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Asking to See the Soul: A Video Documentary Exploring the 'Coming Out' Experiences of Men Identifying with a Gay Subculture

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ASKING TO SEE THE SOUL:
A VIDEO DOCUMENTARY EXPLORING
THE 'COMING OUT' EXPERIENCES OF MEN
IDENTIFYING WITH A GAY SUBCULTURE

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
University of New Orleans
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts
in
The Department of Drama and Communications

by

Barth Louis Cox

B.S., Mansfield University, 1996

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ABSTRACT

This thesis details the production process of a video documentary that describes the *coming out* processes of gay men who identify with the *Bear* subculture of the gay community and some of the conflicts and consequences that they face due to this action. The aim of this production was to portray with dignity and compassion the recorded feelings and personal histories of the subjects interviewed.

Chapters are devoted to the development, pre-production, production and post-production phased of this documentary. A detailed script, transcripts, shot list, and other examples and illustrations are included to give a better understanding of the entire production. This thesis also includes other necessary documentation such as a detailed budget and copies of performance releases.

Introduction

This thesis concerns the production of a documentary entitled, ASKING TO SEE THE SOUL. The documentary focuses on the identity formation and experiences of men who identify with the “Bear” Community, a subculture of the gay community. It was shot entirely on digital video, and was produced by using Adobe Premiere, Adobe After Effects, Sonic Foundry Sound Forge, Sonic Foundry ACID as well as other post-production programs and technology.

Overall Objectives

The primary objective of this thesis is to create a documentary that faithfully examines the *bear* subculture of the gay community. Using an ethnographical approach and the videotaped interview of five men who self-proclaim their involvement in the subculture, the author constructs a psycho-sociological examination into a variety of issue and insights pertinent to this community. Included among the relevant issues this project examines are the ways these men develop there personal and social identify as *bears*, those events that shaped and created this subculture from the personal perspective of the interviewees, and what challenges and triumphs faced by this community contribute to its continuous changes and evolution. The piece also examines how these men, by their association with the *bear community* have changed their lives both as men as well as gay men.

From the emergence of the *bear* subculture in the mid-1980s to the present, there has been a struggle to clearly define what is a bear. Les Wright defined a *bear* in The Bear Book: Readings in the History and Evolution of a Gay Male Subculture as a gay man who is “as comfortable being a man as he is being gay, and who has a good heart” (7). Though this definition appears simplistic and all encompassing, it’s vagueness fuels the community’s constant debate, sparked by the fact that both members and the scholars alike, have difficulty in agreeing exactly what traits constitute a “bear.” The documentarian adds that from the interviews in this piece, it is concise to say that this argument, “generally framed as *bear-as-image* versus *bear-as-attitude*” remains unresolved (Wright 22).

Of course there are those ideas that are connotatively associated with the word *bear*. “A large or husky body, heavy body hair, a lumbering gait, an epicurean appetite, an attitude of imperturbability, a contented self-acceptance of his own masculinity (however that may be defined)” (Wright 21). Theoretically, a person who identifies himself as a member of the *bear* community could possibly have one or more of these attributes, or possibly none of them. The one issue that more than one interviewee agreed upon was that *bear* is a self-determined concept: if you say that you are a *bear*, then you are a *bear*.

This project looks specifically at identity formation. Gay people come to this social identity as part of a larger process, known as *coming out*, which is the various stages and processes in which they begin to form a positive self-identity as a homosexual. This involves eventual disclosure of their identity to others, particularly non-gay individuals, and then integration into a much larger gay community. The experiences that every gay person has when they *come out* are unique and different. This may suggest why the depiction of the *coming out* process has been the subject of many documentaries. Rather than duplicate a larger body of work that examines this phenomena, the decision was made to examine specifically the coming out process of *bears*-identified gay men and how they have been able to use their “coming out” experiences to mold a masculine identity and are able to integrate this identity into their lives as well-adjusted individuals. In addition, this project examines how these men have begun to change society’s perception of the gay community by simply *coming out* as gay and refusing to pass as heterosexual.

This project documents, through the interviews, that there is a common ground some self-identifying members of this subculture shared when *coming out*. Each man shares his own personal coming out stories and those narratives further support the fact that though *bears* face the same obstacles that most gay men encounter when *coming out*, there are additional pressures they face. *Bears* also encounter the additional pressure of being rejected for not fitting the images that permeated the gay mass media (Wright 15). The *bear* community calls the dominant images that prevailed in the gay mass media *twinkies*: The perpetual young boy-type, described as being thin, smooth (hairless), gym-toned, and tanned. *Bears* on the other hand, don’t fit the *twinkie* mold. Some of the men are hirsute. Some men have facial hair such as beards and moustaches. Still other men are larger and bulkier. Some have rugged musculature while others have potbellies instead of six-packs abs. Then there are

the men who are too old to be boys. Faced with few positive images, many of these men enter a second phase where they withdraw, hiding their homosexual feeling, trying to pass as heterosexual. One of the interviewed men chose to hide his homosexuality further by marrying a woman and establish a heterosexual façade. Yet, at some point, each man did succeed in creating a positive homosexual self-identity after becoming aware of the *bear* community and go through a “second *coming out*” process. The *bear* community gave these men who are not the “twinkie,” a place in the gay community. And in doing so, have begun to change the way that male beauty is seen in the gay community (Wright 9).

Bears are faced with the tribulations of molding a masculine identity, while still developing a gay social identity. According to Kleinberg, masculinity and the concept of male homosexuality are contradictions of terms. In his book, *Alienated Affections: Being Gay in America*, Kleinberg notes that the many of values that society associates with men being masculine, such as power, success, achievement, money, etc., come directly from their power over women and their ability to procreate (147). Yet, in the gay community, power over women is unnecessary and procreation is not an issue of power but of desire. *Bears* are just one subculture in the gay community who are still able to establish a personal masculine persona without these issues. During the interviews the men agree that they are not merely imitating the heterosexual ideals of masculinity as Kleinberg has suggested. Yet in other literature, Rofes asks, more extensively the same question, concerning why middle-classed gay men such as the doctors, lawyers, college professors, and business executives among others, are donning the traditional attire of working class men:

What does it mean that we wear grease monkey suits, sleeveless sweatshirts, combat fatigues, thermal underwear, or football jerseys? How have specific artifacts and symbols of white working-class masculinities become a part of the collective landscapes of middle class bears’ imaginations? (90)

To elaborate on Rofes concept, is there something softer, possibly more effeminate underneath façade of *gimme* caps, the faded jeans and flannel shirts, the leather chaps and the tank top, the cowboy boots and the motorcycle jacket? Are these gay men, “the computer technocrats in workingmen’s clothing simply sublimating class warfare through masquerade?” (Rofes 92)

Les Wright gives a different view in his interview. He said, “To me, the idea of *bears*

being just like men, heterosexual men, to me a very political aggressive or politically provoking stance.” He goes on to add that sometimes the ways to make changes in the perceptions of people are from within society, unnoticed. Obviously, there is something deeper, especially from a movement that claims not to be politically motivated or active. Yet, those *gimme* hats and flannel shirts may be more subterfuge, as Wright has suggested, and the political stance become, clear as “living contradictions to the gay stereotypes that still permeate today’s society.” Society has for numerous years accepted as all gay men to be the “effeminate sinner, recruiting young children,” (Hill 65). “*Masculine* gay men have existed all along, though only the violators of gender identity have been remembered by mainstream history, no doubt for their usefulness in admonishing would-be *gender-waverers* from *turning queer*” (Wright 3).

Another purpose of this project is to examine the history of this movement through the eyes of those people who are creating it. Each subject, no matter how long they have been members of the community, has in their own way, contributed to the history of this movement. Each brought something to the production, from Les Wright’s vivid descriptions of the *bear* culture forming, to Michael Tomaszek’s description of coming out as a teacher in a then intolerant New Jersey school system to Bill Hargreaves’ description of *bear*’s social cultural differences in Europe and Australia to that in the United States.

It took an epidemic of vast proportions to finally begin to forge a community around 1986. It is important to note that most self-identified *bears* have come to terms with their sexual orientation under the pressures of the AIDS epidemic. Two men interviewed face the trauma of HIV from a very personal level, continuing to bravely put a face on this disease. It is recognized that the formation of the *bear* community coincides directly with the explosive outbreaks of the AIDS in the gay community during the 1980s. Rapidly, the lean, thin young man began to be associated with a stigma of possibly being infected and the once rejected *bears* began to find themselves sexually attractive to a wider portion of the gay community (Suresha, 48).

This documentarian does not claim to have made a film that represents the entire experience of the bear community. Rather, through the candid and honest opinions of this small group of men, he hopes to open up a discussion of how this subculture of the gay community is making lasting differences in the way gay men are being perceived in the twenty-first century.

Justification of Project

The first audience for this project has always been those individuals who are forming a gay identity and who feel isolated from the gay community. Young people, for example facing the issues of coming out feel that they are alone and singular in their feeling of isolation.

In an editorial, Bruce Mirkin questions the failures of mass media to influence and assist young people with the issues of sexual identity. Speaking of a troubled youth that he has had an e-mail correspondence with for some months, Mirken goes on to say:

It is a world of near-total isolation. He has never known of an ordinary, well-adjusted person who is openly gay. He hears terrible things said about gay people every day. His acquaintances have no idea that the “them” they’re talking about is the frightened boy standing by their side.

From another perspective, the poet Jewelle Gomez movingly describes this loneliness:

Each of us has been terribly alone because few heterosexual families actually prepare anyone for the possibility of gayness. We spend our early years trying to manufacture a context, a mode of expression for deeply routed emotions that everyone around us pretends doesn't exist. In that way, we were islands isolated by the sea of compulsory heterosexuality. (Batson 11)

Unfortunately, however, lesbian and gay youth must accomplish the tasks commonly associated with growing up under multiple layers of isolation (Peters, 53). Hetrick and Martin, as cited by Peters, described the first layer of isolation as being cognitive isolation. In a nutshell, this isolation layer is caused by the fact that gay youth do not have positive role models in which they can model their lives. Gay and lesbian youth lack positive images in the today’s mass media. More often than not, they see only stereotypical gay and lesbian images. Raised by heterosexual parents, these young people generally lack role models to identify with. They are not taught about prominent men and women who happened to be gay (Garnet and D’Augelli 457).

The documentarian feels that he has accomplished his primary goal, which is to portray a picture of well-adjusted, non-stereotypical gay men that could be used as role models for teens and other individuals contemplating coming out. This project puts a face on history of the “Bear” Community and hopefully will empower men contemplating this subculture to make their own contributions.

The second audience is those people who are interested in the gay community, but unfortunately, due to poor exposure, are unaware of the vast diversity. Eliason notes, "One of

the effective means of changing attitude is personal contact with lesbian, gay and/or bisexual people." My goal is to be able to use this video to help educate this segment of the population and provide them with exposure to a group of individuals that generally do not adhere to the stereotypical representations of the gay community.

Project Origination

A series of monumental personal events and, crises, beginning in the summer of 1998, lead directly to the production of this thesis project. During that summer, having separated from his wife of seventeen years, the documentarian was forced to come to terms with his sexuality. He lived those years as a closeted homosexual man, having felt the pressure from family and society to conform to the norm. He was working with another graduate student on her thesis, when he found himself in an uncomfortable situation that facilitated him having to "come out" as a gay man. Also, during this extremely emotional time period, the documentarian began to encounter a series of disciplinary problems from his fifteen-year-old son.

Prior to this time period, the documentarian was seriously beginning to develop another project involving runaway and tossed out gay youths that hopefully was going to evolve into his thesis. As the problem with his son began to intensify, the documentarian felt compelled to follow the advice of a member of the Drama and Communications faculty to seek an alternate project.

Also, in June of that year, the documentarian became involved in a relationship with his life's partner. Both men shared similar personal histories, included the fact that they had come to terms with their sexuality later in their lives; both had been previously married with established families. His partner had come to terms with his sexuality several years before initiating this relationship. During that time period, he had made friends with a group of men who identified themselves as *bears* and subsequently, he had become involved peripherally in their community. When it became evident that the documentarian was not going to be able to make the initial project, his partner suggested making a project involving this subculture of the gay community.

One issue that was eventually going to be addressed by this project was how these men, who were middle-aged, larger, and usually bearded, were carving out a positive self- image in light of the youth driven culture put forth by the mainstream gay community. The documentarian, who is himself a larger gay man, embarked on an extreme diet plan, losing about forty pounds in six months, after being separated from his wife. He found that maintaining

this physical self-image was exhausting. After losing that weight, he was considerably thinner, yet he was still a large framed man. As he began to come out in the gay community, he noticed personally that the mainstream gay community ostracized larger, more mature men.

Subsequently, after meeting his partner and embarking on a path of identity formation that closely aligned him with the *bear* community, he was finally able to form a positive social identity within the gay community.

Using his own recent coming out and identity formation as a gay man as a springboard, the documentarian began to look seriously at this project. Needless to say, he felt that many of the decisions he made to remain closeted extensively, and subsequently to live a lie, were forged by decisions made much earlier in his life. He decided that his goal for the documentary, as with the previous project, was to make a video that would be beneficial to young gay men during those crucial periods where they are making decisions about their identity that would affect their entire lives.

This production book outlines the project as it was accomplished in the three production phases: Preproduction, Production and Postproduction. A MPEG copy of *ASKING TO SEE THE SOUL* accompanies this production thesis.

