said what makes up the image, which is sometimes what a painter might say makes up the image, that the specific thing added to that is time, which makes it a more expanded...

WS I'm trying to narrow down on some of the issues that I think are important. He's picking up on what I was trying to say and I value your coming in for this point

GQ Well let him come in (laughs)

WS Commercial, commercial, go on, go on

EH Just to find you're existence is shut up

(laughter)

WS I'm sitting over here now

GH Yeah so I just want to add something to that and see if you feel the same or whatever. I go along with that possibility of this very sophisticated machinery, to be able to work with in that area with those things. It's also something that doesn't necessarily refer to, you know, a visual image, okay? Working with a machine such as that is creating ideas even though you are working with images, and that's what comes out in the end in your tape or something. There's something else involved

RH Well the complexities of video, and the reason it's becoming, I think, well...everybody's trying to delineate it; everybody's trying to cut into the edges and say "all right this is where it is or this

Ralph Hocking and Sherry Miller interview 2/6/73

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- RH (cont.)...is where it is."  
 WS For me  
 RH Uh... Jerry Mcgrady will say video is in the process, it's not in the visionization  
 GQ Who would say that?  
 RH Jerry Mcgrady said this a couple of times. Woody said this a couple of times. A lot of people have said it. I've said it. I don't believe it, I don't believe it. I think if you're working with video it's not either or, it's an involvement. I'm recently battling with the film makers- Larry Gotheim and Ken Jacobs, Larry particularly. I want to teach a course, I want a course taught in our department that sensitizes the individual to how structures are made, how things are put together; what machinery's about; feeling toward the tools that you're working with, which I think is a very sensible and somewhat traditional approach  
 WS Is there a difference between film and video in this course, in the concept? I didn't want to go off base I was just trying to ask a question  
 RH Well, let me think about what I was coming to  
 WS You mentioned film makers and...  
 RH Yeah but I wasn't mentioning film makers per se, I was mentioning a problem with film makers. The problem with Larry Gotheim was what I was talking about. The problem is that we've got a place called Hollywood. Hollywood has developed a structure of not just products, but methodology of how you go about dealing with what you're dealing with  
 WS This is your entertainment reference  
 RH Let me come along with a group of people who are not in Hollywood and that are coming from some other place and say, what you don't have to deal with is the equipment and the machinery. What you have to deal with is what you see, and what I'm coming back to is that you have to deal with them both. In the process that I'm involved with in video, I have to know something about it. I don't have to know all about it, just something. But I have to know something enough to be able to do what I want to do, the same way painters have to know how brushes work and how paint mixes and stuff like that  
 WS Is that a craft aspect you're talking about?  
 RH You can call it craft, but it's a little fuzzier in video because you have to know where the wires are running. You have to know a lot of things in a system...  
 WS There should be a word that's higher than craft that describes that because I think that is a special intuition that you're referring to there that is special. And it has to do with those people that have and can make the leap from one thing to...  
 RH It's not intuition, it's a learned process. It's a thing that you have to get involved in. And I try to convince my students that you have to deal with it...  
 WS And understanding you have to come to...  
 RH And they say "all I want to deal with is what I see and what I can make this way," and then...  
 WS They can't make it that way.  
 RH You can make it that way. Paul, you're killing the hell out of the recording, probably, with your white noise

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- PD It's a fascinating machine actually
- RH You can't ignore this, except you can ignore this if you go to channel 13 and say John Godfrey I want you to make me this. So yeah, that seems to me to be a valid approach to it
- WS I didn't understand quite what you were saying there
- RH Well, you can get out of the process and structure of these things. You can say "I've got this picture in my head that I want you to put on the screen for me, John."
- GH Well at that point, really, there becomes a discrepancy between ones ...there's a gap between ones idea and ones process and ones image
- RH But the process is giving John Godfrey- you tell John what to do. It's a curious problem
- WS Right, but the thing that's important about what you're saying is that the process is larger than the process. It's kind of like a super process
- RH Well people are saying that the process is larger than the product. I'm saying it's not. I'm saying that they're both in there and you have to deal with them some way
- WS I wanted to say that there are alot of different processes working and to deal with making something that satisfies you and other people, you have to deal with the whole range of them
- RH I don't want to satisfy other people, I want to satisfy me
- GQ But wait. There are two different meanings of process that are working there, and that's what makes this a difficult question. One of them is the very literal understanding of process as...it's not the product of what we do along the way. That's within the frame of what are we interested in? We are interested in the process along the way and not the product. In other words, this is process in dialectic with product. There's another idea of process that has nothing to do with the question of process vs. product, and that has to do with what the work actually is. When it is a product it still has as much process in it as it had when you were making it. It has nothing to do with the biography of the thing. This is in dialogue, not with product, but with prefabricated art, preconceptualized art, or where there's an idea, or it's for something, or it's an art that stands outside of process. And that can be as elegant and finished a product...
- RH That's John Godfried that I'm talking about, I think. That's the analogy I would make there. Maybe I'm misunderstanding...
- WS Yeah I didn't understand, totally, what you said
- GQ When ~~Sherry~~, I assume, says that what matters is the process, I'm not sure, 'cause I don't know his work, if he means-- which of the two ideas of process he's talking about. And I think there are two ideas. And they do, in some instances, coincide. That's what makes it so complex
- WS Define those again. Let him define those again. I think what you're saying is important and I want to understand it
- GQ Okay let me try. One of them is process vs product. What are we interested in? We are interested in the now work, the work that's in process...it's our lives, it's the whole thing. Cage will make statements like this that sound like he means this. He always comes up with very elegant products. So it's not that Cage is against a product, as such, or he's just for the now or on the street corners. Philip Corner would think more in that direction, I think, than Cage

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- GQ (cont.)...would because he's got a real gift for that particular understanding of process. But that's an idea of process that's so extreme that it actually contains the other idea as well, namely, that what we're interested in if we're interested in process is the condition of being in process in the work; that we don't stand out of it. The mind does not leap to the idea about the thing, the biography of the thing, the point of the thing, the social usefulness of the thing, the sex of the thing, the anything that is outside of the thing. It's not the beautiful legs of a lady because she's a sexual object. That question is outside the domain of process. That's why such a question is an imposition, and people who pose that question don't understand process in this case. So the two ideas of process are: one- product vs process, I think it's a trivial idea- and the other idea of process- that that's what the nature of the work is, and it's a kind of consciousness in the work that we're trying to come to. We don't mean some trivial idea of a goal.
- RH I think the problem in thinking about this in relation to video is that video, again, and I've been screaming this from the hilltops for years now, is a very young idea and it's an idea that needs time to mature. And in the maturation time what comes out of it is a lot of paranoia so that people will say "look, you haven't seen too much of it yet but you ought to see what I'm thinking about, or you ought to see what I'm doing back at my place. And even though I haven't been able to make a good image for you to understand, I can justify my existence by saying the art's in the process now."
- GQ Well that's like work-in-progress process
- RH And to try to go about it...
- WS That's where it's at, though, that's where it's at right there
- RH Well, it's not where it's at. Where it's at is a fairly understandable thing if people would think about it in clear terms. But they don't, so I don't want to be forced, again, to make this process vs product number either. I don't think that holds up at all
- GQ Right, I don't either. I think that in video it makes no sense at all. There is an idea of using video's participation medium where tape is not the object, where the object is the performance, and that's quite valid, too. But it's still product oriented. The product is an actual thing that's before you when you're sitting there. It's just a non-repeatable product, that's all. It's still a product.
- WS There are a lot of instances, however, where...
- RH I don't want to wait for that part of the tape. It's going to be insane (laughs)
- WS Yeah. I don't have to say what I was going to say
- GH What I was saying before was somewhat generated
- GH When you brought up things about how ...we can't pawn the analogy of ~~process~~, right? Do you feel that it is just an analogy or do you feel that there is something more inherent in video where it's more than that?
- RH I think what happened to me was the same thing that happened to a lot of people. All of the sudden we've got this whole fucking new thing to deal with. And it's completely different than anything else. It's totally different, so you've got to find out what it's all about. And there's nothing different about it particularly except maybe in the process. But there are images that are different, and I see things that are



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- RH (cont.)...different in what I can make than anything that I've understood before. So it's a really strong kind of...
- GH Right. The question that follows would be- when you were making pottery, or you were making photographs...I mean you went through a process
- RH That's right. Well in the dark room I can go in there, and I understand enough of it that I don't want to understand a hell of alot more about process. I haven't gotten to that point...
- GH I don't mean process...
- RH Well we have to talk about process, Gary, because...
- WS Still,more...
- RH I'm still, like, weekly now I'm coming up with new knowledge that astounds me, that any engineer would have known when he was in the second grade. But that's terribly important to me at the moment because it gives me a further insight into what I'm doing
- GQ Right but that's processual knowledge because the knowledge is coming at a time when you're ready to use it. So your life is introducing that knowledge into itself at this point rather than having all the technology first as a giant head of the thing and going to then try to do something with it. David Jones runs into that problem sometimes; he knows too goddamned much
- RH I've gotten to the point in the darkroom where I don't want to know it a hell of alot more...about the process
- GQ But is that because it's not alive for you now?
- RH I still do it
- GQ You still do it, I see
- GH I think there's a confusion here, though, about doing process...
- RH I've locked my structure in the darkroom to the point where I know what developer I'm using, I know what chemicals I'm using, I know what I'm doing. The only thing I'm concerned about is having my eye deal with it, my hand deal with it,..with my eye and my hand developing some sort of understanding through the whole visual realization of it. I'm also bored with the process of the darkroom
- GQ Right but that's...
- And does the knowle<sup>se</sup> have alot to do with your boredom? Do you want to get away from it all?
- RH I was talking about the darkroom. I'm not bored at all with...
- GQ Yeah but for some reason that knowledge is not feeding you right now. It has kind of become static for you in some way in the way that video is. There are of course people who still feel that excitement very much. A poet who is working with us in this whole enterprise finds the process aspect in the actual use of the chemicals, in the actual point where you stop it or don't stop it, or allow a certain thing to develop and not another thing to develop...in other words, in the stage between the enlarger and the pan is the process for him. He uses superimposition of photographs, negatives, so that some things appear through other things. So the actual visual textures are very much like video synthesis in some ways. Really some of the possibilities seem to arise there, and for him it's in that actual chemical phase. That's, I think, one way of bringing it alive again that he's found