Chapter One: Preproduction

Preproduction for *ASKING TO SEE THE SOUL* began in January 2000. The filmmaker found himself serving multiple functions in this production, which included producer, interviewer, writer, editor, special effects compositor, musician as well as director. During the Preproduction process for this documentary, the filmmaker had to incorporate all of these skills through every necessary phase of planning the project. At first he was concerned with making decisions about the structure of the piece, thus being able to plan what components would be necessary. Second, was the formulation of a budget, and to use that budget to make decisions about video format, equipment, software, etc. Third, was the creation of a production schedule, and in doing so, making pertinent decisions about crew. Finally, using available resources and software to learn the various postproduction techniques that need to be used in this project.

Documentary Structure

The first decision that had to be made was how this documentary was going to be structured. This is pertinent to the entire process, because the structure directly governs almost all other decisions. During his tenure at the University of New Orleans, the filmmaker did not have the opportunity to participate in a classroom setting that directly addressed the methods and challenges of documentary media making. He did receive basic training that was invaluable to planning this project but, for the most part, he had to rely on intuition and training that he received in news production from his undergraduate class work. Prior to this production, the filmmaker produced another short documentary about images of gay aging in mass media. This project was instrumental in assisting the filmmaker with the issues concerning documentary production. Additional assistance in this phase of the process came from other graduate students who were also working on documentary thesis projects. Some of these students were further along in their projects and they were able to relay their challenges and experiences to effectively impact his thoughts during this phase of the production.

Interviews

From the very beginning of this process, the filmmaker was aware that the largest component of the project would be the videotaped interviews of selected individuals in the bear community. Decisions had to be made concerning an interview protocol, recruitment of possible interviewees, and how and where the interviews were going to be conducted.

This portion of the process began with formulating an effective and concise interview protocol. That protocol was necessary to steer which direction the film would take. The major resource the filmmaker used to familiarize himself with the bear movement from an academic level was a collection of essays and scholarly research entitled The Bear Book: Readings in the History and Evolution of a Gay Male Subculture edited by Les Wright. In addition, a larger body of research from a variety of different disciplines was gathered. These resources concerned the major issues and findings about *coming out* and its association with masculinity. The next step was to figure out what information in the literature needed to be explored further.

The filmmaker was aware that a large portion of the interviews would concern the *coming out* process and how these men came to a self-identity as a *bear*. Research on the subject tended to suggest that *bears* went through a two-fold process. Wright went on to say further, “For many bears, coming out as a bear represents a major step from mimesis (‘acting myself’) to authenticity (‘being myself’). Coming out serves as an ongoing narrative constructing of self” (6). The filmmaker knew that to fully understand the identity formation that these men went through, he would have to explore this particular *coming out* phenomena further.

On a similar thread, the filmmaker found it necessary to explore how the mass media affected this process. Important to this process is the depiction of positive role models, yet the following dilemma is suggested:

For gay men, the obvious solution to feeling of marginalization caused by the lack of gay images in the mainstream *straight* media would be to turn to the gay mass media for support and validation... An examination of male images presented in gay mass media reveals that they do no better than their straight counterparts at presenting an acceptable view of male body types that fall outside of a particular standard of beauty. (Locke 104)

It was necessary to examine how important this phenomenon was to the creation of a positive sexual identity.

Much of the research suggests that the main tenet of the bear community is total inclusion. Yet, even the media that serves the *bear* community specifically has narrowed their images to a certain type of man. The question that needed to be investigated was how has the bear-related media steered the image of what is a *bear*? Is the *bear* community creating it's own stereotypes by picturing only a certain type of man as the ideal? Locke asks, "What are the psychological consequences of joining the Bear community to feel included, only to turn around and feel as though one somehow doesn't measure up physically as a Bear?" (133) This basic discussion of setting a particular image as an ideal was also applied to the bear contest and pageants that are common in the bear community.

Another topic that began to develop from research concerned the issues of masculinity and homosexuality. Indeed, the very concept of being masculine and homosexual were viewed by many as mutually exclusive, notably psychologists and counselors (Ridinger 85). He also notes the emergence of a new masculine consciousness within the gay community correlating with the men's movement around the same time that AIDS became apparent:

Interest in alternative models of masculine bonding marked out a certain segment of the movement, the mythopoetic branch, symbolized by group rituals and a sense of tribal identity. Animals symbolizing masculine qualities from many cultures gained new popularity as modern totems, among them the *bear*. (Ridinger 85)

From a cultural effects perspective, this line of questioning also focused on how these men, who have sexual desire for men, feel about a heterosexual society generally viewing them as not being men.

Additionally, some research reported that there was a lack of political involvement by the bear community. For example, Dawson noted that Internet sites for and about bears were "active in AIDS Benefits and Gay Pride events, you'll rarely find a sharp political note to all their growling" (101). These political issues would develop into an interesting line of questions, which would result in a greater understand of the bear phenomenon.

From the multidisciplinary research, the filmmaker generated a broad-based interview protocol, which he felt covered a wide variety of topics pertinent to the larger topics at hand. The key was to keep the flow of questions moving so as to maintain spontaneity. Also, the protocol had to be flexible enough that the questions were able to address specific personal experiences each individual encountered. For example, several interviewees had particular

firsthand knowledge about certain events they had encountered, and the protocol required more specialized questions concerning those topics.

During the summer of 2000, the filmmaker began the process of recruiting gay men who identified themselves as *bears* to appear in the production. The first resource was through the filmmaker's friends and acquaintances in the *bear* community. Michael Tomaszek was the first interview recruited in this manner. Tomaszek was a friend of the filmmaker who had been told about the project months before his interview would actually be done. The filmmaker had met Tomaszek through a mutual friend. After becoming friends, the filmmaker asked Tomaszek if he was interested in being interviewed for the production. He agreed, but during the summer, Tomaszek interviewed and landed a new job in Phoenix, Arizona. During the Southern Decadence celebration, Tomaszek returned to New Orleans to fill a previous obligation as a bartending assistant at a local bar. He was approached again about the interview, and it was scheduled.

Bill Adams was recruited in a similar manner. Adams had come to New Orleans for Southern Decadence and was a close friend of a mutual friend of the filmmaker. He was introduced to the filmmaker as a porno star. The filmmaker knew one important subject that he was eager to explore concerned the concept of how the image of "what a *bear* is" was being created by the *bear* media. Since Adams had worked in some capacity in that genre, the filmmaker realized the importance of this interview. The interview was scheduled for the day after Labor Day.

Another resource the filmmaker had at his disposal was for him or his partner to simply talk about the documentary to *bears* that they met, see if they would be interested in doing an interview. Bill Hargreaves was recruited in this manner. Hargreaves and the filmmaker had attended the International Bear Rendezvous in San Francisco and actually met the Thursday night of that weekend. They became friends, and the filmmaker asked Hargreaves about doing an interview for the production and he agreed. Due to several conflicts because of other events, the interview was conducted on Tuesday morning, right before leaving San Francisco.

The Internet was actually a valuable resource for recruiting interviewees, in particular the use of the *Bears 4 Bears* chat room on America Online. Several potential interviewees were recruited in the chat rooms by either the filmmaker or his partner, and one man was eventually interviewed. Bill Leinenger was in the AOL chat room trying to line up models at the upcoming

Texas Bear Roundup event for his playing cards when the filmmaker's partner approached him online. Again, this was another interview that was important to the filmmaker because he could further explore the relationship of the media and the way it is driving the image of "what is a *bear*." The filmmaker and Leinenger conversed online and set up an interview for the Saturday night of the event.

The filmmaker also sent a request to the Webmaster of BearPress.com about the documentary, and asked for his help in recruiting men to be interviewed. Previously, the filmmaker had come across the website for the Bear History Project, run by Les Wright and sent a request for an interview. As both author of the Bear Book and archivist for the Bear History Project, the filmmaker was aware that procuring this interview was of the utmost importance. Wright did not respond to that request. After asking the Webmaster of BearPress to post a request for interviews, the filmmaker received an e-mail from Wright. The filmmaker found out that Wright was going to be attending International Bear Rendezvous and they arranged informally to conduct the interview then. The schedule was firmed up after arriving in San Francisco, and the interview was conducted Sunday afternoon.

It is important to mention that two additional interviews were performed that were not included in the final production. David Bockus was recruited by the filmmaker's partner at Bear Bust in Orlando, Florida and agreed to do the interview. Scott Klafke was a friend of the filmmaker and his partner who was asked about appearing in the film, and he agreed. Unfortunately, due to problems technically with their interviews, they had to be excluded from the final production.

Various other methods were also used but they were not successful in getting interviewees for the film. E-mails looking for potential interviews were also sent to several listservs, including a couple of listservs that cater to the local gay community and to the Bear Mailing List, an international bear listserv. The filmmaker also pitched the project to a number of local organizations, including the New Orleans Gay and Lesbian Community Center and the New Orleans Bear and Bear Trapper's Social Club, the local bear club. Though both promised to help out, the filmmaker was not able to recruit a single interview from either resource.

The filmmaker did establish criteria for potential candidates for interviews. The first criterion was that he wanted to have as many varied viewpoints as possible. Originally, he thought that he needed extensive representation by every possible sub-group of bear, but once

the documentary went into production, the improbability of this desire became apparent. Other criteria were the ability of the respondents to tell their *coming out* stories effectively and coherently, and their ability to speak freely in front of a camera.

Originally, the filmmaker felt the poignancy of the respondent's experiences, as well as the cohesiveness of their story were essential to the finished documentary. Early in the production process, this would prove to be untrue and would affect the way future interviews were conducted. He realized that sometimes an interview that was in opposition with the majority views of the *bear* community could provide more insights than one that is cohesive. Many times after asking a carefully scripted question, the interviewee would simply respond "yes or no." It became obvious that he needed to inject conflict in a friendly manner to yield insight into a more difficult topic or sometimes even to gain new insight into an opinion that was widely accepted. By challenging the respondents, he was able to get the conversation past a simple agreement or disagreement with the question. What was essential, was to obtain the interviewee's trust, then to use that trust to probe further, even the most controversial subjects.

One hurdle that proved a challenge to the filmmaker was where to actually tape these interviews. Originally, the filmmaker had wanted to conduct interviews in natural settings such as bars, club functions, in the street at events. Yet, early on in Preproduction while scouting out potential locations, it became apparent that these settings would be impractical. His next choice was a studio setting, but he was aware that it would not be feasible. The first reason was that the majority of the interviews were conducted at bear events in cities other than New Orleans. Resources were limited to what the filmmaker had at hand, which ended up being the hotel room that he had rented to attend these events. It was important that the area used was as sterile a sound environment as possible. Even with interviews conducted in New Orleans, the two interviewees were hard pressed for time so arranging a time in the studio was impractical. The filmmaker, with very short notice, set up an interview area in his own home which was effective for his immediate needs.

B-Roll

A major component of the narrative being told would come from the variety of non-interview footage. The vast majority of this footage would come from events where *bears* frequent. Bear Runs were the major groups of events that the filmmaker found beneficial for this portion of the production. The runs are usually thrown by individual clubs on an annual basis,

and with the help of a variety of businesses and corporate sponsors, serve as fundraisers for a variety of gay-related charities. The number of participants attending a run was dependant on the size restrictions of the individual host club, from a couple of hundred to a couple of thousand. The filmmaker also taped activities at two local events in New Orleans that catered to a large *bear* attendance: Southern Decadence and Mardi Gras.

An issue that the filmmaker had to deal with involved the fact that gay people are still distrustful of cameras. Jack Fritscher who served as editor of Drummer magazine, detailed this problem:

Cameras were the weapons of vice cops. Cameras at the first gay parades were a hot debate. Cameras at the first gay rodeos caused some cowboys to wear an orange patch that meant “No Photos.” Up until the 1990s, cameras were verboden in a gay bar... It’s a wonder any tangible history of early *bear* culture exist at all. Such attitudes based on fear of persecution, hampered the emergence of *bears*, and have caused many digital cubs to think *bears* were invented in the 1990s when *bears* finally became camera-ready. (xxxiv)

This problem would occur both in the interviews, where men were not interested in speaking in front of the camera thought they would speak eagerly off camera, and the non-interview footage where men simply asked not to be photographed.

The filmmaker found this type of video production to be similar to productions that document weddings and other similar events. Whenever possible, the filmmaker wanted a spontaneous response from subjects videotaped rather than a staged response. The goal was to show these men as normal average guys, not as freaks or specimens and the filmmaker felt that by showing people going about their average lives, then he would be able to achieve this goal. *Bear* events though in their very essence are not naturally occurring events. People who live all over the country and all over the world in some cases, come together to party and celebrate their involvement in the greater community at these events. Unfortunately, the very essence of these events gave way to some instances where people turned to the camera and showed off, but most were courteous of the goal of the filmmaker.

Another type of non-interview footage would be footage that may or not be *bear* specific, but would not come from bear events. This footage was necessary to support the narrative being told on screen. Some of the footage, which the filmmaker felt would be beneficial, was shot concurrent to the other bear event footage. For example, footage of polar bears in the San Francisco Zoo was shot at the same time as International Bear Rendezvous. Some of the footage

would be shot independent of other footage, during the course of the production period and other footage would have to be shot as pick-up shots after the interviews are arranged and narration was written. Also, there were a number of independent images that also needed to be converted to a format that makes them easier to edit into the final production. These images include picture, advertisements, and archival paraphernalia, etc. The vast majority of these items could be scanned into the computer as *.jpg* graphic file, which are compatible with the editing programs being used. Others items that didn't scan properly, were videotaped and handled like all the other video images. There are other items, such as Internet sites, which were captured with Screen Grab Pro, a freeware program that converts whatever appears on the computer screen into a *.jpg* image file. The filmmaker used this program to process the uploaded *.html* file into that graphic format.

Budget and Equipment Decisions

After decisions were made about the manner in which the documentary was to be structured, serious decisions had to be made concerning the budget. This portion of the process directly influenced pertinent decisions concerning both the production and post-production aspects of the project. Among the issues that the budget had a direct impact on was the equipment that the filmmaker was able to purchase and the video format to be used, the production schedule, and what equipment and software would be used in post-production of the film.

One of the major challenges the filmmaker faced concerned arranging finances to produce the video. The major means by which he obtained funding came from borrowing money through his student loans. Though student loans generally have a cap amount per semester based on multiple criteria, it never reached the maximum allowed per semester. There is a special compensation for thesis work that involved having the Department Chair to write a letter in his behalf, based on the budget in the prospectus. Unfortunately, the letter and the budget were lost in the process of reorganization occurring in the Office of Financial Aid. The paperwork had to be resubmitted and this caused delays. The filmmaker had scheduled the first shooting dates for interviews and B-roll for the week after school started, during the Southern Decadence Celebration on Labor Day weekend. The entire student loan was delayed due to these problems and the filmmaker found himself holding a yard sale the weekend before to raise enough money

to purchase the camera and tapes for that first shooting date. The money was straightened out at the end of September; however, it nearly forced the filmmaker to cancel another shooting date.

Equipment

The largest decision concerning equipment had to do with the format the filmmaker wished to shoot in, and how he was going to achieve this goal. From the beginning, it was obvious that he was going to use a video format. The filmmaker was aware that he was going to be shooting a large amount of footage for the project. In the end, there was over nine hours of interview footage as well as approximately twenty hours of B-roll footage. The filmmaker was aware that at that rate, his budget was not going to allow him to use film to record either type of footage.

Originally, when the filmmaker proposed this production, he was going to use a combination of Beta video formats for the interviews and S-video format for the B-roll. The cameras that utilized these formats were readily available in the Department for student use to produce video.

Yet, from the very beginning of the project, the filmmaker knew that his preferred format was digital video. Several years before, in undergraduate classes, the filmmaker had completed a project that investigated the digital video formats. First, the image quality of digital video is far superior to the image quality of either of the analog video format the University had available for student use. Second, the final product would be superior. Digital video signals are not simply captured on the computer in post-production, resulting in generation loss, such as in analog video. Rather, the actual signal which is a digital stream is directly transferred via an i.Link (IEEE 1394 digital link) or firewire to the computer without generation loss. The major problem the filmmaker faced when this project was proposed concerned the fact that the cost of digital cameras was very expensive.

Another problem that the filmmaker had to face concerned the size of the cameras that the University had to offer. All of the cameras available were large, professional style cameras, suitable for electronic newsgathering. As Fritscher has said, the camera is not a welcomed device in most gay venues and the use of a large camera would bode back to an era of news scandals and scrutiny. The filmmaker was sure that once he brought out any camera available, which could be perceived as a news camera, there was a greater chance of negative reaction. Even the smallest camera at school, which was the one-chip S-VHS camera, could easily be

perceived as a problem. Yet, on the other hand, in the everyday lives of many Americans, consumer size video cameras have become a vital method of documenting a variety of events and milestones. It became clear from the beginning that if this project was going to be done successfully, the process of making the video should not affect the honesty and spontaneity of the interviews and B-roll footage, that was needed to tell this story.

A couple of months before the first shooting date, the prices on digital video cameras dropped significantly. Manufacturers of digital video cameras, almost across the board, were taking huge discounts on their equipment, targeting people who went on summer vacations. The task at hand was to select a camera that would have as many features as possible, yet stay within a reasonable price.

Due to the fact that there were problems with the student loans, the filmmaker was aware that he could not purchase a camera over a thousand dollars. There were essentially two different digital formats that fell within that price range. The first was the Mini-DV format, but the majority of the cameras that used this format were more than the filmmaker could afford. There were several models that were in the lower price range, but they lacked a firewire port for video transfer from the camera to a computer. Without this feature, these cameras were not any better than the analog cameras available at the University.

The filmmaker, after considerable comparison, decided to purchase the Sony, Model DCR-TRV103 camera that used the other format, which was Digital 8. Sony designed several cameras using this format for use by both consumers and professionals alike, specifically lower end professionals such as wedding and other event videographers. The only real drawback was that it was a one-chip camera that did not allow for manual white balancing. The camera used a Hi 8 tape for recording, which is considerably larger than the Mini DV tape. Theoretically, except for those differences, it is the same camera as the higher priced, thirteen hundred dollar three chip-camera, as it is able to record the same number of lines of resolution and has the same digital effects. It is also able to export digital video via a firewire.

One issue that came up early on in Preproduction concerned the intensity of light that was needed by the digital camera, especially of the interviews. Unfortunately, the filmmaker was not able to find a good resource to assist with this dilemma. Unlike traditional analog video cameras, the digital cameras were extremely fast and required less light to produce an image. This became a challenge that the filmmaker would have to overcome through trial and error.

Initially, the filmmaker decided to go through the Production Resource Committee and borrow the rest of the equipment from school. He followed the rules and made his requests in a timely manner, they were honored accordingly. On the very first shooting date, a light meter that was reserved did not operate properly and the filmmaker had to shoot that entire weekend's work by eye. Though this was an inconvenience, it was only the beginning of the problems he would face as the production moved forward.

Eventually as the project progressed, there were more and more problems borrowing equipment, for one reason or another. For example, on the next shooting date there were new problems. Again, the filmmaker attempted to get a light meter. Unfortunately all of the light meters were checked out to students in DRCM 4510, which were taking priority over all other requests. There should have been an additional meter, but it was either broken or misplaced. Incidentally, the filmmaker would never get to use a light meter for this production.

The filmmaker found that all future shooting dates would have rather unique challenges concerning borrowing equipment, even though he had reserved it in advance and went through the proper channels. By the final shooting date, the filmmaker conducted the last interview with Bill Leinenger with all of his own equipment.

One of the first pieces of equipment that the filmmaker invested in was a larger battery. The original battery that came with the camera lasted approximately two hours peak, but various functions would decrease performance. During the first shoot there were several instances where battery power either had to be conserved or the filmmaker had to find an electric socket to plug-in and charge the battery. By the second shooting date, the necessity of a larger battery was becoming more obvious. The filmmaker purchased a battery that charged to over twelve hours of normal usage.

Another piece of equipment that became essential was a good lapel microphone. During the first shooting date, the first two interviews were performed with the lavalier microphones from the school. Though they did perform well, they recorded the signal in mono or a single soundtrack. To create stereo, the pieces had to be taken into Sonic Foundry's Sound Forge and the single track has to be duplicated to the other track. By purchasing a stereo lapel microphone, then filmmaker was better able to record the desired stereo sound signal.

The filmmaker decided to purchase a tripod for the camera as soon as he got the camera. Even though it was an essential piece of equipment, the filmmaker did find it to be inconvenient

and clumsy to use in some situations. After the second shooting date, where the filmmaker attempted to shoot a contest in a heavy wind, he realized that he needed a monopod for those circumstances when a tripod would prove impractical. Actually, the monopod did become one of the most utilized pieces of equipment.

One problem that the filmmaker found himself consistently dealing with in the interviews, concerned framing the shot and being able to keep the subject in the frame. The camera had a small flip out viewfinder that was useful but was easy to ignore. The way that the interviews were planned, was to set up the camera and set the focus on automatic, this way the camera would adjust for any motion from the subject. As will be discussed later in this chapter, the filmmaker found himself conducting the interviews alone and this technique proved vital to a successful interview. Yet, while doing an interview of a friend who was wearing a leather ball cap, the camera focused on the edge of the hat. Though the image appeared fine in the viewfinder, his face recorded on the tape as a little soft. After this interview, the filmmaker got an idea from the set up of the jib-arm at UNO and purchased a small black and white television that could easily be attached to the camera via RCA cables. Not only was this essential to give the filmmaker a better view of the images, but all of the other data that appears on the screen of the viewfinder like time code and battery charge also appeared on the television screen.

Production Schedule

Once necessary equipment and various related expenses were relegated, the next step concerned formulating a production schedule and deciding what locations to use. The majority of the interviews and the B-roll footage would come from three different types of events: larger national events, smaller, more regional events and local events.

The filmmaker realized early in the process that he was going to have to pursue the bears on their own turf. That meant attending a number of national bear events, based upon the needs of the project and his budget. He actually could have had his choice of as many of the numerous bear events that he needed to attend. In fact, there are major bear events sponsored by different bear club at least one a month. For each bear event attended, the filmmaker had to transport needed equipment, purchase airline and hotel accommodations, buy a run package so that he could have full access to the events, and in many cases have another graduate student cover his teaching load.

There were three events that were vital to this project due to their size. Those events were Bear Bust in Orlando, Florida, which was hosted by the Bears of Central Florida, the International Bear Rendezvous in San Francisco, California, hosted by the Bears of San Francisco and Texas Bear Roundup in Dallas, Texas, hosted by the Dallas Bears. These three runs were among the largest, attracting as many as two thousand registered and non-registered participants.

The filmmaker also attended a smaller event, Hibernation in St. Louis, hosted by the Show Me Bears. This event was not originally planned, but a potential interviewee suggested the event as a means by which the interview could be conducted. Though he backed out of the interview at the last minute and it was not conducted, the event did prove beneficial for B-roll footage. Unlike the larger events, this event was more personal which gave a much more intimate feeling to the footage shot there.

The local events of Southern Decadence and Mardi Gras both proved beneficial in obtaining both B-roll footage and interviews. Though both events are not bona fide bear events, both attracted a large bear presence. The advantage of these events was that they did not require extensive traveling or a hotel stay. Since the filmmaker lives right outside of the Quarter, he was able to walk to the events.

The most controversial decision made by the filmmaker had to do with what type of crew positions would be necessary to complete this production. This was controversial due to the fact that the filmmaker did not use anyone in a crew position throughout the entire production. The decision was made based on the delicate nature of the interviews, and the responses made by the potential interviewee concerning having any crew present. It became apparent early on during the Preproduction process that most of the men would not be comfortable interviewing in front of anyone else, especially someone who was not gay. Rather than lose an interview due to the respondent feeling violated by conveying some very personal information to a stranger, the filmmaker decided to work alone on this project. His partner would serve as an assistant producer, assisting the filmmaker whenever he could, seeking out perspective respondents, serving as craft services and taping B-roll on occasion

Post Production

From the very beginning of the project, the filmmaker had to keep a critical eye on what he wanted to accomplish and what software and equipment he was going to have to use to reach

the desired end result. The process of planning post-production during this phase entailed actually researching and selecting the hardware that would produce the best end product, researching and selecting the accompanying software, and actually learning and pushing the software to accomplish the desired result.

The filmmaker was aware that the post-production equipment at UNO, though of a high quality, had multiple limitations that would serve as a barrier in completing this production. The first limitation concerned the absence of firewire (IEEE 1394) technology and supporting software to allow for direct data flow from the camera to the computer. The next limitation concerned the fact that the AVID programs owned by the Department did not support digital video at the time that this project was in Preproduction. What this would have meant, production wise is that the desired footage would have had to be converted to another inferior format, either Beta or S-VHS, and then captured digitally, further derogating the image. After editing the segments, the finished product would have to be recaptured again, on Beta or S-VHS, again resulting in a further generation loss in the final project. The amount of generation loss and derogation of image quality was not acceptable to this filmmaker. Additionally, any supplementary programs that would be necessary for this production, such as Adobe After Effects or Sonic Foundry Sound Forge, were either restricted or not available for the filmmaker's use, or he would have extremely limited access to their use.

So what the filmmaker started to do was to make a wish list of equipment and supported software that he felt necessary for this project. First on that list was a computer that

supported firewire transfer of digital video. The first consideration was the possibility of upgrading the filmmaker's present computer and adding a firewire port. Then another opportunity became available and the filmmaker investigated the options. Corrine Clements, another graduate student tipped the filmmaker off that a local computer store had a discounted Sony Vaio computer, model number PCV-539 DS. Having bought a Sony camera, he decided to investigate this possibility and found that the compatibility of the two products was superb. Thus began the filmmaker's efforts to put together a home editing system. Additional upgrades and computer peripheral purchases were made to upgrade this computer system, including purchase of an additional Maxtor 80 gigabyte hard drive.

Additionally, the filmmaker found himself needing a computer system that was portable and that allowed him access to his production at school. The decision was made to

purchase a Sony Vaio PCG-9251 laptop computer and eventually a Maxtor 80 gigabyte firewire portable hard drive. While working with an independent producer who was generating a weekly hunting and fishing show for a local television station, the filmmaker became familiar with the Sony Vaio line of laptops and the portable hard drives. Though there were some limitations from the use of the hard drive as to data transfer rates, it provided significant storage capabilities and allowed the data to be accessed by both computers. Another selling point for this computer system was that via the use of a firewire, the computers could be networked and the data on both computers could be accessed and integrated.

A variety of other peripheral equipment was added to this system to integrate and increase image and sound capabilities, such as a scanner, midi-capable piano keyboard, USB supported midi input device, among other peripheral hardware.

The filmmaker made the choice to start with a core of programs and then to expand upon those central products. He decided to utilize the Adobe suite of image programs, specifically Premiere for video editing, After Effects for video layering and compositing, Illustrator in order to increase vector graphic capabilities and Photoshop for individual image editing. In addition, the filmmaker added Jasc's Paint Shop Pro for additional image editing capabilities and Macromedia's Freehand for superior auto trace functions for graphic integration. Also, the filmmaker had worked with Crystal 3D and other three-dimensional programs, and planned to incorporate these types of images into his production.