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- GH But George that analogy of photographic image that looks like video synthesesis, to me, is just totally...it's not important
- GQ Wait wait wait. You missed the whole emphasis of what I'm saying. I wasn't saying it's important. I was describing it as, in fact, something that has some of the visual qualities of it. The process is in the chemical stage for him. It's in the actual magic of the thing either becoming or not becoming at that moment, and the thing that appears, and taking it in its appearance and stopping it with that
- WS But it changes after that, George. It goes, you know, once you think it's stopped, as a photograph, over the years it ages and deteriorates
- GQ Well that's another question
- RH If you look at this historically in the short time that video has been alive, you got from a point where people were fascinated with what Nam June was doing-- warping, wiggling, changing things...
- GQ Right. Manipulations--and collages
- RH Dealing with the little electro-magnets and permanent magnets and things like this-- instructions he was putting together. And then they went to a point where they said, "all right, let's fund this. idea. Let's put this idea together. Let's get alot of people making these kinds of things..." Alot of people started making them, or a few people started making them, and they didn't like the results of what they saw. They said "well screw this, let's fund people to make documentaries. Let's fund people who'll make things that we can understand, because what we see is dribble." --which I would agree with. I think alot of what I've seen in people who do process is dribble. Alot of what I've seen in the documentaries is dribble. But the documentary dribble is less of a front to people than it is in terms of the process imagery. So what it comes down to is that we're in a down point right now of support, of realization of the possibilities. And at the same time, if you look at it on a global time span of everything else, we will have had very little time to figure it out. But then you take this and relate it to technology and what happens with technology now. If you don't have good technology within a very short period of time, then you drop that and go on to something else because the developments of technology are so rapid that you can't keep up with them. Your mind can't comprehend what's going on. It's a question of time.
- GQ This is the advantage. You're automatically thrown back on being the artist you are because you cannot encompass the possibilities. So the temptation to encompass the possibilities may drive some people crazy with their attempt to do it. But the artist feeds off of that situation if he's that kind of artist
- RH Yeah you can feed off it to a point. But then you come to a point where you say "I'm totally confused and I've got to stop. I've got to think about what I'm doing. I've got to put it together."
- GQ Right. What is that point of confusion. That's a very interesting question to me because I could reach it very easily. I know so little
- RH It is the systems. If I keep changing my system daily or weekly or monthly, which I have done in the past, I come to a point where I don't know the system, where I don't understand it, I don't know what I can do, I can't figure it out

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- WS That's part of life, though. That's what it is, dealing with new systems. You get up in the morning and every day you have to deal with a new system
- GQ Do you need to figure it out?
- WS Yeah I think you have to to get to the evening
- GQ Well what does it mean to figure it out? I mean, that must be different at different times. I mean figuring it out means whatever satisfies you at that point
- RH Well I control my system up here. I can say ...
- WS That's not the only system, though. You have to have one.
- RH But I can control my system up here. That's what I'm talking about.
- WS But it's close to the phone and who disturbs you and how you get it done
- RH That's a whole different thing. I can say...
- WS No. It's a part of the whole day
- RH No that's a different thing from my system up here
- WS Right. It's another system
- RH Yeah. I can control this system. I'm not going to bring my keyers into it. I'm not going to buy David's new wonderful machine that he's made. I'm going to deal with my structures and see what I can figure out. That's kind of what I'm coming to. I'm adding things to it, but I'm adding things to it that are maybe better than the things I have...but they're the same things.
- WS That's a very classic way of working, 'cause I think George could identify with that kind of metaphor. And I, as a creative artist, I mean I don't have the same systems that I work with that you do, but I can understand that very well--your metaphor in dealing with your life. And I find that I do the same thing
- RH At the same time I'm encouraging David to letting his brains flow as far as they can. I hope Jerry gets an incredible god damned machine out of this whole thing. I have no jealousy involved in any of this, and I'm pushing Paul to develop a system that I don't know anything about
- WS I think part of your problem, Ralph, is that you're too generous
- RH No I don't think that's a problem
- GQ That's not a problem. Why is that a problem? It's wonderful, actually
- WS Givers give and getters get
- GQ I think the point is that you have a domain that you work best in, yourself, but that doesn't imply that you're trying to exclude the possibilities in growing richer around you
- WS No, I see that. I agree with that
- RH But I want to encourage everybody to think in terms of what I'm doing and lock your systems off. But at the same time I know damned well they aren't going to so what the fuck (laughs)
- GQ Right
- WS What the fuck. That's a good title of the thing: "What the Fuck."
- GH I'm very aware of the situation. I mean weekly I'll say to myself
- All right, this stage of it is going to end in two weeks because I'm going to do this, this, and this and that's it until this happens, and so on and so forth. But during that stage, working, you know, I had this now I can make this happen. And it's very much a part of thinking about making a piece, is the technology. But it's an interesting question because what...

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- WS You can't think of a piece without thinking about the video technology. That's what I think differentiates video from alot of other things. Because when I think of a work, it's a real systems approach. I can't think of any work without thinking of how many monitors, what the switching is, and the whole thing. And most people that look at video don't have any suspicion of what's really happening because they haven't got the experience or the knowledge to understand...
- RH Video is such a young thing
- WS It's so like blue sky. I mean to get to the systems...
- RH The first video major that ever existed in the universe is around here someplace
- He's really the first?
- RH Yeah, he graduated in film
- WS If the magazine can begin to kind of delineate this strange consciousness, the video consciousness, that would be really valuable
- RH If you want to talk about your magazine, I think the magazine is way ahead of its time. I think you're going to have real problems
- GQ Whose book?
- RH Your magazine, I think is way ahead of its time
- WS It is, it is. But we're trying to ground ourselves in a certain sense of tradition, Ralph. That's why we came
- (laughter)
- GQ Well actually, in the process of talking about this, you're creating another kind of tradition. There is a process tradition. There's a tradition of process and a process tradition. A tradition that doesn't become static or rigidify, that doesn't have within itself the attempt to create fixed points of reference but which passes on, if nothing else, the idea of process. When you're taught, in art, you're taught to appreciate products. There's nothing wrong with that but it does encourage a certain kind of product orientation that, in effect, becomes anti-processual so that people are tempted to contrast process and product
- RH Take this to a point where you're dealing with a product. You're making a magazine.
- GQ Oh I love products. I think products are wonderful
- WS We're in the process now, we're not making a magazine, Ralph, wait a minute. We're in the process. This is definitely a process stage of what we're doing and none of us are committed to any kind of... we are intimations of a product. But this is, and the magazine will be reflective of that process of making or it won't be valuable because I think I'm beginning to respect, more, your understandings and some of the delineations. I think this process theme is very very important. It's very wide ranging. There's alot of ground underneath it
- RH Somewhere along the line I've heard that the idea is to make this magazine support itself. And the magazine itself becomes a product, at that point, that you have to sell
- WS Well we hope it will be published, all of us, don't we?
- GQ Well it's far more intricately real to us than just that question would suggest. For one thing, we're involved in printing as part of what we are, and publishing, and video, and these things exist in

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- GQ (cont.)...the same rather small context and are very supportive of each other. And the people who are doing Station Hill Press, which is the publisher, and the Open Studio Print Shop, which is the facility, are very profoundly into the idea of process. So the idea of making the magazine is real to them as they get to know more about it
- WS And as a matter of fact, Ralph, you'll be shocked to think that process is actually a very good name for the magazine
- GQ Well, no, it can't be
- WS Is there some other magazine called "Process"?
- GH 'cause of those kinds of confusion
- GQ There are actually a couple of good reasons. There's an historical reason. There was a thing called "The Process" which came in the Manson period; a magazine called "The Process"
- WS I have no complaint there. What's the other complaint?
- PD The Manson?
- RH ~~Whitehead~~ had a publication called "ETC" and that didn't stop me
- GQ In any case, there's actually a deeper issue. That's not a real issue. The deeper issue is that the notion of process has been very deeply alive in the poetry of the last twentyeight years, starting in about 1950 with Charles Olson's essay "Projective Verse"
- WS And in art, too
- GQ And at that point he was a Whitehead reader. He picked up process from process and reality, to some extent. He picked it up from many many areas. It's very much alive in phenomenological philosophy and other areas. I don't know all the places he picked it up from, but in any case, he identified a new verse, an american verse of this time, which was a process verse. He called it "Projective Verse," And the essay is an extraordinary document. Do you know the essay? It's an extraordinary document and it's a document which any person who's involved in process video really should look at because it's incredibly alive to the issues that we're talking about. So that's a very much and deep tradition in poetry now
- RH You brought out another point that I'm curious about<sup>CA</sup> have been thinking about alot. I don't do much reading at all. I don't do much of anything except talking to people and things like this, and I'm not trying to not taint myself with all of this information. It's just that there's so much information. There are so many things
- GQ This is where I would differ. This is not information, though. This is where I have to make a point. It's not information. It's part of seeing the largeness of the event that video is part of, and my interest in video...I'm a poet and I've never made video. I've only gotten interested in video in the last year or so
- RH What interests you about it?
- GQ This very thing that we're talking about. The work that really turned me on is Gary's work, actually, and then seeing other things-- Peer's work, others' work, and your work now, and many numbers of people's, Barbara Buckner's, whoever it might be that I get a shot at. What interests me is that there's something possible within it, something emerging within it that has been within poetry for a long time. But this is a completely different expression of it and it's unique to video.