In addition, the filmmaker had to make decisions concerning sound and music programs. For general sound manipulation and editing, the program of choice was Sonic Foundry's Sound Forge. Though there are other sound programs on the market, Sound Forge in the filmmaker's opinion is far superior. In addition, the filmmaker decided to use ACID, which is a loop-based music program, also by Sonic Foundry. ACID was selected first because it has excellent integration capabilities with Sound Forge, and it is a simple program to learn by someone who is not a musician. Also, because when a loop is placed into an ACID project created by the program, it is interpolate with all of the other loops in the project, suggesting the key, rhythm and beat progression. This would remove a lot of the guessing that accompanies other music production programs. In addition, the filmmaker intended to integrate other music sources such as midi and synthesizer to create a unique sound and ACID works perfectly with all of these sound sources when adding to a musical project.

At the time when this project was in Preproduction, the majority of these programs were not being taught at UNO. Adobe Premiere was being taught in a limited degree to DRCM 2510 students and the filmmaker taught himself rather quickly the fundamentals of this program. He became a specialist of this program and found himself teaching other students the fundamentals of how to use it. As part of a special topics sound class, the filmmaker was introduced to the basics of Sound Forge and it's use within a Spectral Workstation. Otherwise, to learn the additional programs and to become proficient on the few that he had limited experience, the filmmaker found himself having to educate himself without classroom support. He utilized a variety of educational resources, completing the projects in the books to better understand how each program worked.

Chapter Two: Production

The production phase of this documentary began on Thursday, September 2, 1999. This phase of this film centered around eight different events as well as additional filming to incorporate other footage into the production. The log in this chapter chronicles the decisions made by the filmmaker in regard to the photography of both B-roll and interview footage.

Southern Decadence, New Orleans, LA

Thursday, September 2, 1999, NOBBTSC Annual Bear Beer Bust

The filmmaker planned to begin his shooting schedule at a variety of events and functions surrounding the Annual Southern Decadence festivities. The first function that he wanted to shoot was the annual Bear Beer Bust thrown by the New Orleans Bears and Bear Trappers Social Club, on Thursday, September 2, 1999. The beer bust was an inaugural event of the clubs annual Bear Run thrown in conjunction with Southern Decadence. The filmmaker wanted to begin shooting B-roll at the beer bust. The party occurred outside the Rawhide 2010 Lounge, and in the streets surrounding the bar. This shoot would involve night photography.

The first major problem that occurred before the first shooting date involved not having a camera to shoot with. The filmmaker had ordered his camera several weeks prior to the shooting date from Focus Camera, Inc. in Brooklyn, New York. Unfortunately, that particular camera was not in stock when he ordered it. Sony Corporation had targeted this line of cameras for national advertising, cashing in on the opportunity to sell the cameras to late summer vacationers. When the order was placed, the retailer did not have any digital 8 cameras in stock and this information was not told to the filmmaker. After what seemed like a reasonable period, the filmmaker began what would eventually result in a number of telephone conversations, seeking information about when his camera would be back in stock and would be shipped out. With the continual telephone conversations came continual promises from the retailer, but approximately a week before the shooting date, the retailer informed the filmmaker that the camera had indeed been shipped and should arrive prior to this shooting date.

United Parcel Service shipped the camera and the first attempt to deliver the camera occurred on Wednesday, September 2, 1999. Unfortunately this delivery occurred while the filmmaker was attending school and his partner was at work. Upon receiving the failed delivery notice, the filmmaker telephoned the local United Parcel Service pick-up center. The filmmaker found out that the camera was rescheduled for delivery the next day. He decided to accept the rescheduled second delivery rather than attempt to pick up the parcel at the warehouse, though it would mean rescheduling his duties as a graduate assistant to accommodate the delivery. The camera was delivered on Thursday September 3, 1999, a few hours prior to the event that would initiate the production phase of the project.

The delayed delivery of the camera affected the shooting schedule in a number of ways. Because of the initial out of stock delays and the subsequent delivery delays, the filmmaker was not able to test the camera properly. He was not afforded an extended period of time to be able to get used to the camera. For example, this camera was equipped with a number of features such as steady shot, low light and digital zoom features that he was not able to test. Thus prior to shooting, he was not able to determine if these features could be integrated into this production. In addition, he was unable to determine what effect using these features would have on the picture quality. Thus, due to limitations on time, the documentation was only able to perform a preliminary test to see if the camera worked.

Another problem would occur with the battery that came equipped with the camera. This problem, which resurfaced repetitively, involved the size of the battery. The immediate problem was that the smaller battery resulted in shorter battery life between recharging and a shorter period of time in which the filmmaker would be able to shoot at each event. Even the simplest camera features like using the pop-out screen would affect how much of a charge the battery had and the amount of time he would be able to shoot. He was not able to determine how using the various other camera features would effect how much of the battery 's power would be needed to run these features. Without proper time to test the camera, the filmmaker did not know how the size of the battery would affect camera operation.

Also, there were problems with obtaining additional equipment from the Department. For example, a light meter was needed to determine the camera light sensitivity, yet unfortunately, the meter that he had scheduled to check out of the equipment room was not functioning properly. As well, all the other meters were already checked out. There was not an

immediate concern since at this point, the filmmaker had not scheduled any interviews for Thursday, and was not taking out any additional equipment.

Due to these limitations, the filmmaker was aware that this shooting date would be more tentative in nature. There was going to be an extended period when the filmmaker was going to have to familiarize himself with the camera and its features.

The actual shooting period lasted approximately three hours, in which the filmmaker recorded approximately forty-five minutes of B-roll footage. The footage was shot entirely in the streets outside the bar, which means that he was shooting in a lower light situation. This would prove to be a challenge, but the filmmaker became aware early on that this camera had a high degree of sensitivity to light and was effective in recording video information even in some of the lowest light situations. He met the challenge by looking for a variety of opportunities such as using the lights from the awning outside of the bar, passing cars, streetlights, etc. to spice up the footage.

At one point, midway through the evening, there were several images that he wanted that were occurring in an extremely low light situation. The filmmaker decided to experiment with the low light features on the camera. The camera was equipped with a zero LUX feature that used an infrared light to assist in recording the images. This feature proved to be more of a novelty than actually useful. The resulting image was interesting, though somewhat grainy and slightly off colored. It could be usable if converted to grayscale as long as the subjects being videotapes did not turn their head to the camera. When they did, the infrared lights would reflect off of their eyes, resulting in an eerie green glow. Due to the limited life of the battery, this was the only experiment that the filmmaker decided to try with the camera.

The filmmaker also felt that this event might prove beneficial in networking, possibly leading him to subjects to be interviewed. During the night two interviews were tentatively scheduled. Several months before starting production, the filmmaker had spoken to Michael Tomaszek about doing an interview. He had met Tomaszek about a year before through a mutual friend. The filmmaker had spoken about his thesis with Tomaszek who agreed to an interview. However, a few months later he accepted a job offer in Phoenix, AZ and had moved away. During the course of the evening, the filmmaker ran into Tomaszek who had returned to New Orleans to fill a barbacking position at the Rawhide. The filmmaker and Tomaszek agreed to schedule the interview for Tuesday, September 7, 1999. At that point, Tomaszek would be

finished with his obligation to the bar, and would have enough free time to complete the interview, before leaving New Orleans to return home to Phoenix the next day.

Also, during the course of the evening, a mutual friend introduced the filmmaker to Bill Adams. Adams had been involved with Brush Creek Media, as both a model for BEAR Magazine, and as an actor in several of their pornography videos. From the beginning, the filmmaker knew that this was going to be an important interview to pursue. One subject that he wanted to explore with Adams and other members of the community who were involved in creating the predominant bear images, was how the magazines and other media sources are driving the images of who is and who is not a bear, and how were they affecting the self-concept of individuals in the community. Bill agreed to do the interview, but was reluctant to tie himself to a date at that point.

Friday, September 3, 1999, Lords of Leather's Annual Leather Block Party

The filmmaker planned to shoot the second day of the schedule at the Annual Leather Block Party sponsored by the Lords of Leather Social Club. This event, though not specifically a Bear community event, proved in years past to bring out a large number of bears along with the leather men. This party occurred outside the Phoenix Bar and in the streets surrounding the bar. Again, the majority of the filming would be at night but the area outside of the Phoenix was better lit and proved more conducive to videotaping than the area taped the night before.

Prior to this shooting date, the filmmaker had checked out lighting and sound equipment for the rest of the weekend from UNO Video. The equipment was not necessary for this part of the shooting schedule. He had tentatively scheduled an interview with Bill Adams, and was hoping that several leads he had would come to fruition. He felt that it was necessary to have the equipment, just in case. Again, he was not able to check out the light meter that he had requested.

This function, which was a major event in the Southern Decadence festivities, again provided an excellent opportunity to videotape both bears and leather men. The filmmaker was aware that at some point during the interview process, that there would be discussions comparing and contrasting these two separate subcultures in the gay community, and this event gave him the opportunity to film B-roll footage to illustrate those discussions.

The filmmaker taped approximately thirty minutes in the two hours that he was at the event. This event attracted a larger crowd than the beer bust filmed the previous day. Not only

was the crowd larger, but also there was a larger concentration of people, which proved to be a challenge. The filmmaker found it difficult on several occasions to record a desired scene or subject due to the crowd. On many occasions, the full scope of a subject or his attire had to be sacrificed because he could not get far enough away to capture the image. On other occasions where it was possible to get the necessary distance to record an image, multiple people would step in front of the camera and obscure the image. The filmmaker solved this problem by whenever possible, recording images from the edge of the crowd. Yet, many of the desired subjects never ventured out of the crowd, which forced the filmmaker to brave the crowd to get his images.

The Lords of Leather used this event to introduce the contestants for their annual Mr. Louisiana Leather Competition. The filmmaker decided against recording this portion of the events because he did not feel this was necessary for his project. He concentrated instead on individual members of the audience.

Saturday, September 4, 1999, Streets Footage

The filmmaker decided to shoot footage over two separate occasions to film people in the streets, enjoying themselves at the Southern Decadence activities. The first occasion to shoot this footage was Saturday afternoon. The day proved very nice for shooting since the sky was clear, the weather was warm, and the sun was shining brightly.

During this period the filmmaker shot approximately one hour worth of video footage, during the two hours he was out. Shooting was started on the streets outside of the bar at Café Lafitte's in Exile on Bourbon Street at noon. At Lafitte's, the filmmaker ran into a man he had met the day before, who he had spoken to about interviewing. Though the man was a State Trooper in his home state, and by his own account interested, the filmmaker would eventually not interview him because he was unable to get the man to stop drinking long enough to do the interview.

The crowd was relatively light on the streets, but he was able to videotape a number of bear groups and couple shots as they passed by. He then walked up Bourbon Street to St. Anne Street, and taped a small amount of footage outside of the Pub and Oz Clubs. He then proceeded to Good Friends Bar. The filmmaker was friends with the bartender on duty in the upstairs bar, and received permission to photograph footage of the crowd below from the bar's balcony. On the balcony, the area below the floor was decorated with Rainbow Flags. One flag in particular

was blowing in the wind in a pleasing pattern and the filmmaker knew that this footage would prove beneficial.

While on the balcony, the filmmaker noticed Bill Adams walking down the sidewalk to Good Friends and called to him. He met him downstairs in the bar and spoke to him about doing the interview. He was still interested and they arranged for him to do the interview on Tuesday, September 7, 1999 at 4:00 p.m. After logistics and phone numbers were traded, the filmmaker then preceded down the street to the Rawhide Lounge to tape additional B-roll.

Unfortunately, there were very few people at this establishment. Michael Tomaszek was working at the bar that afternoon and the shooting schedule for his interview was firmed up. It was agreed that Tomaszek would be interviewed before Adams at 3:00 p.m. on Tuesday. The filmmaker shot a small amount of footage outside of the Rawhide, but since there was not a large crowd, decided to walk up the street to Lafitte's, where there was a larger crowd earlier. The filmmaker shot the remainder of his B-roll footage outside of Lafitte's until his battery ran out. He then went home to charge the battery.

Later that evening, the filmmaker decided to brave the large crowds gathered for the evenings festivities and shoot additional B-roll. Unfortunately, the crowds were very large and there was a general fear that his camera may not be safe from either being damaged or stolen. After shooting approximately fifteen minutes of footage in the hour he was outside of Café Lafitte's in Exile, the filmmaker decided to find a safe place for his camera, and enjoyed the festivities without shooting additional footage.

Sunday, September 5, 1999, Southern Decadence Parade

The filmmaker planned to shoot the Annual Southern Decadence Parade on Sunday, September 5, 1999. Again, this was not specifically a *Bear* community event, but there would be a large crowd gathered for this event and it was sure to bring out a large number of *Bears*. It was decided to film the parade at the beginning of its route, since the parade was more intact at the beginning. It usually wound up rather disorganized nearer the end of the route with a number of the marching groups giving up and mixing in with the crowd. This parade began outside of the Golden Lantern Bar and ran up Royal Street to wherever the Grand Marshall wanted to lead it. Due to these reasons, the filmmaker felt catching it at the beginning would provide better photographic opportunities.

The parade began right around noon and would go on for approximately thirty minutes. The filmmaker taped selectively for an additional thirty to forty five minutes both before and after the parade.

The filmmaker had many opportunities to videotape *Bears* before, during and after the parade. He began taping images of friends who he incidentally ran into before the parade. The New Orleans Bear and Bear Trapper Social Club had a number of its members marching in the parade with a banner. In addition, there were several groups of *Bears* marching in the parade, mostly in some form of camp drag. After the parade finished, the filmmaker and his partner waited for the crowd to disperse and shot footage of a variety of *Bears* as they passed them.

Then after the parade, they went to a private party and footage was shot on the streets on the way to the party. The filmmaker found an outlet at the party and began charging the battery, but chose to spend the remainder of the afternoon and evening with friends rather than face the crowds.

Monday, September 6, 1999, Streets Footage

The filmmaker decided to shoot footage of people in the streets, enjoying the final festivities of the Southern Decadence weekend. Monday proved to be a much lower key day, with a much smaller crowd than over the weekend because many people had already gone home early Monday morning. There were still a number of people in town, which made for interesting filming. Again the weather was pleasant and the day proved to be very nice for shooting. The filmmaker shot approximately forty-five minutes of footage in about an hour and a half of shooting.

The filmmaker started shooting outside of Café Lafitte's in Exile, filming a number of friends with their guests who had assembled at the bar. After several minutes, he walked down Bourbon Street to St. Anne Street and across on St. Anne to the Rawhide Bar. There was a larger group of men outside the Rawhide this particular day and they proved to be very photographic. The filmmaker attempted to get additional subjects for his interviews from this group, but was unable to garner a subject due to the fact that most of the people approached were leaving early Tuesday morning, and were not interested in leaving the party atmosphere.

The filmmaker returned to Café Lafitte's until his battery ran down. At that point he had finished taping the activities surrounding Southern Decadence weekend.

Tuesday, September 7, 1999, Michael Tomaszek, Bill Adams Interviews

The filmmaker conducted his first two interviews on Tuesday afternoon as scheduled with his subjects. The interviews were conducted at the filmmaker's apartment, and each spanned slightly over an hour.

His first step was to re-secure the equipment that he had checked out from UNO Video over the weekend. This was arranged with his advisor, Barbara Coleman. Luckily, the semester had just begun and the students in UNO Video had not begun their projects, thus there was not already a reservation for this particular equipment.

The next step was to tailor the interview protocols to the subjects. The filmmaker had already prepared a broad-based interview protocol during the Preproduction phase of the production. Earlier that summer, several possible subjects being recruited by the filmmaker had requested additional information, and he sent out a preliminary version of the protocol.

Though the protocol was multifaceted in its approach, in reality it was divided into two distinct parts. The first part of the protocol dealt specifically with the individual subject's personal identity, as a gay man as well as a *Bear*. This particular line of questioning was opinion based and being so, delved into the subject's personal beliefs as to what actually constituted membership in this community. The subjects gave their own personal beliefs of what traits were necessary for a person to be considered a *Bear*, as well as those traits that excluded a person. Questioning ranged from "What is your personal definition of a *Bear*?" to "Can a straight man or a gay woman be a *Bear*?"

The second part of the protocol, though very closely related, dealt with the politics of sexual identity and its relationship to the *Bear* subculture. Though many times the issues were also addressed from an opinion basis, the questions dealt more specifically into the individual's actions or lack of action in a specific situation and what motivated that response. A large part of this project involved the coming out process, which by definition is the epitome of an individual's sexual identity formation from personal to political. This line of questioning was designed to explore motivation, and in doing so, allowed the filmmaker to delve into their emotions and opinions based upon their actions.

Though each part was distinctly different, the filmmaker was able to interweave the individual components together at times to gather a full perspective of these individuals and their

own ideas, hopes, and opinions about the subculture they participated in, regardless of whether they participated eagerly or reluctantly.

The filmmaker specifically designed the protocol to challenge the subject's beliefs and opinions. The filmmaker drew upon past experience where he had been employed as a professional interviewer for several market research companies. Even if he agreed personally with a response, he had to look for the means by which to question their response to further clarify or to further substantiate their responses. In many cases, the questions were reworded in a variety of ways for the subject, especially when the original question did not provoke a response. In some situations, the questioning resulted in a completely different response than the filmmaker expected. At that point the filmmaker had to weigh whether the response was valid to the discussion or was he going to have to restate the premise of the question asked and continue probing to provoke the desired response.

The next step was to create the physical environment to actually tape the interview. Originally, the filmmaker had hoped to record the interviews in environments that he felt were more representative of the *Bear* subculture. Yet, when these interviews were scheduled, it became apparent that these types of environments were not only impractical, but also generally inaccessible at this period of time due to the festivities that weekend. Working on a tight schedule and with little time, the filmmaker decided to convert a room in his apartment into a studio setting for these two interviews. With minor adjustments to accommodate the lighting and sound issues, the setting proved satisfactory.

The first interview was with Michael Tomaszek. The filmmaker had arranged to pick the subject up at the Phoenix bar, a few blocks from his home, where he would telephone for the pick-up. Tomaszek was later than he anticipated getting to the bar, thus causing the interview to start about a half-hour later than scheduled. Even before starting the interview, the filmmaker noticed that Tomaszek was exhausted. He had just finished five straight days of very strenuous work at the bar and it was apparent that he was physically drained by the experience. The filmmaker even suggested that the interview be postponed until another time to which Tomaszek replied that he was okay to participate in the interview.

Tomaszek's interview added some interesting perspectives to the discussion about the *Bear* community. As previously mentioned, the filmmaker had been acquainted with Tomaszek for a considerable time period, and was aware that Tomaszek, though self-identified as a *Bear*,

chose to not participate in either club activities or other *Bear* community functions. He had never attended a *Bear* run or frequented the bars. Tomaszek, in many ways epitomized the modern gay rights movement that Les Wright would discuss later in his interview, the quiet consumer who views equal rights as an act of passing through society.

Tomaszek's interview lasted approximately an hour and fifteen minutes. Probably the most important contribution that Tomaszek made to the discussion was the details of his own rather difficult coming out process. He also had strong opinions about the direction of the *Bear* community, about reasons behind his own nonparticipation in the community and though he admitted to not being politically involved, he had a strong desire for societal acceptance and equal rights. There were points during the interview that he grew tired of a particular line of questioning and would become confrontational to the ideas being examined, particularly with the types of questions that were designed to look at masculine identity in the gay community as a political provoking stance. The filmmaker found it difficult to access whether this reaction was more akin to his physical exhaustion or just a disinterest in that particular line of questioning. The interview went along well and yielded a number of usable quotes.

The second interview was with Bill Adams. Bill was aware that he was the second interview that the filmmaker was performing that day. Arrangements were made to pick up Adams at his hotel and the filmmaker's partner called him when it became apparent that the first interview was starting late. Near the end of Tomaszek's interview, Adams was telephoned for the pick-up. Adams arrived at the filmmaker's apartment near the end of Tomaszek interview. There was an apparent riff near the end of Tomaszek's interview when both men were in the same room, where Tomaszek became extremely uncomfortable speaking freely about his experiences as he had not been uncomfortable previously. The filmmaker made a noticeable change in questioning strategy to keep the interview focused and to complete the necessary inquiry.

Adams' interview was important to the dialogue that the filmmaker was gathering because of his obvious involvement in the *Bear* community as a BEAR magazine model and porno star. While researching into Adams' involvement in the magazine, it also became apparent that he held the title of Mr. San Francisco Bear, 1996. These combined experiences were significant to discussing how the *Bear* targeted mass media, and the contest were effecting the way *Bears* perceive their own self-worth and self-image.

What the filmmaker did not expect was the fact that Adams had become increasingly intolerant of the *Bear* community, especially along the lines that he felt that in the formation of this subculture and others like it, the larger gay community has become less cohesive and increasingly segregated. Though the interview had initially taken an abrupt perspective change, his critical views of the *Bear* community actually gave greater insight into the dynamics of the community than several of the other interviews that were more in agreement with the community's philosophy.

Adams' interview lasted approximately an hour and twenty minutes. This interview happens to be the most graphic in this thesis project, especially in relating life experiences. Adams was extremely candid about relaying both his opinions and the events in his life that helped to form those opinions. Even before the interview formally started, Adams stated in the initial discussion that he had been diagnosed with having the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV+) and followed up with how this condition has affected and changed his life. Adams, by his own admission, had been extremely active sexually, and this part of his life would play an important part of the opinions and experiences that he relayed in the interview. In most circumstances he relayed this information in a candid manner.

New Orleans Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Weekend

Saturday, September 25, 1999, Pride Parade and Festival

The filmmaker had planned his next shooting date to be the Parade and Festival that were the major parts of the New Orleans Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Weekend. He was not sure what footage he would obtain from either of these events, but he knew that there was going to be a rather large gathering of gay people and these events could be important to his shooting schedule.

The filmmaker began this day's scheduled shooting by filming the Parade as it passed on the corner of Royal Street and Frenchman Street, right near the starting point at Washington Park. The parade started at 11:00 AM and lasted about thirty minutes. It was rather sparse and there were few *Bears* present among the groups marching or on the floats. The filmmaker recorded this event in hopes that some of this footage might be useful to accompany any discussion of gay pride in the interviews. After the parade passed, the filmmaker returned home to recharge the camera's battery before going to the Pride Festival.

Around 1:00 P.M., the filmmaker arrived at the Gay Pride Festival at the Louis Armstrong Memorial Park. His first observation was that the crowd was very sparse and that there were only a few *Bears* among the crowd. After checking out the festivities, he noticed several friends who were manning the booth for the New Orleans Bears and Bear Trapper Social Club and decided to spend some time with them. By setting up his camera in close proximity to their booth, he was in an excellent vantage point to film the few *Bears* who attended the festival. There was also one merchant whose booth was nearby who had a large amount of *Bear* related merchandise and the filmmaker was able to get some footage of those products.

After filming for about an hour, the filmmaker decided to wander over to the drag stage and film some of the activities that were going on there. Though this was definitely not *Bear* related footage, the filmmaker was unsure if it would relate to the discussion in future interviews. After filming for about two hours total, the filmmaker left the festival and went home.

Sunday, September 26, 1999, Pride Festival

The filmmaker had planned to shoot additional footage of the Sunday events at the New Orleans Pride Festival. He had hoped to obtain additional footage at this event, but the crowds were only slightly larger than the previous days.

Fortunately, there was a slightly larger *Bear* presence, and there were more photographic opportunities. There was a good size crowd of people watching the drag performances and several *Bears* were in attendance at this event, providing interesting footage. The filmmaker decided to shoot footage for approximately two hours until the battery on the camera ran out.

Bear Bust, Orlando, FL

Friday, October 15, 1999, After Hours Party

The filmmaker had planned his next shooting date to be the events and activities occurring at “Bear Bust,” the annual *Bear* run, sponsored by the Bears of Central Florida in Orlando, Florida. The majority of activities at this event occurred either at the event’s host hotel, the Howard Johnson’s or at the Full Moon Saloon. The filmmaker had never attended a *Bear* run prior to this event, yet friends had recommended this event as being one of the largest such events in the country. He anticipated a very productive shooting opportunity, particularly due to the large number of *Bears* attending this event.

Problems began to occur even before the filmmaker left New Orleans. About two weeks before the event, the problem concerning his student loans was resolved and he received a partial

payment, which allowed him to make the necessary reservations and purchase needed equipment to make the trip.

Immediately upon receiving his student loan money, the filmmaker began purchasing equipment and supplies that were necessary to complete his thesis production. One of the first pieces of equipment that he found necessary to purchase was a larger battery to facilitate a longer shooting time. After researching and comparing batteries at several distributors, the filmmaker decided to purchase a 720 minute battery from a local distributor. He also received a tip about a lapel style microphone that was sold inexpensively at Radio Shack. During the first interviews, it became apparent that the lavalier microphone that he borrowed from the Department would only record a sound signal on one channel. After researching the microphone, he decided that this microphone would be beneficial to his production. Additionally, the filmmaker purchased his computer system at this time.

He also ordered forty Fuji videotapes from Focus Camera, Inc. in Brooklyn, New York due to their incredibly low price. A few days before the event the tapes had not been received, and the filmmaker began a series of calls to locate his order. He found out that there had been a mistake made by the salesperson that he initially ordered from and the original order had not been pulled for shipment. The filmmaker decided to pay for the second day air shipping to insure having the tapes before the event. When the order still had not been received two days before his scheduled departure, the filmmaker call to inquire about where his tapes were. He found out that the tapes would be delivered to his home a day after he departed due to a delay in shipping. Arrangements were made to have the shipment re-routed to the hotel where the filmmaker was staying on Friday morning. Meanwhile, he obtained a small number of videotapes from a local source to insure having enough tape to begin shooting.

Due to the delays in getting his loan processed, the filmmaker decided to wait until the money was paid to him before booking a hotel room or making travel reservations, just in case there was another delay and the trip would have to be canceled. Once the loan was processed, he began to make his travel plans, but was unable to book a room at the host hotel or either of the overflow hotels. There was a third hotel recommended on the clubs web site that was supposedly four blocks away from the host hotel. The filmmaker was able to book a room at this hotel easily.

On the recommendation of friends, the filmmaker decided not to purchase the run package that would have incurred an additional two hundred dollars in expenses. His friends said that he would have access to the grounds of the hotel, the contest, and the vendor fair without the package. This proved to be true, but a large number of other events were accessible only with the run package, and the filmmaker later regretted not being able to film those events.

Upon landing at the airport in Orlando on Thursday, October 13, 1999, the filmmaker noticed that the weather was terrible. It was raining and it appeared that this weather might continue through the weekend. The filmmaker found out that Hurricane Irene was right off of the coast of Florida, and this accounted for the bad weather. Though the hurricane was not an immediate threat because it was far enough off of the coast and it was moving more northerly, it was apparent that the filmmaker's ability of to get good footage over the weekend could possibly be effected by the rain.

After the filmmaker arrived in Florida and checked into his hotel, he found out that in Orlando, "the four blocks" actually turned out to be about two miles from the host hotel. Based on the distance published on the web site, the filmmaker waited for the rain to let up and embarked on foot to the host hotel to begin investigating the activities occurring at the *Bear* run. Fearing damage to his camera by the rain and just wanting to get an idea about how the events would be situated, the filmmaker decided not to film activities during this first night of the run. He arrived at the host hotel about an hour later, soaked to the skin.

The filmmaker was concerned that if he would have to continue walking in the rain, his camera would be damaged. With the uncertainty of the weather for the rest of the weekend, the filmmaker and his partner decided to rent a car on Friday, to facilitate an easier transport to and from the events.