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- GQ (cont.)...I'm not into the idea of making them all one event. "Poetry and video are the same thing--that's garbage. But they are part of an event that neither one is the sum of and it's that event which I think we are. Those of us who think this way are this way. I think it's a mode of being. It could go further. It's a mode of consciousness. I think it's the beginning of what is the new consciousness. It's not like something that's going to be...when they say the "new consciousness" they're not going to mean this for quite a long time. I think that's where you're right about the historical difficulty of putting the magazine out. At the same time it is absolutely essential that it be done, and that it be done with the integrity of the event itself. I don't know whether we will do it. I mean certainly we're tuned in to the problem
- RH The idea of a magazine is one of serial and it's a thing that follows and follows and follows. Do you think that the things that you're talking about...that you'll have enough stuff to make it follow this way
- GQ If it's as important as I think it is I think it will. I think there's a question of what the proper audience for such a publication really is. I think there is a tendency within us about that question arising right now. I'm probably far more of an esoterist than Willoby is in that sense. I'm not into the idea of being the agent of reaching the millions, myself. I'm into being the agent of creating the language of self recognition for those people who are ready for it. And not because I would exclude it from anyone, but because I'm not that hungry to be the one who gets it to everybody. I think that the important thing is that the consciousness develop within itself, and that the people who are doing it feel sustained and feel that their historical moment has in some sense begun to come. And I know how important that is within poetry because I've been part of that for a long time and have known deeply the people who've been nourished by a publication that comes at the right moment and says... <sup>what's</sup>
- RH Should you possibly be making video tapes instead of a magazine?
- WS No. No way
- GQ Well I'm into the idea of...
- WS The audio tape is there. There shouldn't be any video tape
- GQ That's Willoby's opinion. That's not my opinion. My idea is to give it any expression which it can be given within the means that I have to give which are high in energy and low in dollars. However...
- RH I'm interested in the form of this
- GQ Yeah, well I would like to produce a video anthology yearly. I've talked to Gary about it, I've talked to Peer about it, that would be keyed to the magazine, that would become known through the magazine, and that would acquire a kind of internal distribution that way. And if one only actually distributed twentyfive of those tapes a year, that's a lot of people that could see it. I know how deeply appreciative I would be if somebody handed me an anthology of what had been done in process video last year. So in five hours if whatever the anthology consists of, and that's not a suggestion, that's just a guess...
- RH But you're not talking just about process video you're talking about the whole concept that you're dealing with
- GQ Oh I know that, yeah. But you see...
- RH So your magazine is going to reflect this
- GQ The magazine will reflect that, certainly, if I have my way (laughs)

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- GQ (cont.)...it will certainly reflect that
- WS Reflect what? No, I want to know, I want to know. Sorry, I want to know
- GQ It's not necessary, Willoby. it's all right. It's really okay. You don't have to worry about it
- WS Reflect what?
- RH Reflect the whole thinking that he's talking about, this whole idea...
- WS And more and more and more
- GQ Well the end more worries me a little bit because I don't want to say everything because I don't know everything, but...
- WS We haven't signed contracts yet, you know. This can't possibly be published without my permission, so...You know you said you didn't know what you were doing, Ralph. We don't know what we're doing. We're all in the same boat
- RH <sup>Walt Law</sup> Was asked by the governor to develop a structure for a library in the near future or something. And I haven't talked to him about it but one of the people around him asked me "What do you think about a library in the future?" My initial reaction was- throw the books out. If you want a library that's going to function in ways that we currently have, then books have become objects that we don't need
- GQ Well I disagree with that very strongly. I think that's...
- RH Well let me finish this because I think the book, eventually, is going to find its way into the same status that a painting has, or something like this
- WS It already has, Ralph, it already has
- RH And information in the book that is going to become very common in public and through the computer process...
- GQ But you're talking about books as information, you're not talking about books as works
- RH Yeah. I'm not talking about books in the way that you're talking about them. I think there's an absolute need for what you're talking about, but I think the information in the books is...when I was in the fifties, man, it was hard to decide to buy a paperback because you would be snubbed by your friends. It had to come in the hard cover
- WS Ralph, if a fair expression of this was translated into something that would come out in print in the magazine that would be expressive of our collective aspirations, what are the range of words that you think might express the title of that magazine? In other words, what is a good title for a process oriented, video oriented publication to have in 1978? It's a hard question
- GQ How do you feel about "Videa"??
- RH No no
- WS That was my expression
- PD What's a magazine?
- WS When something comes out periodically and has information in it and has a title
- PD Well a magazine, to me, is a place you store things totally. Amunition magazines...
- GQ But see the word as the title for a moment, V I D E A
- WS No he has the same reaction
- PD I think it sucks
- RH I think it's kind of cute. I would move someone away from it
- WS Yeah it's really too specific. I don't think you can have...

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- RH How about not having a title?  
WS I'm more in that direction than Vide  
GQ I like very much the Vide, myself  
PD What is it about Vide that...  
RH Is Vide an idea?  
GQ Well there is the idea that the original idea in Greek, idea, means to see, and that video gives idea its visual dimension again takes it away from the head idea and puts it into...  
RH Well my reaction to the cuteness in it is probably the way you'll get a lot of people to react. That's a very common reaction, I would think. They're not going to go deeply enough into what you're thinking about  
WS It stops thinking about the subject rather than encourages an openness about...  
RH It sounds like soap, or something. It sounds like something that is very Madison Avenue tricky number that we're confronted with  
WS How do you like the equally ridiculous title "Window"?  
RH How about a magazine about video processing if that's what it's about?  
WS No we're discussing the possibility of it being wider than that  
RH "A Magazine of Video Processing and"  
WS No, no  
RD That's pretty honest. what's it supposed to be?  
RH How about a sentence for a title? Or do we need a logos like Madison ave?  
WS We're in the process, aren't we? Oh he's got the...whatever it is, we've got...spiffy  
GQ I think it needs a title because of the nature of the means by which you put it in the world, as in any expectations of the people in the world. You don't want it to completely undercut your liability  
WS It would be hard to agree on doing it without a title. I think that's the crux of the whole enterprise, that if we can group around a common belief in a word that we're doing, then we will have gotten much further than we are now  
RH How about "Signals and Stuff"?  
WS How about just "Stuff"?  
RH How about "Signals"?  
GH How about "Getting Up in the Morning"?  
WS There was a magazine called "Signals" in London in 1963  
RH Did it work? (laughs)  
WS Yes it's going on  
PD "Getting it Up"  
WS "Signals" doesn't quite do it. I like it. It has a ring, but...what do you think, George? Maybe we could do it in Morse code  
GQ You broke the rule  
WS It's hard. That's a very hard thing. You have a hard time with the titles of your work. So we're asking...  
RH I don't have hard times with it. I just wish for it to happen. Sherry or I wind up with a name because we have to refer to the damn thing somehow. How do you refer to your magazine?  
WS The magazine, or I don't know, everyone refers to it differently. We're trying to get a common referral point  
GQ It's a very new idea-- the whole project. We're still working from the point of knowing what it is that we're doing  
WS We are doing it, though, Ralph. We may be doing it, we may not be doing it