On Friday, the weather was slightly better than the night before. The videotapes arrived at the filmmaker's hotel as Focus Camera promised. After lunch, the filmmaker and his partner rented a Ford Bronco from Budget Car Rental Company. This actually proved to be a smart move since the weather was still pretty nasty Friday night.

The filmmaker decided to wait to begin shooting later in the evening, since the weather appeared to be improving. Unfortunately, the weather affected the event at this point negatively. The filmmaker found many of the participants to be extremely moody and impatient. Most of them were hanging underneath the walkways of the motel and were not very friendly. The

filmmaker videotaped an hour's worth of footage in approximately two to three hours of shooting.

Saturday, October 16, 1999, Vendor's Fair

The filmmaker decided to continue his production by shooting footage at the Vendor's Fair, the Saturday day event scheduled at the Full Moon Saloon. He wanted to obtain additional footage of the *Bears* that were in attendance at this event, as well as of the merchandise available for sale. The crowd at this event was rather large, probably because the weather had shown a great improvement from the previous two days. There continued to be some scattered showers through out the day, but the spirit of the day's events would be much more positive than the previous day.

In approximately two hours, the filmmaker was able to record over an hour of video footage. Though not expected, he obtained images of several BEAR and American Bear magazine models. For example, the filmmaker filmed images of BEAR magazine model Max, who was autographing a recent issue of the magazine in which his picture was on the cover. There were several other models among the crowd, yet the vast majority of images obtained were from ordinary *Bears* purchasing and viewing merchandise. Additionally, the filmmaker photographed a number of shots of individual merchandise that he was sure could be integrated into the final production.

During the course of the afternoon, the filmmaker attempted a mini-interview format. The first persons he attempted this format with were the webmaster of MuscleBear.com and the reigning Mr. Southern California Bear. In this type of interview, the filmmaker asked five pertinent questions in quick succession requesting the respondents to simply answer the first thing that came to their mind. He was not pleased with the way that this interview format worked. After a couple further attempts failed, the filmmaker felt that the longer format interview, though more difficult to schedule, provided a far greater amount of information. On the flip side, while attempting this process, he did meet a number of people who were important in their contributions to the *Bear* Community.

Saturday, October 16, 1999, Bear Bust Competition

The filmmaker returned to the outdoors area behind the Full Moon Saloon for the *Bear* competition that evening. Because it had been drizzling prior to the contest, the filmmaker found

a place to stand under the bar's back porch area that gave him an excellent place to capture the entire show without getting people's heads in the way.

The filmmaker had an opportunity prior to the beginning of the contest to videotape a number of the *Bears* that were in attendance at the event. The lighting behind the bar was minimal, but several pockets of light around the exterior setting did yield some interesting artistic shots.

The contest started about fifteen minutes later than scheduled. The filmmaker decided to record the contest in its entirety, rather than try to piece together the contest from individual shots. One problem that the filmmaker encountered was that holding the camera up for an extended period of time, his hand became tired, and it was extremely difficult to keep the shot steady.

After the contest concluded, the filmmaker recorded additional images of *Bears* waiting to take the shuttle bus back to the host hotel. Among those shots, the filmmaker recorded shots of his partner and Max.

Saturday, October 16, 1999, After Hours Party

The filmmaker left the bar and returned to the host hotel to record images of *Bears* around the pool area, enjoying the after hours party that evening. The atmosphere at this party was much more relaxed than the parties the filmmaker encountered the previous two days.

At one point during the festivities, a younger man stripped down and jumped into the empty pool, causing a raucous among the men in attendance around the pool. The filmmaker was actually in a perfect place to tape the occurrence. In actuality, though of a risqué nature, these shots are among the most beautiful footage the filmmaker would record in this project. The lighting flickered into starburst off of the water's surface and the subject in the pool portrayed a very positive, somewhat playful attitude that contributed to the aesthetic of the shot.

Later during the evening, the filmmaker shot a longer piece of footage with Craig Brynes who was Mr. International Bear 1998 and the creator of the flag that is generally accepted by most members of the *Bear* community as their representative banner. Brynes who was selling merchandise at the vendor's market was unavailable to do a formal interview due to his tight schedule at this event. Earlier during the evening, the filmmaker made a couple of other unsuccessful attempts to get further interviews.

Months prior to attending this event, the filmmaker's partner had began an on-line conversation with Gerry Williams from Columbus, Ohio. Williams, who was a model in the premiere issue of American Grizzly magazine, also claimed to be among the original board members of the Bears of Central Florida that started Bear Bust several years prior. Online, Williams agreed to do an interview, but once approached about the interview at Bear Bust, he became vague and began avoiding the filmmaker and his partner.

Earlier in the day, the filmmaker's partner met David Ducote who was a model for BEAR magazine and an actor in their videos. Ducote agreed to do an interview, but the filmmaker was hard pressed to get him to actually leave the event long enough to perform the interview. Ducote agreed to being interviewed at International Bear Rendezvous, which the filmmaker was planning to attend.

The filmmaker shot about three hours of the party and ended up with over one hour worth of footage.

Sunday, October 17, 1999, Pool Area

The filmmaker returned Sunday to the host hotel to record images of *Bears* around the pool area. The weather had finally turned from downpour to warm and sunny. The pool was full of *Bears* enjoying themselves at the pool party.

This party was very relaxed and the *Bears* were lining up for photographic opportunities. The filmmaker did not encounter the resistance that he found from the men at the beginning of the run. In several situations, individual *Bears* sought out the filmmaker to make sure that their images were included in his footage. The filmmaker filmed about one hour worth of footage in about an hour and a half of shooting.

While the filmmaker was filming the activities around the pool, his partner was working to get someone to do an interview. While up on the second floor balcony looking down on the activities in the pool region, his partner started a conversation with David Bockus. Bockus was a graduate student in Elementary Education at New York University-Buffalo and had studied film as an undergraduate student. Bockus agreed to do the interview because he knew from his own experiences how difficult this type of production could be and he wanted to help a fellow grad student.

Sunday, October 17, 1999, David Bockus Interview

Bockus' interview was unique in a number of ways. Bockus was the youngest person that the filmmaker would interview during the course of this production. Because of his youth, the conditions of his coming out process were actually different than many of the other subjects. To begin with, Bockus did not go through a second coming out process that many of the middle-aged interviewees admitted to. He said that when he came out, it was as a *Bear*. He credited the Internet for giving him the fact and resources necessary, allowing him to assimilate a *Bear* self-identity. This permitted him to be able to move his sexual preferences directly to being a member of the *Bear* subculture.

The filmmaker encountered problems from the very beginning of the interview with the new microphone. Thought the filmmaker had tested the mike previously, for some reason unbeknownst to him, he was not getting sound recorded on the tape. Rather than loose the interview, the filmmaker decided to record the interview using the microphone on the camera. Bockus' voice was extremely deep and the resulting sound as recorded by the camera was very low. In post-production, all attempts to raise the level and cut out the high noise ratio would result in his voice taking on a very "tinny" quality. Though the visual was clear and his interview was pertinent to the discussion the filmmaker was trying to create, regretfully, a decision had to be made to not include his interview in the final production.

Monday, October 18, 1999, Iconology

The filmmaker decided to return to the Full Moon Saloon to shoot footage of a different nature. He had noticed that during the previous visit that on the walls of the patio bar was a large number of advertising signs and license plates, both antiques and newer signs that were iconic to the gay community and it's subcultures. Though at that point he was not sure if this footage could be integrated into his production, he decided to videotape some of those icons as well as various other banners and printed matter decorating the bar. He shot approximately ten minutes of footage in the thirty minutes he was at the bar. Returning to the host hotel and finding it almost deserted, the filmmaker decided to conclude his shooting of this event.

Hibernation, St. Louis, MO

Friday, November 12, 1999, Welcoming Party

The filmmaker had not expected to do this *Bear* run, but ended up adding this event to his shooting schedule at the last minute. After Bear Bust in Orlando, the filmmaker had an online

conversation with Gerry Williams, who had reneged on doing an interview with him. Williams claimed that he had begun to second guess whether or not he wanted to be involved in this production. He said that he was going to be attending the Hibernation Bear Run, hosted by the Show Me Bears Club in St. Louis. He promised that if the filmmaker was able to attend the event that he had reconsidered and would gladly do the interview. Once the filmmaker checked his calendar and his finances, he decided to add this event to his shooting schedule. The filmmaker was able to register for the event, but was not able to reserve a room at the host hotel. He reserved a room at a hotel about three blocks away.

The filmmaker found his greatest hurdle involved borrowing equipment on such short notice. He usually borrowed equipment from the UNO Video inventory, but that equipment was tied up by other student projects. The filmmaker was going to need to borrow the needed equipment from the film check out room. He put in the necessary request and was approved for an equipment release to travel to St. Louis. Unfortunately, most of the equipment had been tied up by other classes. The filmmaker was left with a Lowell light kit that had broken barndoors and the light stands were extremely tentative.

The filmmaker decided to pack as compactly as possible. At the previous event, the filmmaker had the assistance of his partner, but for this trip his partner was unable to get the time off from work. Thus, the filmmaker took the two best lights in the Lowell kit and the two best stands.

The filmmaker arrived in St. Louis, Missouri around midday Friday, November 12, 1999. After checking in at his hotel, he went to the host hotel to register for the run. After registering and having lunch, the filmmaker decided to shoot images of the opening party and the participants at this event. The filmmaker filmed for around two hours and recorded about forty-five minutes of footage.

Later in the evening, the filmmaker met with Williams. When the filmmaker reminded him of his promise, Williams almost immediately began to downplay the interview. Several attempts to schedule the interview were postponed or delayed. Ultimately, the filmmaker would not get this interview, though he would spend the weekend trying to arrange and execute it. Eventually, around midnight Saturday night, Williams said that he did not feel that he had anything to contribute to the project and said he was no longer interested in doing the interview.

Saturday, November 13, 1999, Saturday Night Block Party

The filmmaker decided that the best event to shoot during this *Bear* Run would be the Block Party held outside of the St. Louis Eagle on Saturday night. The weather for this event was pleasant and unseasonably warm. The large crowd overflowed out of the bar into the empty lot behind it. The bar had strung a series of lights overhead, but the general lighting scheme for the evening would be a challenge since it was very dark in some areas and brighter in others. By maneuvering his shooting around the area, the filmmaker was able to shoot a number of very artistic shots. The filmmaker shot approximately a hour and a half of footage in three hours.

Independent Shooting Date, New Orleans, LA

Sunday, February 6, 2000, Scott Klafke Interview

The filmmaker conducted his fourth interviews on Sunday afternoon, February 6, 2000. The filmmaker had met Scott Klafke one evening around Christmas, when he had come to New Orleans from his home in Baton Rouge to celebrate a friend's birthday. The filmmaker and Klafke became friendly and later began a conversation online, which would lead to this interview. The filmmaker scheduled this subject's interview to coincide with a visit to New Orleans for another party. Again the interview was conducted at the filmmaker's apartment, and it was around forty-five minutes long.

The first step was to secure equipment to be checked out from UNO Video. The filmmaker made the necessary arrangements to insure that he had equipment available.

The filmmaker thought that Klafke would be an interesting subject to interview for several reasons. To begin with, Klafke identified himself as a "Leather *Bear*" which the filmmaker felt would be an interesting dynamic to add to the discussion. Additionally, Klafke had been married to a woman for several years and came out to his wife around the same time that he separated. Also, Klafke was a younger *Bear* and the filmmaker was eager to include that perspective in the discussion.

The first problem occurred as soon as the interview started. Klafke, rather than being honest and realistic, began to play a character of himself for the camera. He began delivering his answers with an attitude that read as fake. When answering a question, his response was either an affirmative or negative without reason or when he was asked to respond, it was full of double entendres.

The second problem involved the image that was recorded on the videotape. The filmmaker decided after the first interviews that he would not be able to use a crew during this process to insure the comfort of his subjects. By making this decision, he was aware that he would have to make a few concessions. One concession he would have to make during the interview process was that he had to depend on the camera's automatic functions, including the automatic focus and exposure settings. While doing this interview, the filmmaker proceeded as he had in the three previous interviews and the image in the camera's pop-out screen appeared fine. Klafke wanted to do the interview in full leather attire, which was fine, except that he wore a leather baseball hat. The camera's automatic focus settled on the edge of the brim of the hat, putting that feature in focus, thus making Klafke's entire face slightly out of focus.

Due to the fact that this interview yielded very little to the discussion at hand and the image was slightly out of focus, the filmmaker decided he could not use this interview either. He spoke to Klafke about reshooting the interview, but due to other scheduling problems, they were not able to do so. Meanwhile, realizing that this may prove to be a problem again in the future, the filmmaker decided to purchase a small portable television to allow a better view of the image being recorded.

International Bear Rendezvous, San Francisco, CA

Friday, February 18, 2000, Hotel Lobby, Meet the Contestants and After Hours Party

The filmmaker planned his next shooting dates to be the events and activities occurring at "International Bear Rendezvous," the annual *Bear* run, sponsored by the Bears of San Francisco in San Francisco, California. The majority of activities at this event occurred either at the event's host hotel, the Ramada Plaza, at one of several host bars, or at the Civic Center. The filmmaker wanted to attend this *Bear* run because it was one of the largest and longest running *Bear* events. Also, he had made arrangements online to conduct an interview with Les Wright who was the editor of [The Bear Book](#).

The filmmaker had made the necessary arrangements to borrow equipment well in advance of this event. The filmmaker had to put in a formal request for the equipment, due to the fact that he was traveling across the country. He also arranged to have back up halogen light bulbs for this event. When picking up the equipment, he found that it had been double booked, and ended up receiving only half of the lighting equipment that he had requested.

Anticipating a very productive shooting opportunity, the filmmaker decided to do as much research as possible to maximize his schedule. He knew that he needed to capture the front of Twin Peaks bar, due to the description he had received of this bar from Bill Adams. He also wanted to get shots of other landmarks on Castro Street, because this area of San Francisco would continue to come up in interviews

Another problem that the filmmaker was having concerned recording moving images of real bears. This problem arose due to the fact that zoological gardens all over the United States, including the ones around the New Orleans area, have been reducing their numbers of larger bear species for many reasons. One reason was that these bear species were harder to handle and represented a greater liability risk. In addition, zoos were also running into problems with their breeding programs of these bears due to the very close genetic pool that almost all of these institutions were breeding from. Also, as larger species were not in trouble in the wild as they had been a few years back, there had been focusing on more endangered species, like the Spectacle, Sloth and Sun Bears. While researching the San Francisco Zoo, the filmmaker found out that this institution housed both Polar and Kodiak species, and he made arrangements in his schedule to visit the Zoo to get the required images.

The filmmaker arrived in San Francisco on Thursday, February 17, 2000 around midday. After checking into his hotel and settling in, the filmmaker decided to make a visit to the Castro area of San Francisco. As with the previous run in Orlando, the filmmaker decided not to film images the first day, but used the time to find the landmarks and areas that he needed to photograph. Later that evening, the filmmaker decided to attend the festivities at the Lone Star Saloon. After surveying the locations at this event, the filmmaker returned to his room and prepared for the weekend's shooting schedule.

The next morning, the filmmaker decided to get footage of the crowd as they were registering for the event. The number of people in the lobby of the hotel had increased dramatically and the filmmaker decided to seek out those images that he felt were pertinent to the production.

The filmmaker had noticed while observing the footage from previous shooting dates that he had problems with shaking or moving the camera too abruptly. During this shoot, the filmmaker decided to concentrate on this problem and the results were obvious. Besides just slowing down, the filmmaker began flipping the pop-up screen toward the subjects so that they

were able to see the image being recorded. Doing this forced the filmmaker to slow down his production process and spend more time to get the images that he wanted; the results were evident.

Another problem that the filmmaker observed while reviewing footage already taken was that most of the men filmed were of one type, namely Caucasian men of European origin. To begin with, the filmmaker made a conscious effort to record images other than those of people that he personally found either attractive or aesthetically pleasing. He knew that he was going to need images of people who did not fit the media's and contest's version of what a *Bear* was. In particular, he wanted images of older men, *Bears* of other nationalities rather than European, *Bears* who were of other physical shapes and other ranges of beauty than those constituting the norm in the media.

Prompted by a thread from previous interviews, the filmmaker decided to cover the "Meet the Contestant" event at the San Francisco Eagle bar. Like most of the events over the weekend, this event had an informal tone and drew a large crowd. So large that the filmmaker was unable to cover the part of the program where the contestants were introduced to the crowd, before they went out to sell raffle tickets. Once the crowd dispersed, the filmmaker was able to move closer to the stage area. He found the lighting in this area to be a little less challenging than the rest of the patio area of the bar, but just dim and sporadic enough to yield some artistic images. In fact, this thirty minutes of the shoot would yield higher quality images than any part of the production so far.

Leaving that event, the filmmaker decided to film a smaller group of *Bears* at the After Hours Parties held in the club's hospitality suite in the hotel. The atmosphere was more about camaraderie and friendship than any other scheduled activity during this event. The filmmaker took advantage of this intimate setting to record some of the production's tightest shots.

Saturday, February 19, 2000, Teddy Bear Factory, Hotel Lobby

The filmmaker had decided when registering for IBR to attend the optional tour of the Teddy Bear Factory. This activity revolved around touring a factory that allowed participants to select and stuff their own teddy bear. The filmmaker was not sure if the footage from this tour would be beneficial to his production, but since he was taking the tour anyway, he decided to document the event at least for his own personal enjoyment. Prior to the tour, the filmmaker was able to film the group of *Bears* who were waiting to start the event.

Returning to the hotel from the tour, the filmmaker was aware that people were beginning to meet in the lobby to go out for the evening's activities. He took advantage of this and began shooting images of the people who were waiting for friends. After about an hour of shooting, the crowd began to disperse and the filmmaker decided to go to dinner and rest before the evening's activities.

Saturday, February 19, 2000, "Celebrate San Francisco" Dance and After Hours Party

The filmmaker decided to shoot the dance that was the final part of the "Celebrate San Francisco" activities. The combination of disco style lighting such as colored lights, mirror balls and strobe lights, gave the resulting footage an interesting look. The filmmaker decided since he was having focusing problems due to the low light situation, to keep the shots longer and to pay close attention to camera movement. He wanted the images to reflect the high-energy setting, while concentrating on the quality of the images being shot. He shot approximately forty-five minutes of footage in the two hours he was videotaping.

After the dance, the filmmaker decided to film the After Hours Parties, again held in the club's hospitality suite. Unlike the night before, the room had a larger crowd, probably because the night's activities were held in the hotel rather than in one of the host bars. The filmmaker was able to record a larger variety of subjects in the video filmed this evening.

Sunday, February 20, 2000, Castro Street Scenes

The filmmaker, his partner and a friend decided to go to breakfast in the Castro. Though on a tight schedule due to the scheduled interview with Les Wright after lunch, the filmmaker decided to shoot some of the scenes and images from the Castro that he felt were important to this production. He filmed the front of the Twin Peaks bar but unfortunately, the shot was not artistic in nature and the streetcars that pulled up to the stop in front of the bar looked very nasty. The filmmaker also shot other landmarks that were specific to this region of the city as well as footage of people on the streets, many of which were attending the run.

Sunday, February 20, 2000, Les Wright Interview

The filmmaker had to cut short his video shoots in the Castro to get back to the hotel to set up and conduct the interview with Les Wright. A couple days earlier, the filmmaker contacted Wright to set up a day and time for his interview. They agreed upon sometime Sunday afternoon as being the most convenient for each of them, with the filmmaker needing to phone

Wright that morning to set up a specific time. That morning they agreed on 1:00 to 1:30 P.M. as best.

The filmmaker ran into a minor problem concerning his lighting equipment that he borrowed from UNO. Though the filmmaker tried to minimize movement of the fixtures in traveling to San Francisco, by bringing them on board as carry on, the halogen lamp bulbs in both lights did not work. Luckily he had brought spare bulbs and was able to get the lights back working.

The other problem would be noticed later in the recorded image. The filmmaker had relayed to Wright the basic rules about what to wear for the interview. Wright came to the interview wearing a neutral, gray shirt. The filmmaker's shirt and the wall, which was salmon, looked to be very different colors, but they recorded as being within the same hue range. When the filmmaker reviewed the footage upon returning home, Wright's shirt appeared to blend into the wall behind him.

Wright's interview was important and extremely necessary to the discussion that the filmmaker hoped to create in this production. He had lived through the beginning of the evolution of the *Bear* community during the mid-1980's and had faced all of the pitfalls that the community faced head on. He had been actively involved in preserving the artifacts that the community had produced to mark its emergence. Wright, a college professor and academic, also was important in placing a critical voice to the discussion the filmmaker was trying to achieve.

Spanning over two hours in length, Wright's interview was the longest interview the filmmaker would film in this production. Sitting for more than two hours during the process of this interview proved difficult for Wright. This became obvious by the fact that he began to squirm during the end of the interview, but his commentary did not show noticeable differences from beginning to end. Near the end of the interview, the filmmaker rushed the questions a bit because Wright was late returning to his hotel room to meet his partner.

Sunday, February 20, 2000, IBR Bear Contest

The filmmaker decided to videotape the entire competition for Mr. International Bear, which was presented to the group at the Civic Center. The evening began with a catered buffet and after everyone had eaten, the competition started. *Bears* were seated according to a reservation system set up earlier in the run; the filmmaker was not aware how this system worked. Unfortunately, the filmmaker and his partner were seated in the second balcony levels,

overlooking the arena. During the evening, the filmmaker saw a friend who was seated at a table in the second row from the stage. The friend said there were two empty seats at his table and offered the filmmaker a prime position for videotaping the event.

The filmmaker decided to videotape the event in its entirety and was happy that he did. Several of the comments by the contestants could possibly be resourceful in the final edit of this production. While filming the contest at “Bear Bust,” the filmmaker had problems holding the camera steady during the extended period of time that the contest ran. Using a tip given to him by his partner’s father who was a professional event videographer, the filmmaker invested in a monopod, a device that resembled a tripod, except it had one adjustable leg and a camera mount. This device proved to be a good investment for the shoot because it allowed the filmmaker to keep the camera steadier during the entire competition. This was quite fortunate, since the duration of the event was over three hours.

After the competition, the filmmaker decided to film the last After Hours Parties, again held in the club’s hospitality suite. Like the night before, the room had a pretty large crowd, and the atmosphere appeared very festive. Again, the filmmaker was able to video a large variety of subjects, and the crowd was very eager at points to be videoed .

Monday, February 21, 2000, Charity Auction

The filmmaker decided to videotape the final event of the *Bear* run which was a continental breakfast and charity auction to raise funds for the BOSF’s designated charities. Positioning himself along the sidelines, the filmmaker taped shots of a variety of people enjoying the entertainment during the auction.

During the course of the auction, the filmmaker ran into David Ducote who he had met during “Bear Bust” in Orlando and who had promised him an interview. Ducote promised to call the filmmaker after the auction to arrange an interview that afternoon. Needless to say, Ducote became involved with someone and never made the call.

Monday, February 21, 2000, San Francisco Zoo and Castro Street Shoot

After the auction, the filmmaker decided to take the Muni (subway) down to the end of the line, to the San Francisco Zoo. As previously mentioned, he went to the website and found out that the zoo supposedly had Polar Bears and Kodiak Bears.

Upon arriving at the zoo and walking to the Bear Enclosures, it became apparent that they did not have the Kodiak Bear as their website suggested. Questioning the zoo-keeper who was

working in the Bear Enclosure where the Kodiak should have been, the filmmaker found out that their Kodiak Bear passed away due to old age about a month before. The zoo did have three Polar Bears in two separate enclosures and two Spectacled Bears in another enclosure. The Polar Bears were pretty active and their movement looked nice on tape. The Spectacle Bears were rather lethargic and looked bland. The filmmaker photographed around twenty minutes of footage of the three Polar bears, from a variety of angles.

The filmmaker decided on the way back from the zoo to stop in the Castro again to obtain landmark footage, street scenes and better footage from the front of the Twin Peaks bar.

Tuesday, February 22, 2000, Bill Hargreaves Interview

The filmmaker conducted the sixth interview with Bill Hargreaves a few hours before he had to vacate his hotel room and return to New Orleans. The filmmaker actually met Hargreaves the first night at the Lone Star Saloon. Hargreaves and the filmmaker became instant friends and they shared each other's company for much of the *Bear Run*. The interview with Hargreaves had been scheduled and rescheduled several times during the weekend. The major problem had been that with all of the events that were scheduled, they were finding difficulty in setting time aside when there was not something else to participate in. Finally, Monday night, Hargreaves and the filmmaker agreed to do the interview around ten o'clock that morning, right before checking out time.

Hargreaves' interview gave the discussion a completely different spin, especially on the subject of inclusion in the *Bear* community. Prior to International Bear Rendezvous, Hargreaves did not view himself as being a member of the community due to his own physical appearance. He was not a big man and he did not have a belly. He was not particularly hairy, though he did wear a beard. Those differences along with the fact that in the Netherlands where he was living, he felt the line of demarcation was drawn exclusively along physical attributes. After coming to the states and to IBR, he came to a realization that the *Bear* community was going to accept him readily, despite his differences.

Hargreaves was also able to give the discussion the international flavor that it lacked thus far. He was from Australia and was living at the time of the interview in Holland. In many ways, what he brought to the discussion was not the differences, but rather how universal the *Bear* concept was.

One subject that Hargreaves brought up that was surprisingly absent from the discussion thus far was how aging affected the members of the *Bear* community. Research into gay and lesbian aging suggest that these individuals are psychologically better prepared to handle the lifestyle changes that occur in old age than their heterosexual counterparts. Despite these findings, aging is one of the many taboos in the mainstream gay culture, where an aging individual is no longer desirable sexually. This attitude correlates much in the same way that aging is observed in heterosexual feminine culture. Despite this, when one observes the way older or Polar *Bears* are considered in the *Bear* community, they are actually considered by many Bears to be sexually desirable.

This interview spanned approximately an hour and fifteen minutes. After finishing the interview the filmmaker had to put away his equipment and finish packing in order to check out of the hotel.

Mardi Gras, New Orleans, LA

Saturday, March 4, 2000, Street Scenes

The filmmaker planned his next shooting dates to be the events and activities occurring at Mardi Gras, in New Orleans, Louisiana. Though not officially a *Bear* event, there were a large number of men who the filmmaker knew to be *Bears* that attended the event. Outside of the single *Bear* Club sponsored event at the 2601 bar in the Marigny, the filmmaker decided to concentrate his shooting outside of Café Lafitte in Exile bar in the French Quarter, where the filmmaker had observed in years past the majority of the *Bears* gathered.

The filmmaker filmed footage earlier in the afternoon for an opening credit piece for the Advanced Television Class's cable access show. While waiting for his partner to get off of work, he went down to outside Café Lafitte's in Exile bar and filmed the tourist and locals who had gathered outside the bar. The crowd was quite thick, but the filmmaker was able to get a pretty nice vantage point away from the thick of the crowd in the back of a friend's truck. He filmed approximately thirty minutes of footage in the hour and a half that he was outside the bar.