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- RH Well you should find a good funding source  
WS That's a pretty good title  
GQ You see we have the means of production. Our costs are relatively low for doing this kind of thing. It's a fraction of what it would be otherwise  
RH Are you thinking of a fairly elegant production?  
GQ Yes, yeah, because we have that capability  
WS Four color cover...  
RH What are you thinking in terms of selling it?  
GQ Price? We're not at that stage yet. It needs a whole lot of thought. It depends on distribution, the context in which it appears...  
RH What's Ginsberg doing these days. You ought to find him  
GQ He was up at our place recently. He's going to do a benefit for us in the spring  
RH He's had enough problems with his publications that he might be able to get involved in it  
GQ He's an old friend and he likes the operation. He's going to do a benefit for us. But I'm not anxious to publish him because that's what everybody wants to do and ...  
RH I still have two or three copies of the Eros upstairs. He went through hell...  
GQ Oh you're talking about Ralph Ginsberg. You just through me off. I was talking about Allen Ginsberg. Ralph Ginsberg...so start again.  
RH Yeah I was curious about...I don't know why it popped into my head. He's the outside elegant publisher, or one of them  
GQ That's a different kind of elegance. When I think of the elegance of "Aperture", a magazine in photography, at the production level, it's something I've held in mind as a good example of something. I mean high production on that level appropriate to the medium. Willoby got involved partly because Neil and also Gary were taken by "Avalanche" magazine as a level of production, particularly the earlier ones. I'm taken by it too. I have a different sense of what it would be. Willoby is very interested in the direction of making it in the art world, making it with a lot of the magazine selling, wants the magazine to move toward something more general nature. This is a new idea. I only met him yesterday for the first time  
RH Oh really? Ear out (laughs). God  
GQ He's involved in this dialogue right now  
RH Yeah, that's interesting  
RH I love it  
RH That's interesting, very interesting. I didn't realize that, uh...  
GQ But the idea that Gary and I developed is that the magazine is a magazine of process video. And I imagined it in the context of great small magazines  
RH I have nothing but discouraging thoughts about this whole thing. And the main discouraging thought I have is that you're too damned soon. It's just, you know, I don't know. The idea of being more general may make some sense. But not general in spreading it all over hell, but general in your concept. Because you're thinking about what you're going to do with this thing. So if you could find some way to tie that in, altogether, and make it a common, not bad word, common experience for the idea, then it may work. But video processing is

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- RH (cont.)...(gesticulating) about that high. It's coming out of its fetal stage
- GH But part of it is to be an ongoing dialogue. It's not just...documents this is what process video is
- RH That's the reason we're thinking about a book. We just don't want to go through it again
- GQ I understand that. We produce books. We don't produce magazines. This is the first idea of a magazine that we've come up with
- RH Oh you picked a tough subject to deal with
- GQ That's what's interesting about it. It isn't done
- PD Why did you decide on a magazine?
- GH Actually the first idea was a book
- GQ The first idea was a book. And the idea of a magazine was to build the material to make a book out of. The magazine would be a way to actually build that material, to actually create the flow of the material. And that's not trying to be a big success as a magazine, necessarily
- GH Maybe a journal, even
- PD Well journal, magazine, whatever. It implies that there is some critical mass of people out there, like over some number that....
- WS That's true with a book
- PD Well no. A book is a repository sort of idea. "Whether anyone cares or not I'm going to put it here and if someone cares they'll go out and get it." But a magazine implies that you can support yourself, support yourself based on the idea that there is a certain mass of people who are interested
- GQ You produce it to the level that the market exists on. If there is 500 people you can produce a 500 people magazine and it will be economical. You print what you need. Your costs are that low. We have the equipment to do it with
- PD Printing 500 copies of a magazine is kind of... I can't imagine that being economically feasible
- GH Don't think economically
- PD I'm thinking economically because you've got to have paper
- NZ If you break even you're putting out something
- GQ It's cost-effective to produce a 500 edition of a book. We're doing it with books all the time
- PD Do you know a thing called "Audience" magazine? In literature "Audience" was a thing that came out and they may be up to 17,000 copies now. They started with two or three thousand copies in hard bound monthly magazines of good prose and poetry and so on. And they went under. They absolutely went under because of their own idealism. They went under because they said there's no point in publishing this anymore because we've stopped communicating
- RH The dean told me, "You know your problem, Ralph? You're too idealistic." And I said really? (laughs)
- PD I've always wanted to ask Melville is he knew anything about what it was. Ha ha ha I just wanted to know
- RH He probably said my Moby? Moby I do, and Moby I don't (laughs)
- SM That was so bad it's incredible
- ... (eating noises)...
- GQ Well one basic decision is are we going to try to do a magazine that's going to make it or are we going to do a magazine that we can sustain

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- GQ (cont.)...with an audience of several hundred that we really want to do that will make history in the world that it makes history in and that's quite enough. And if it does catch on, it catches on and we expand it. But Willoby's involved and it implies...he's got a large ego about the question of publications making it in the world because he belongs to that world. I don't object to that. I'm just not sure I'm interested. On the other hand I'm not against the magazine making it if it doesn't lose its authenticity, its usefulness to the people who really need it.
- PD What's the use of this?
- GQ I'm less interested in selling video, the process of video, to the people who don't know about it than I am to sustain, feed, and help develop the sense of self awareness that's in the artists who do it, and to create a language out of that that is appropriate to video. One of the original ideas is to create an actual discourse out of the experience of video rather than leave it to the critics who'll employ film vocabularies and more conventional video vocabularies to what doesn't fit into those ...
- RH You're probably dealing with about a hundred or two hundred of the outside people right now that are really involved in this stuff
- GQ I think the audience is larger than that. One of the ways I'd like to develop the audience is by involving certain poets in the magazine
- RH Oh, okay, yeah
- GQ Because there is a larger world of people who know what process is in poetry
- RH You're selling the thing too. I mean you say you're not but...
- GQ Well I'm a poet interested in video. I am extending my experience, that's what I do as an editor. I make larger what is otherwise just my experience. If I'm a teacher I may come up with a bunch of converts, but I might not be out to do that. If I give a course in process poetry or process video or both of them together, that's what it would be
- RH Well you wouldn't come up with too many converts. I don't think you would anyway. I know I don't. You usually wind up with three or four at the end out of forty or fifty to start with
- GQ That's alot, though
- PD 10%
- GQ I don't come up with any more than that with the kind of poetry that I'm really interested in when I give a course in poetry. It's not a different situation in poetry to sustain itself in that atmosphere of integrity for a long time. It's also the other dimension of it. All of the things you could say about video documentaries, other kinds of video, and the world of video in the state council, I could give you the same story back about poetry only it's been going on a longer time.
- RH You were teaching at Stony Brook? When was this?
- GQ 1965 and 1970
- RH So Nam June was out there
- GQ Yeah I knew Nam June out there. That's when I first got interested in video actually. It was my second wave of interest
- RH He used to tell me horror stories about Stonybrook and the way they treated him

Ralph Hocking and Sherry Miller interview 2/6/78

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GQ Oh sure. I could tell you some about him or about me. I <sup>wasn't there</sup> <sup>at the time</sup> was out there. That created a little bit of receptivity to Nam June. <sup>Lawrence</sup> had his own problems

GH We were thinking of putting <sup>Ohlyk's silhouette</sup> cunt on the cover, a colorized version

RH Well I couldn't advise you on that, I haven't seen it yet (laughs).

PD Maybe you could go to Peggy Cass. It's on record. Yeah or even Eleanor Gugenheim

RH I've often wondered whose cunt that is, man. Nobody'll tell me

PD I wondered about that an hour ago

GH It looks like coin operated

RH It was plugged in here with CCBS through there, that's the idea. That was one of Nam June's and my collaborations in the sixties. I don't think he knows whose cunt it is "Oh is this somebody's cunt?" (inaudible)

GQ Sherry, do you make tapes too? Do you work with cameras?

SM Um...I don't know how to answer that one.

GQ Really?

SM I've done some portapack stuff and some stuff on my own. But mainly when we do it, we do it together

GQ It's a kind of really a collaboration that's happening. I'm just curious as to whether you deal with the machinery as such yourself

SM I understand what the machines do and I can work them, but I don't use them

GQ To me, that's very interesting, actually, to be a part of video without touching the machines. It's actually the kind of relationship that I could enjoy myself. Ralph, do you ever use feedback?

RH I used to. I haven't used it for a long time. I find it too weird

GQ Volatile

RH Too weird for me to deal with. I'm very interested in it

GH I've recently been tangling my horns in it. I feel a drawing from me because of the rawness of it. The kind of thing I'm working with is a very uncontrolled thing, too. As far as feedback itself, it's usually just the threshold of the camera not turned at all, just the threshold straight on, not reversed or anything.

SM We've been talking about putting together a tape show of feedback stuff

GH I'd like to see a tape show of a matrix of monitor just a hundred times..

RH Fed back? Feedback--alot of all feedback shows

PD Walter's probably doing one right now in Michigan

GH Well I know he's got his surge together. He's gonna want to plug that into his IP

RH He's got it running?

GH Yeah. In fact, when I call him I can hear it in the backround just whopping away

GQ It's wonderful to see these tapes. I'm really loving this. Do you know Jim <sup>Lawrence</sup> <sup>Miller</sup>?

RH No

...  
(machine talk...)

GH Voltage control, too, which is real nice. There's a hard square wave that's bizarre. It punches it in and it has a delay to it and it's still delaying when the square wave thing goes off. So when it turns the reverb off it's still going

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GQ It's called bleed-through?

RH Yeah

PD It happens on the six o'clock news

RH I can't quite deal with the images. That's quite fancy. We were doing some things this morning but we didn't record anything

GQ At what point do you begin to record? Do you have a sense that you've arrived at a field where you can set the parameters and you know that you can...

RH It seems like it might work and you say, all right let's record something and Sherry says "okay" and we start recording. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't

GQ So you both tend to feel that the moment has come and turn on the tape

SM Quite often we'll record the segments, such as this one, and then we'll rerecord five or six different times. It's like variations...

GQ So your editing process is in the doing again rather than in the messing with the tape

RH Yeah. I don't like to deal with editing 'cause it's...for one thing it takes you the next generation in which you make copies. And when you have limited access the way we have, why, the copies are really terrible. I can make a second generation copy that's pretty good. A third generation tape...not too easily. I'm a firm believer in not recycling my tapes. I find myself going back and looking at things after a month or so and then I get interested, so I don't throw things out too quickly

GQ Do you keep all tapes?

RH Yeah. I used to recycle my tapes but now I'm pissed because I haven't got the tapes I used to.

GQ Right. Oh I really believe in that keeping

RH I'm going to have a hell of a lot of tape for somebody to sort through some day

PD You ought to appoint an executor

RH I sent a tape to this Ithaca video festival and then I read a review that said it was an exercise in editing

GQ Did you write back and say if it were going to be an exercise in anything, it would be an exercise, at the very least, in non-editing?

RH I refused to write back (laughs). I get bored with trying to expose...

GQ "I would like to point out to your readers that you left out the very important non in front of the word editing. RH I solved the whole problem by not sending anything this year" (headline)

GQ You deprived yourself of another amusing moment

RH I've decided I want to get a grant this year. I've never applied for a grant for myself. .... People who've showed me interesting tapes are dancers and things like this. And they have no idea of what they're doing in relation to what's happening and then they become signals

GQ Gary did an interesting thing with using the Advent projection screen and the dancers and live video synthesis. And the dancers could, at a certain point, get in front of the screen and see themselves and also interfere with their own image. I thought that the possibilities were terrific

GQ Actually there was an interesting space because the Advent was situated here, right, and there was a large space behind it. And then there was a camera that framed the back of the Advent exactly. So they would be going the opposite way in front of the Advent, and then they would move

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- GH (cont.)...in front of it and then go the same way until they went behind it. So there was an essentially a sort of backing space...
- RH A sort of delay in there. You're trying to figure out where they are... (laughter)
- GH Well actually there was a delay through there, but not through tape, through using the frame buffer and triggering it
- RH Yeah the frame buffer. Well we did a thing, well, Artie and those guys did a tape together a couple years ago. It was really interesting, it was, you know, carving a space in the center
- GH Was it Peer Bode and Marilyn Blackman?
- RH There were tons of people involved, I don't know, Brian...
- SM Video events in Binghamton....
- RH Yeah, oh boy what a zoo
- GQ It's interesting because the attitude toward editing seems to me to be possibly something-- a comment on process in itself-- I mean that the convenience of within expensive systems creating better second generation tapes to do whatever with. But that's convenience. There's really more to it than that, right?
- RH Oh yeah alot more to it. I have a luxury of being able to go back and look again because I'm not confined to events as they happen. I'm not working with...the worst example I can give you is the guy falling out the window. He won't fall again for me so I've got to get him on the way down, quick, and then get the momentary stages of his falling that somehow represent the whole thing. It's very much a thing beyond the idea of just dealing with editing. It's what the hell the whole thing of processing something is all about is that you can study it
- GQ Well I don't think I completely grasp it yet
- RH All right, let me try again. If I go through something and Sherry gets through something, then we can study it
- GQ In the process of...through the feedback of...
- RH We can immediately go back and look at it
- GQ Through the self monitoring, or...looking at the tape right afterwards?
- RH Through the tape
- GQ I see, and then go do it again, I see
- RH Then I look at it and study it and think about it. And Sherry looks at it and studies it and...
- GQ Right. It becomes text. Now this is very important- very very important. They become texts in sequence or in process, processual texts, but nevertheless texts. And one of the things about texts is...
- RH I'll sublimate my paranoia about words. Go ahead (laughs)
- GQ Text is a powerful word. It has to do with a weave in the present, in which consciousness occurs in the medium. I mean if something is happening it is happening in the medium and is also a product at the same time
- RH Well what is context then?
- GQ What is context?...the text around, the circumtext. The context is the text with, con-text. It means we create a context here because we are all whites or we're all in the world of video or whatever it might happen to be. Those are contexts or frames by virtue of the fact that there is more than one text coming together in a larger text. But a text is something that we make, that is made, that produces the condition of consciousness that has about it the element of reflection and the opportunity for self-awareness that I think you're talking about.

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- GQ (cont.)...see process is not non-textual. Process doesn't imply that we don't have--well we used the word product before but I'd rather use text because it is something that is woven with intention. The word text at root means a weave, something woven, ~~text~~. It is something woven with intention. It is something that is made whether by the letter or by the image
- RH Well but I'm not sure what you're saying. My position on it is that we've made this thing, and we have this ability to immediately look at it without sending it off to the processor
- GQ Right. The process is in the making
- RH I rewind it and I look at it and I think about it. And I may rewind it and look at it and think about it again
- GQ Right. That instantaneous feedback or replay is important
- RH And then instead of thinking about how I like parts of it and then I'll save those parts, I'll say, "All right, I like these parts. I'll build on these parts," and then we'll push the record button and do it again. And that's a real luxury in relation to the kind of thing that we're doing because I can't think of any other medium that can do that in the ways that we're working with it, any other visual medium. In time, you have to keep qualifying it
- GQ That's right. Well, there's a forward momentum
- RH In other words film can't do it (laughs). So I'm going to use that aspect of video. I mean that's an important thing is for me to find the aspects of video that are unique to video and then use them-- the qualities of video and the whole idea of video, and not just try to treat it as something that might be because I know something else about something else. I'm still trying to find those qualities within the structure of what it is and that's one of them
- GH But I think there are several ramifications of the editing vs not editing aesthetic. And also because of the limitations of the machine, like I find that one thing that I do is edit while I'm doing it. I don't make a bunch of material, put it over in the corner, and then the next day or several hours later put it on a deck and go from that deck to another deck, because my machine can't switch from this image to this. I don't mean in terms of time or space. If it's not capable of a certain change because of the voltage that I have available etc., I can do that by laying down this knowing what I want to come next, etc., but it doesn't look like an editing, it looks like a switch. So in that way it is the process of editing, but the aesthetic is switching. Whereas if I had had a computer or this or that I could have done it any way
- The process of editing is a process of comparison? I mean what is process editing?...by comparison, or juxtaposing, or by...
- GH Well when I was referring to that I just meant in terms of the machine, you know, editing onto the tape. I think, normally, aesthetically, that is what editing is referring to. You know...juxtaposing time...
- RH Well editing is a concept, is a filming concept. It was really defined by the film makers. And it was a thing that came through the fact that film was invented
- GQ Well actually the word comes from writing originally

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- RH Right. Well I'm trying to stay within the visual experience pretty much. Film actually is the first visual art that has time involved as far as I know
- PD Well there's Stonehenge and things like that
- GH That's an illusion
- GQ I see what you mean but that's not art as such. It's out of the realm of what we're talking about
- RH Paintings didn't move and so they had film. And then you had all of these paintings coming after each other in implied time. So I'm coming after film with the idea of video. So with that heritage I'm trying to figure out where the hell to go and what I have and what I don't have. In fact, I've got a real advantage because I've never made film. I've made about a hundred feet of film in my whole life. It was never...it was edited. Larry Gotheim edited my film and it was a product of Gothcock Corporation of Film Processing whatever and that was the end of that. So we did my film together
- PD When was that?
- RH A long time ago. But that was my only experience in film so I can look fairly freshly at the whole idea of what video could do and the way to approach it. It seemed to me the most reasonable way to approach it was to just go back and do it again because I had it all right there. So--let's do it again. Let's do it again. We may make about four or five versions after looking at each one and then usually I'll find one version that I like which is usually the last version. Then I'll say fuck it, let's do something else 'cause that's been solved. That problem has been figured out. It's a fantastic medium to do that in. And the theory behind Sony portapak and instant replay was to do that in the field and with documentariss. You go out, you shoot it, you don't like it, you rewind your tape and you do it again. Well of course you can't do that half of the time because of what's gone by...
- GH Or the battery runs out
- RH It was an event that's not going to happen again. But within the confines of the space that we're dealing with, we can do it again. So far I don't find a real need to edit
- GH I understand perfectly what you're talking about, myself. Going over and over even a small bit of time, also...
- NZ Gary has been working on a set of polaroids, even setting up each shot for a long period of time, and I wonder how much you can repeat any particular that you've made. Do you feel you can?
- GH I haven't ever really wanted to. If it did involve outside forms I think I could, if it was just electronic
- NZ What do you mean "if it didn't involve outside forms"?
- GH Camera images. Well you know I'm not into mass production so it doesn't really matter (laughs)
- NZ Well it didn't involve your ability to control your systems when working with cameras. It's in nature's hands at that point? I mean you're delegating...
- GH No. I'm talking about a variation. I've come very close as an exercise, I suppose, even if it did involve cameras and people. But what would be the purpose? I mean, what is the question- is the machine sophisticated enough, or am I sophisticated enough, or do I know enough



Ralph Hocking and Sherry Miller interview 2/6/78

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- GH (cont.)...about the machines to be able to reproduce something? Is that the question?
- NZ Yeah, can you repeat?
- GH I mean you're asking me if I'm technically capable of doing that. It's not really about image making, it's about my technical ability. And what I'm saying is that there's a gap in there, - definitely a grey area in there because there are variables in the machine and something could have gotten dirty by the next time...you know just little, little things. So that's why I'm saying I've come close
- NZ Well why did you point to the camera as being the element that would keep you from duplicating certain...
- GH Because it produces much more of a complex- like a square wave or something like that. Therefore if it's simpler it has less of a chance to be different each time it's turned on or, you know. Cameras are set up with an image in it. It would be much harder than to turn on a square wave and have it there
- NZ I'm curious to know about how you're working towards controlling the wave form at the Television Center; where Paul Davis fits into controlling and image
- RH Well Paul's not controlling my wave form at all. When you're dealing with your terminology you're really controlling signals. That's the basic thing that we're dealing with either in sound or in video. And you're dealing with a signal. That's a very general statement. All right, now we ought to go from there
- NZ I'm just curious to know what you and the Television Center and Paul Davis are doing towards...are you still involved in what <sup>Basilica</sup> is involved in getting away from the pot (C) and controlling empty signal with, you know, an outside control voltage?
- RH Yeah. We're doing it in a different way than the <sup>Basilica</sup>. The <sup>new cas</sup> are trying to generate signals within the structure of what a computer is. We're trying to control voltages in terms of vices outside of the computer. Paul is trying to pull together the general ideas that we're working with because he knows computers. What he's doing is trying to find the language that he can understand because he knows computers that I can understand because I don't know computers. And the first idea was Paul, or Walter at the time, I want to be able to tell the computer to make me four red bars for three seconds, and that's all I want to be able to tell the computer. I don't want to deal with any interim kind of experience language or anything else. And Walter, I think, I put too heavily into the whole thing and that's hard to deal with for a person who develops language because it's a very sophisticated language involved in trying to get that to a point where you can just speak English to it. Most computer languages have nothing to do with English
- NZ Sophisticated in the amount of information you have to deal with or...
- RH Oh yeah it's an incredible amount of instructions to get the computer in its language to understand your language. So what we're coming to is a point where we're dealing with some fairly basic issues that also directly relate to what the video signal is about which is time and amplitude. And Paul's working on it from there which is still a big problem. It's not an easy thing to do, but I relent in my understanding because I've understood more since then, if nothing else. But what

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- RH (cont.)...I'm trying to do, in the long run, is to find a language that directly relates to what is happening. If I can't say where, then at least I can say something else
- NZ Are you both looking for the same language?
- RH I don't know if we're looking for the same language, no, I don't think so
- PD We won't know until we find out
- RH But Paul knows a hell of a lot more what he's doing than I do. And what I'm doing upstairs doesn't relate directly to the computer and we're trying to interface the whole thing
- PD I don't know if it's ever going to work, Ralph
- RH Well it may or it may not. If we keep fucking around with it we'll see what happens. But that's the nature of the whole thing
- GH I don't see why it won't work
- PD Well, something will work
- RH It's an expensive attitude and that's the problem that we have now. You know, everybody thinks that we're not being directly productive or whatever
- PD Well, a lot of bucks have been blown on this computer. I'd say four or five thousand dollars you guys have invested in computer, now
- RH That's all? We had more like ten or fifteen or twenty thousand invested in that computer project
- PD You're kidding
- GH In developing hardware or developing the soft...
- RH Hardware and software and the people who are involved in developing this, yes
- SM We spent about ten thousand dollars from the Endowment and that includes Don's salary, Walter's salary, plus Paul and the hardware
- RH We spent more than that
- PD And the salaries are more than the hardware, or at least as much as the hardware. I'd say you've got about four to five thousand dollars worth of hardware there
- NZ And getting Brewster off on his special project and that infringing on his time in the Television Center?
- RH Well it's all mixed together. If you started sorting all the things out that relate to computer project, and all the things that relate to everyday operation, I'm sure the computer project would come to at least a third of the total operation of what we're doing. So I don't know how to sort it all out. I still say that we're probably coming close to twenty thousand in the total investment. But I don't give a shit. I mean that's ridiculous. Who cares?
- PD Neil, to tell you what's going on...
- NZ Yeah, the beginnings of forming a language sound...
- PD Ralph has been trying to convince me to get involved in this for a couple of months now. And I finally said okay Ralph I'm interested, let's do something
- RH That's one way to look at it. I've been offering it to you--a responsibility
- PD Well that's the way I look at it. I mean you've been trying to get me interested
- RH No, no. I think I said this is an interesting thing. Are you interested in it?
- PD I finally got interested in it. I mean I started thinking about it and I got interested in the computer aspects as related to what I know about video, and what Ralph knows about video related to the computer and the

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PD (cont.)...attempt to form a language

RH But my basic view point on this is the same viewpoint that I have-- and I have it stronger about this project than what these guys are doing in developing a magazine. I think that it's incredibly premature because there's so much to learn about just the simple shit that I've got sitting upstairs as far as I'm concerned. And again I'll keep qualifying this and then I'll quit. The main thing that I'm concerned with is to try to get as much going in one time with people interested in, you know---they can evolve and develop things that I don't know about. If I can find somebody to get this to happen, okay. If I can't, then fuck it. But it's not a life-support system as far as I'm concerned. I've got what I need and I'm trying to see if some of these other areas plug together and if they make any sense to eachother. So that's my approach to saying hey Paul, this is a possibility of something to explore for you.

PD I find it interesting. And I find it interesting as a way to escape...  
RH Well one of the reasons I kept saying things like this to you was you kept saying to me, "I'm interested in the arts." And the people who've made sense to me in the past have been potters and people involved in the arts." And I'm saying all right, maybe there's some crossover at this point

PD Well what happened friday which was...I did alot of talking friday  
RH Of course you did. Somebody had to and you were the only person who knew what the hell was going on

PD Well what I heard coming back was people saying, "Ah. I see something happening here. I don't know quite what it is but I see something happening." And the next step is to begin to produce a little paper, and not anything more than that but a little paper that has some words on it that say ramp, sign wave, computer in applied...

RH That's up to you. I have no idea what to do...

PD Well I'm telling you what I'm going to do

RH Go ahead and do it

PD And I'm telling you what makes sense to me. I'm saying, you know, sign wave...it's on paper and the plan is to make the computer understand these sorts of statements

GH You mean with like a microphone interface where you would say "ramp" and it would understand that?

PD Well you could go that far. Whatever way you get the symbols in. Typing them in is one of the most native modes, but recognizing them with a microphone is not ruled out by any means

GH It would certainly be more real time

PD Pretty hard to do, too. And you have problems with understanding. I mean with the microphone recognizing the word ramp--it's only going to do that 3% of the time

GH What if you made a sound that was programmed to do a ramp instead of the word ramp

PD See that's a whole other set of ideas about computers recognizing...

RH Which is what we talked about, too

PD You can get into that

RH Light pens drawing a ramp instead of thinking ramp

PD Sure. But before all of that comes you have to get a little sphere of

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- PD (cont.)...influence going. And we're talking about control wave forms, we're not talking about  $x/y$  video on each point
- GH Right. But it's still what's the fastest rate to communicate to the computer
- PD Well to Peer it may be some little thing that he can trace a wave form/he drew out, as we've discussed. And to Willoby it might be...
- RH The fastest way... get that fucking ramp wave up there baby
- PD To Willoby playing little games-his fingers, drumming his fingers...
- RH But that's not practically the fastest way because in order for the computer to translate the particular intonations in your voice is a hell of a job
- PD Well yeah but you have one computer doing that and another computer listening to what that computer's saying. You dedicate a computer to listening to the person talking, the processor, and figure out what that person said or is saying back, and then another one to recognize what's going on. Okay, "execute the command ~~Framp~~." That's a secondary consideration. I mean all this...
- RH When you get all the computers together, you have the same problems that we've got trying to figure out what to do
- PD That's right. And if we were all computers trying to have this conversation it would be equally as sticky
- RH Yeah. It gets a little weird
- PD I mean the only thing that I envision, and I was saying this when I was coming up, is let's give a go at some kind of a language to find control signals in parallel. In other words, let's say a maximum of sixteen, let's be able to define counterpoint of control. So let's say that I have four violins, and I've got four clarinets, and four saxophones, and four tympani, and I have the notation to...
- RH Or you have four channels of color, and four channels of keying...
- PD And now I want to orchestrate that piece of musical instrumentation or video instrumentation. I want to orchestrate it, I want to draw a score up and draw half notes and quarter notes and talk about time in action
- RH You're talking about amplitude and...
- PD More than that. Music is more than amplitude and time
- RH We're not dealing with rhythm?
- PD Well in a sense we are
- RH Well, we aren't. We're dealing with video so talk to me about video
- PD Well, time and amplitude is pretty limited
- RH All right then what else do we need?
- PD Well, time and amplitude is a way to look at anything but it's only a limited way of looking. You need to have a few more auxiliary ways of describing something. I mean time and amplitude is like saying draw a graph with  $x/y$ . We also draw a graph by saying there is a line which has slope such and such and it's translatable either way. But it's a different way of saying it
- RH Slope is time and...
- PD Slope is a rate, two and four, let's say
- RH Are you talking about rate or are you talking about tempo?
- PD But you're also talking about tempo when you say go from here to here which is time/time, amplitude/amplitude. You know, that's all we're talking about and we're talking about saying it, though, in a different way

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- 2/46  
 PD Are you trying to define the ballpark?  
 PD A multitude of different ways to define a controlled signal or a set of controlled signals and their relationship  
 GH How about starting at the basic level of, you know, letters are time and numbers are ...  
 RH Well we talked about that and we decided, or at least I decided that maybe numbers make more sense than letters because numbers define time and amplitude better than letters do  
 PD But letters define action better than numbers  
 GH Yeah but you can't do actions with controls  
 PD You can do actions, though. You can say "RAMP." That's an action  
 GH But now you're back to the microphone  
 PD Okay so ramp might be R. You don't have to go to the microphone. R may be ramp. H may be hold.  
 GH But I think as long as there is a chart one could learn just about anything that anything represented quite fast. I don't think that the surface thing of hold- H is going to be that...  
 RH Well we're trying to directly relate this as much as we can to the actuality of what we know about it already. If you say ramp and you put R and R is not enough, then RP may be the...  
 GH True, but as far as identifying the language and the command that you want to do, to me, in seriously getting involved in communicating with computers and wanting to do something with it, if one develops a way of talking to it that's more defining, what is happening that is a language rather than as a description of something...  
 RH We need the description, Gary. The problem is that none of us want to get involved with learning Fortran or learning some language that exists  
 WS Some of us do  
 RH Some of you do but...  
 WS Not me, but people I know  
 GH I don't mean a language that actually programs the ramps and then the language on top of that so that some person can type in RP, I mean a language so that a person can type RP at that level. The person has already programmed sign waves, etc. into the machine. Now how is one going to get at those, correct?  
 PD No  
 GH In other words when you get to the machine someone who knows computer programming has already programmed in there sign waves, ramps, and he's giving you, now, another language in order to get to the ramps and how fast they are going to be. And you can choose what you want, but it's programmed. You can't just turn on a computer and say RP. It's got a whole language in it  
 RH Well that's the whole problem that Paul's got  
 GH Okay. Well what I'm referring to is that that language is already in there. The ramps are already in there, right? How is the artist going to get them out?  
 RH I'm telling you now. We're going to get Paul to teach us how to put RP into the machine. He's going to do all of these subsets that have to take place in machine language or whatever the hell it is to get the computer convinced that RP means a ramp  
 GH Now at that point that's where I misunderstood. That language, instead of being RP or SW,... I think that in the end that will be more confusing

Ralph Hocking and Sherry Miller interview 2/6/73

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- GH (cont,... than if one were to do the language in numbers that would represent time and voltage. ~~And~~ You could actually do a much more, as far as scoring something...it's going to make much more sense than having SP, TRI ...
- RH I think you're right if you're working as an individual. I'm working as a corporation developing something that people can somehow easily identify with who don't know shit from shinola
- PD We're not precluding either thing. In other words, this language is not formed yet. And as we said Friday, let us not preclude the idea of someone working exclusively in time-amplitude coordinates. In other words, a time-amplitude coordinate would be at the fifth frame at this voltage level and at the sixth frame this voltage level entered as 5,4 and 5,5. You have this general, hopefully, a program, which is what it is, which understands at various levels. In other words, you're writing a line of "do this now," and "do this now" might be "arrive now at a certain voltage and time coordinate" or "right now start producing a ramp with these parameters" or "right now start producing a sign wave with these parameters," "right now start producing a sawtooth wave with these parameters," ...I mean the idea is, in the next month or so, to develop the range of this language. Not to pin it down but to say okay let's develop a range of the way people want to deal with it. Now here you're saying "okay I want to deal with it in time-amplitude coordinates."
- GH No. I'm just talking about how you're going to talk to it no matter what's in it and how much it can do
- PD Okay. How do you want to talk to it? What's your ideal of how you want to talk to it?
- GH I'm just talking about it. I can't tell you how Gary Hill ...
- RH He wants to talk to it in whatever exists the way Woody's doing it
- PD Well Woody's talking to it in machine language or basic higher level language, talking to it in the native language of the computer
- GH Okay but that's not what I mean
- PD Which means you have to know how to get something done. If you want to generate a ramp you have to...
- GH That's not what I meant
- RH Now I'm confused. I thought that was what you meant
- GH I'm talking about the second level language. It's already passed machine language. He, for instance, has already programmed what it can do
- PD Okay so it can do a ramp and it can do a sawtooth
- GH It can do these things, right? So how is Ralph Hocking or Gary Hill or Peer Bode going to get at it? And at that point you would prefer RP which would represent ramp in your head
- RH It represents a ramp in my head and it's also it's more close to representing a ramp in the language that I know which is English
- GH I know that. I realize that. All I am saying is that I think in the long run people might not be interested because they may not be interested in computers to that degree. But I think that a language that would be visual, that would be on paper and make more sense of what is actually happening would be better
- RH Everything you're saying is very much in our minds except that we're looking for the practical aspects of getting started on this whole thing.

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- RH (cont.)...And the practical aspects now have to do with not buying more machines that can translate things in individual form or translate things in the auidial form, but that we can type into, so we're getting a language that we can type into the machine. in fact we're going to try to take that one step further and try to type things into the machine without using the teletype, which is something that Paul and I are going to battle out the next few days
- GH Without teletype how would you get into the system?
- RH I was thinking about a chisel and a hammer (laughs)
- PD I think it ought to be a cadillac. We'll put your cadillac up on blocks and with the steering wheel the excellerator and the brakes...
- RH No, what we're talking about is a CIT display of what's going on instead of coming out on paper. So you get rid of the mechanics. You use a keyboard but you don't use the mechanical devices
- PD There are alot of ways to go in this, Gary. I've come into this with very little preconceptions about how we ought to talk to the computer. I know how to talk to computers on the computer's level because I've dealt with that for a long time. I've always had to deal with a computer as a computer
- b ..... (after viewing one of Ralph's tapes)
- GQ Very powerful, that tape. But I felt that the going further and further into the textures was very interesting in itself
- RH Yeah it is. The going in is interesting and there's a whole long space in the middle that is not terribly interesting, and then coming out of it is impossible. Besides, the part that has always fascinated me is getting in there
- GQ Right
- WS I'm always interested in getting out, Ralph. I always get in easily. It's getting out that's a problem for me
- RH That's what I'm saying (laughs)
- WS I know, I know but you're too lucid for me. I have to camouflage it with language
- PD Where is that bottle of scotch?
- WS Well Ralph you've given us alot more than we bargained for. It's going to take us a long while to digest all of this
- RH Well, I'm still working on it.
- WS (laughs) Godspeed
- PD Awful good scotch
- RH It's probably older than you are
- PD I just never heard of it
- WS How much a bottle? .....
- RH A boogle?
- WS A buggle
- RH I think it averages out to about eight dollars a bottle
- WS That's a good buy
- RH In fact I should have a few more bottles down there waiting for me
- WS You will. You'll have an unlimited supply
- RH No
- WS No? You mean there are limits? Wait a minute turn on the recorder again, I'm interested in the limits. We didn't seem to get to the limits. It seemed so vast. If I could have some limits then Id be able to deal with it more

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- RH Do you want today's limits or tomorrow's limits? (laughs)
- WS Just any limits so I can have a perspective on the whole thing. I got lost way in the middle.. I was floating around...limitless... it seems to be limitless...I have to get an anchor
- GQ I thought the journey into the textures was really...I thought you would go all the way in until you couldn't go any further
- RH No I have to get out
- GQ No I think I'd want to stay in there. It's really quite disorienting in some way
- RH The only thing I could think of doing with this equipment...this was the first portapack that I got and the portapack wasn't given with playing back. I had to take the tape off the portapack and then put it on a playback unit. So having those two units I said, well, I'll go back and forth and see what I can do with two tapes and I kept rerecording and went into this project
- PD It's pretty wild to recognize the space and things in the space. I know where that was and I saw the picture of you, the rotating picture
- WS Yeah I recognized that, too, Ralph. We all recognize that space. I think it's basic video space located in the basement in Binghamton
- PD Ralph, I was around here long before I ever came. I came here in 74 but we used to make cash runs to Binghamton in 71. Binghamton is a major supply distributor spot. Pounds and pounds of hash--that's how I paid my tuition for my last two years of school. You have to flow with the times
- RH As long as you don't get caught  
....(casual drugisms...)....
- PD How many other video magazines are there?
- NZ There are commercial magazines that deal with equipment  
....
- PD What do you think about this language, Ralph? I've been thinking about it an awful lot, I have to say. It kept me awake quite a while last night
- RH My only premise in the language is to try to find some way to relate the language to function. What Paul is talking about is dealing with the parameters of using a keyboard and how you deal with language.
- NS Oh, the premise being that it all happen on the keyboard. That's the difference. I thought the difference was to make it feasible to deal with the computer in a simple kind of interface
- RH But there are many ways to make the thing happen. It's not simple. But I mean that's the intention-- to simplify that activity so that entering the information and getting it out is fairly simple
- RH The common way of relating is the way we're doing it right now. It's called English language and that's the most common ground that we have. It seems to me that we have to find the most common area to begin with. If you think it isn't, tell me why. It's a hell of alot easier to know what you're doing conceptually with a certain amount of knowledge and then to punch things into the computer, than it is to chase something all over the goddamned board. Because by the time you've done that you could have had all of this done
- WS Do you like the Kinks, the rock group? They're survivors. They started in the early sixties and they're still #1 now



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- GH Ralph, do you work just about every day now?  
RH On this stuff? No, I work mostly on weekends  
PD Most of the time he deals with trying to tell a mixed audience how the low level is black and the high level is white  
RH They're catching on  
WS Gary just suggested "OHM" for the title. It may be esoteric and a little bit technical but...
- 
- RH I'm looking to get the average intelligent college involved person. I mean I'm leveling off at that point. I don't think that we're going to get too many people from the Ford Motor Company assembly line involved in this  
PD I don't know. We're never going to know how this is going to work until we can take a guinea pig sort of person after something happens...  
RH The thing that has happened, Paul, either because of you or because of time, as Sherry said, this is kind of the way Walter was going, but the thing that happened around me and that had to deal with time and with voltage is probably the most sensible thing for me so far  
PD I think it's sensible because it isolates an area that can be handled. I feel comfortable with it as a delineation of what can be done. It may not have a lot of potential...  
RH You know one step beyond is dealing with totally common words like red and orange. My fantasies, initially, were that the computer was going to do everything for me. Now I know that the computer is going to control voltages and give commands on certain parameters to devices outside of itself. So I have to know the devices and I have to know how to tell the computer to control the devices  
PD Which means that the computer kind of makes it even harder for you in a lot of ways  
RH Well, right now. But the reason it's harder for me is because I don't know what to tell the computer to do because I don't know enough about what I'm doing in the simple knob twirling process  
GH I think you should use the giant audiosynthesizer until everything else gets developed  
RH Yeah, but if you put the giant audiosynthesizer on the computer you get the same problem. You've got to tell the giant audiosynthesizer what to do  
PD There is nothing wrong with not using the computer. The question is, can you use the computer to do something?  
RH I wrote two or three grant requests this year that were based on trying to find space between analog and digital which had to deal with voltage control, oscillators, and the kind of stuff I'm doing now, that nobody's done so far. I think there has to be that kind of progression  
PD Well I think a lot of people don't understand it. I mean most people are brought up in the tradition of analog and...  
RH Give me a volume control and I know what I'm doing (laughs)  
PD You tell them that if a volume control means 1,2,3, or 4 and not turn it and it goes louder, people freak out 'cause they don't realize that there's this discreet continuum  
RH At the same time, Paul, with this group that I've been talking about, these kids, ... I've been at it for three or four weeks now and those fucking people know what a sign wave does. It took me seven years to figure out what a sign wave does

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- PD You haven't shown them what an oscilloscope is yet?
- RH They don't know what an oscilloscope is
- GH How are you planning on controlling color?
- PD I'm not planning on controlling color. I'm planning on providing knobs for people to plug in any way they want to plug in. If it happens to get plugged into color, fine
- RH You control color by voltage and amplitude, or voltage and time, say
- GH Like, for instance, David's colorizer. It would be much more complex because you'd have to have three signals to get one color, whereas if you had a phase shifter, ~~like I said~~, it would be only one letter or one number representing the color
- RH So we're going to deal with complexities in that relationship
- PD The point about the computer, though, is that I'm making no statements about color whatsoever. We'll produce that control voltage and you can plug that control voltage into whatever you want to
- RH And you have to figure out what the voltage does
- PD And what it means to you is another level. Here it is and you can define it in these terms. But the symbolic attachment to meaning-- color, key, clip, whatever, is higher up
- RH I think the Jones colorizer is, in some ways, ~~is~~ the most inefficient possible machine to plug a computer into because there are too many controls in it. You've got so many parameters to deal with in that machine that it's going to drive you crazy. So what you have to do is set a few of them and then plug a few things into the other things
- GH Well, yes and no. I mean where all the knobs and things are multiplied is the color. That's where all the knobs are
- RH Who the hell needs a voltage control on the pedestal and the main?
- GH All right so you don't voltage control, you just leave it set
- RH And another example is that if my keyers are any indication of what the range is on some of these controls, out of that I'm dealing with this
- GH So am I on mine. He still hasn't gotten that taken care of
- RH Fortunately I've got bias knobs on my outputs and I can go boom boom boom in that range. There's no way you can deal with the entire range in the keyer. You're always working somewhere in the middle. And the idea of grey level keying is ridiculous. It doesn't key on grey levels at all. It doesn't come close. I've tried it. I've tried to pick out certain areas of grey, and there's no way that I can take the two controls that I have on my keyer now
- GH You mean if you had both keyers on the same image
- PD You could do it with a position switch in a well-calibrated system. There are calibrated colorizers and calibrated...
- RH That flip off from light to dark that I showed you upstairs? I've got three levels of voltage and I'm going to go from the darkest to the lightest. It's all I can do to get everything set to go to light to dark. Now if I want to go from a grey to a lighter grey there's no way. I have no idea what your machine's going to come out like but I know my machine won't do it. I don't necessarily even want to do that because I'm still dealing with the extremes and trying to figure the whole thing out. But David's design on the earlier keyers, which is what I have, are...
- GH Yours go much harder

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- RH Really? Well my soft heads are like fades
- GH Right that's what mine are like too
- RH Well it's nice to know my theory of it's being in an infant state is true
- PD Just r'ving the pallet together, just beginning to figure out that there is such a thing as titanium dioxide and you could mix it with pitches to make white paint
- RH A lot of people have come with machines where, when they work they work and when they don't work, nobody can fix them
- PD Well you can fix any machine, but you don't know what it was meant to do originally and you can't fix it back the way it was
- RH If you have a schematic for a machine you can fix it. <sup>Harv</sup> hasn't put out a schematic for his machine so you send it back to him and hope he fixes it. Lot's of luck
- GH How many machines does he have out?
- RH Three or four that I know about, <sup>Abc</sup> has quit. I mean as far as I know he's not doing anything
- GH What about George Brown?
- RH I don't think George is doing a hell of a lot
- GH So Dave's going to come out on the market at just the right time. But someday somebody's going to throw the whole god damned thing into whacko and take it to David and say "here, fix it for me" and David's not going to have time to do it and that's going to wipe him out because somebody will say "all right, this guy won't fix anything," so he won't back up his systems and that's what Sony and these companies that keep in business do. They develop a whole service organization
- PD You have to develop a service organization to back up everything that Jones ever put out. I think I could probably fix anything that Jones ever built, but the question is do you want to (laughs)? Is there any fun? Is there any good times?
- RH You have to be fairly knowledgeable about what's going on in order to fix it. You can't hire someone to come in off the street who knows the common denominator of fixing a television set by following the schematics and realizing what's going on, because there's nothing to follow
- PD Well there are these levels of craziness. I mean I've followed some of Dave's designs and he designs kind of like Escher would put together a drawing
- RH I've got some drawings that you wouldn't believe but they work
- GH Do you mean in terms of how they look or the actual design?
- PD No, no the ideas of what it should do. You're talking about a phase shifter. I worked on a phase shifter at one time, you know, how to build a good phase shifter. I remember having my mind totally blown because I'm pretty into straight forward ideas. I don't like to do obscure things. Dave was getting into this convoluted approach to phase shifting which was; this amplifier has such and such a delay and then we put it through this other amplifier and then back through this one and speed back and the delay adds here and subtracts there, and this crazy...
- RH Do you know what Jones aspirins are? If in doubt add a capacitor. I've got boards upstairs that have so many capacitors on them you wouldn't believe it
- GH My keyer has about thirty of forty capacitors on it

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- PD Well David is stuck back with the discrete transistor design. I mean I did a little discrete transistor design in electronics but never at the level that David is doing it. I'm used to designing with blocks. I have integrated circuits and I buy an amplifier with these parameters and I read in the manual that it has this gain and this bandwidth and so on, put it in, and use it. David builds three stage class A amplifiers out of transistors. I'm not at that level at all. I mean I could follow what goes on, but the internals of building amplifiers is not something I ever had to deal with 'cause I don't build them, I buy them off the shelf
- GH But I think that has something to do with some qualities.
- PD No. It's a comment on the difference between the way I view things and and he views things
- GH I think that's the reason why the coloring in the David Jones colorizer is the way it is. It has developed out of analog systems rather than integrated shifts
- PD Because he can build it exactly the way he wants it. He can optimize at any point. He can degrade it at any point. If I were going to design a system I'd be hard pressed in alot of cases to pull off the kind of real diddly control that he can do
- PB Then there's that whole thing of being able to standardize it so that he can produce it in some quantity and it will be a stable system. Because with the system that we have at the Center, there are just some things about it like we're not sure how to set it up
- GH He's there, though
- PB He's not there enough and I don't have enough control over it to utilize it efficiently. It goes out of tune easily
- RH It's a crazy fucking machine
- PB It's beautiful, Ralph, is what it is. And we don't know how to do it. It's that kind of dependence
- RH That's cleaner than some of the boards he has built
- GH The keyer that he had didn't look like this, though, at all. Is that the same?
- RH No that's the number 3 keyer. He and I didn't speak to eachother for months because he didn't fix it and he said I ripped him off and blah blah and blah blah and blah blah. We finally got ourselves straightened out and he built this keyer. It's the best god damned thing I've got. It will do all kinds of weird shit. It's really a pretty fair line regulator which is not easy to come by
- PD You mean the clip is non-linear
- RH I have no idea. All I know is the god damned thing makes lines and it has got soft edge and it goes into positive and negative and all kinds of weird shit. He hates the design now, but at the time it was a good idea
- PD Yeah that's the problem with designers. They grow
- RH I'm very happy living in a world of prototype. I'd rather be there, actually
- GH I would too
- RH And there's no way in hell you could ever figure out a way to duplicate the god damned thing
- ....
- GH Ralph it has been very terrific