Sunday, March 5, 2000, Acrophile Party

Scott Klafke had asked the filmmaker to attend a party that was held by the New Orleans Bears and Bear Trappers Social Club every year on the Sunday before Mardi Gras, at the 2601 Bar. The party was held inside the bar and had a mix of local *Bear* Club members and visitors.

The filmmaker was able to film approximately thirty minutes of footage during the two hours that they attended the party.

Monday, March 6, 2000 Street Scenes

The filmmaker decided to film footage again outside of Café Lafitte's in Exile bar. The area in the street and around the exterior was packed with people of all types, partying and enjoying the season. Though the crowd was quite thick and the lighting would prove to be a challenge, he was able to get excellent footage. The filmmaker filmed around an hour's worth of footage in the two or three hours that he was there.

Tuesday, March 7, 2000, Street Scenes

The filmmaker started out the day by attending a party at a friend's apartment, right on Bourbon Street. Much to his surprise, he found out that a gay cruise had landed the night before and many of the *Bears* who were on the cruise had ended up at this party, being friends with the hosts. The filmmaker filmed the crowd attending the party as well as other *Bears* that were traveling on the street.

After about an hour of taping, the filmmaker decided to go over to Café Lafitte's in Exile to film for most of the rest of the day. The filmmaker would eventually record approximately two hours of footage in the six hours that he was outside of the bar. At approximately five o'clock, the filmmaker decided to take his filming up to the balcony to get a better vantage point. The filmmaker stopped filming at one point to meet his partner who worked Mardi Gras day, but they returned to the bar and he filmed right into the night, until midnight when the police cleared the streets.

Texas Bear Round-Up, Dallas TX

Saturday, April 1, 2000, Mr. American Bear Contest

The filmmaker planned his next shooting dates to be the events and activities occurring at "Texas Bear Round Up," the annual *Bear* run, sponsored by the Dallas Bears of Dallas, Texas. The majority of activities at this event occurred either at the event's host hotel, the Sheraton Dallas Brookhollow or at one of several host bars. The filmmaker decided to attend this *Bear* run because it was one of the larger *Bear* events and because of its geographic location, it would yield images of a number of *Bears* who did not attend the other three events. Also, his partner had made arrangements online to conduct an interview with Bill Leinenger who was a photographer with a possibility of one or more other interviews.

Prior to attending this event, the filmmaker would again encounter problems with borrowing equipment from the school. Though he had placed his request for equipment in a timely manner for this event, all of the available lighting equipment had been already reserved or was earmarked for specific classes. Reflecting on the hassles that he had encountered over the course of the production, the filmmaker had earlier in the production actually looked into purchasing a Lowell lighting kit, but decided not to make the purchase due to the price. The filmmaker, in a last ditch effort, went to the Home Depot and purchased utility halogen lighting to use for the interview that he had scheduled.

In the previous events, the filmmaker would simply shoot any *Bear* that he could. He decided to take a different approach with this shoot. The filmmaker decided rather than take shots indiscriminately, that he was going to shoot only the scenes that he found necessary. With the interviews nearing the completion date he had set when he initiated the project, the filmmaker was able to see the common thread and decided to collect his images accordingly. Also, during the three previous events, he spent the entire event with the camera in his hand and he wanted to participate more in this event rather than just document it from the sidelines.

One type of footage that he wanted to continue to concentrate on was the footage from the Mr. American Bear Contest. This contest was probably more important than any of the other contest covered so far because this contest was sponsored by American Bear magazine and its editor, Terry Martin was one of the judges. Unlike the two previous contests, this contest was a meat show, where contestants were paraded across the stage in various degrees of dress (and undress) before the panel of judges. Again, as with the previous contest, he decided to shoot the contest from beginning to end. This contest was far shorter than the others also, with the intermissions removed, it was less than an hours worth of footage.

Saturday, April 1, 2000, Bill Leininger Interview

The filmmaker conducted his final interviews on Saturday evening, immediately following the contest. The documentarion's partner had met Bill Leininger while chatting on-line one evening. Leininger had initiated a series of playing cards that featured pictures of different *Bears* on each card. He had been working at various events to record the images of various *Bears* for his cards, using his profile on America On Line as the means of recruiting new models.

The filmmaker had contacted Leininger on Thursday afternoon, when he arrived in Dallas. They agreed to attempt the interview on Saturday evening, immediately following the contest. When Leininger showed up for his interview, it was apparent that he was exhausted, having worked almost non-stop the entire time that he was in Dallas accumulating pictures of new models. Though the tone of the interview was friendly, near the end of the interview, Leininger became increasingly frustrated with some of the questions being asked.

The filmmaker felt that Leininger's interview was important to the discussion that had been initiated in previous interviews. He knew from conversations online that Leininger had previously been married and had actually come out later in life. What he contributed to the interview was an image of longtime shame and denial that culminated with Leininger deciding a therapeutic solution to treat his feeling of suicide.

The filmmaker wanted to also continue the thread of discussion concerning the way that the images being created by the *Bear* mass media and the contest were affecting the way average *Bears* were seeing themselves. He hoped to challenge or to dispel the notion that these two factors were segregating the community, considering that the subculture had actually been formed to confront the exclusive nature of the mainstream gay community. Taking this line of questioning very personal to his own work, Leininger was very vocal about his dissatisfaction with the way the *Bear* mass media was steering the image, particularly about who the media was leaving out of their magazines and videos.

This interview was conducted at the filmmaker's hotel room and would span around fifty-five minutes.

Sunday, April 2, 2000 Barbecue, Street Scenes

The filmmaker decided to videotape one of the final events, the Barbecue and Country Line Dancing Party held Sunday afternoon at the Round Up Bar. There was a buffet spread of barbecue sponsored by the bar. When not eating, the men were invited to dance on the bar's dance floor to country music. The filmmaker chose this event to document specifically for the dancing. There was a major thread in the discussion that dealt with the societal perception of men who are attracted to other men, and the disparaging way in which they are treated. The filmmaker felt that two men dancing in a formal setting such as a two-step or a waltz where one leads, would be a tasteful way to illustrate the point without being overbearing. The filmmaker

positioned himself along the side of the dance floor allowing him a perfect angle for the dance action. He also obtained shots of a variety of people enjoying the dancing from the sidelines.

Immediately following the barbecue, the filmmaker met some friends on the street and included shots of them.

This portion of the documentary's production was concluded on April 2, 2000. Though the filmmaker would continue to videotape assorted shots as necessary to further color the commentary and quotes used in the production, this was the final event that the filmmaker would include in his thesis production. The filmmaker collected seven interviews, deeming five as usable. Total usable interview footage was roughly around seven to eight hours. Total B-roll footage was in excess of twenty hours.

CHAPTER THREE: POSTPRODUCTION

Prior to beginning production, the filmmaker decided to complete shooting all initial phases of production by May 1, 2000. Even though he had been disappointed by the problems he incurred getting respondents to be interviewed, he decided that those Bears that he had already interviewed presented enough information to put together an effective discussion of the Bear community. He discontinued shooting B-roll footage and interviews on that date, but left open the possibility that there may be additional pick-up shots that he had not envisioned during. The filmmaker decided to begin the postproduction process of his project around the final date he set for production.

Before starting postproduction, the filmmaker had two separate events occur that would force him to begin thinking from a postproduction point of view prior to his predetermined final production date. On April 22, 2000, the filmmaker presented a portion of his thesis at an academic conference on queer masculinities at Mount Ida College, outside of Boston, MA. When he contacted Les Wright about doing an interview, Wright asked if he would be interested in participating at of the conference he was the organizing. The filmmaker felt obligated to attend after Wright had granted him an interview for the documentary. The filmmaker relayed to Wright that he was not going to be presenting a finished project. They both agreed that the filmmaker was going to present some of the highlights of the project thus far. The filmmaker also attempted to put together a simple montage segment to give the conference attendants an idea of the project and what direction he felt the project was going.

Immediately upon returning from Mount Ida, the filmmaker was faced with the prospect of entering something from his thesis project into the Annual Media Showcase, produced by the Department of Drama and Communications. Initially, the filmmaker had decided not to enter a piece in the Showcase because he had did not have enough time to finish a project that he felt confident about. The filmmaker decided after the deadline was extended due to technical problems to use the highlights and the smaller segment he had edited for Mount Ida to put

together a trailer for his thesis documentary. He centered the piece around strong quotes of personal experience from the interviews and representative shots from the B-roll footage. Using a piece of music entitled “Pride” by Ernest David Lijoi, the filmmaker fashioned an acceptable entry for the Showcase.

The filmmaker would use this trailer again when he was part of a panel discussion entitled “Beartalk” at the 8th American University Conference on Lavender Languages and Linguistics held September 22-24, 2000 at American University, Washington DC.

Music

Probably the first challenges that the filmmaker needed to face was concerning what musical pieces that he would be using in the project. The filmmaker found the solution to this challenge in a rather odd way. During the production phase of the film, the filmmaker had asked the webmaster of the BearPress website to post information about his documentary in the hope of getting people to interview. He had initially gone to the site to check on the posting when he came across a review of an album by Earnest David Lijoi. Lijoi, a self-identified Bear from Boston, had been independently producing music of a high caliber for a number of years. The filmmaker decided to do some research on Lijoi and found both a website for him and a number of his songs for previewing at MP3.com. He contacted Lijoi and asked if he could use this music in his thesis documentary. Lijoi responded that he was honored that the filmmaker felt that his music could be used in such a way and sent a copy of the recent album for his review.

Prior to contacting Lijoi about possibly using pieces of his music, the filmmaker had not even thought about using the Bear community as a musical resource. He decided to continue his search for artists and found a few artist on the MP3.com website that were self-identified as gay. However, he was unsure about whether they were Bears or interested in having their music associated with a documentary about the Bear community. Some initial responses by these artists proved unsuccessful. Eventually, the filmmaker would inquire on using music by Mark Weigle from the MP3.com site. Weigle is a prominent gay musician who had received numerous awards and recognition for his three albums. The filmmaker was cautious about contacting Weigle, especially since he was not sure of Weigle’s affiliation with the Bear community and because the filmmaker had been unsuccessful in his previous attempts with musicians outside of the subculture. The filmmaker wanted to use one song in particular. He decided to contact Weigle after seeing on his web site a song entitled, “Bears” and noticed that

he had been involved with the International Bear Rendezvous in 2003. He was also encouraged to contact Weigle by another musician, Ed Borland, who was a mutual friend of the filmmaker and Weigle. Weigle responded quickly to the filmmaker's inquiry, was thrilled that the filmmaker was using music by other gay musicians, and was happy that he was included.

After attempts to find Bear musicians on the MP3.com website failed, the filmmaker decided to do a broader search for gay musicians on the World Wide Web and came upon the Outvoice.com website. He contacted the webmaster of the site and asked for assistance in finding artists who were interested in helping him out with his thesis. The webmaster suggested that the filmmaker subscribe to the Outvoice listserv, in which he did. After an initial post asking for help, Martin Swinger and Ray Baker contacted the filmmaker about music that each had created that they felt might be of use to the filmmaker. Martin Swinger sent a copy of his recent album while Ray Baker promised to send a copy of a remix of a recent song he had produced as soon as it is finished.

The filmmaker continued to monitor the listserv looking for possible resources for music. One feature of the listserv is the playlist submitted by various radio stations who have weekly Gay and Lesbian programming. They use the listserv to solicit new music and programming material. The filmmaker used these playlists to familiarize himself with new artists and then would execute a search for more information about a particular artist. On one occasion he came across a listing on the "Out, Loud, and Queer" playlist for a program that airs on Fridays, 10 pm, 90.5 fm, WJFF/Radio Catskill, Jeffersonville, NY by the host and producer Kathy Rieser for a song by Dennis Malone from New York, NY. He contacted Malone and received permission to use his music for the thesis documentary.

Artists also used the listserv to publicize events and bookings to the list's members. On one occasion, the artist saw a listing for Bearazoopola, a concert produced by Freddy Freeman that featured a number of Bear musicians, including Lijoi and Swinger. The filmmaker contacted Freeman after going to his website and hearing a number of the songs he had listed there, asking permission to use one particular song, "Echoes." Freeman again was honored to be able to help out, and offered to help the filmmaker in any way possible.

Fearing that there might be problems getting the right music for the piece, the filmmaker began researching the use of classical MIDI files, which could be easily converted into either a WAV or MP3 file for access with Adobe Premiere. While doing a search for files using the

keyword “Bear” in a MIDI search engine, the filmmaker was directed to the website of Martin Stahl who was a composer of instrumental and choral pieces in Sweden. The filmmaker sent several e-mails to Stahl who did not answer. While doing research on Bear clubs, he came across the webpage of the Viking Bears in Stockholm, Sweden and noticed that Stahl was listed among the club’s members. He contacted the club’s president, who in turn, forwarded the e-mail to Stahl. Apparently, some time back he had changed e-mail addresses but failed to make the necessary changes on his web page. Stahl was happy that his compositions would be included and offered to convert the MIDI files to WAV or MP3 files to make the music more easily accessible for the editing process.

The final method that the filmmaker used the Internet for to contact musicians was the Bears 4 Bears chat room on AOL.com. The filmmaker was online speaking to a friend one evening when he noticed a post in the chat room where one Bear was asking another respondent whether he would be interested in representing a lesbian friend’s band. The filmmaker took the cue and send an Instant Message to the Bear who was looking for bands to record and met Ed Boland. Boland had started a gay recording distribution company and was looking at the time for artists to sign with his emerging label. Having studied film and video production in undergraduate school, Boland was willing to help the filmmaker out with his project. He sent two CD’s of music, one of his own compositions and the other was a sampler of pieces by artists that he was presently representing. Though the music was of a completely different genre than any music the filmmaker was using thus far, he could see the possibility of some of it working to give the production more texture.

The filmmaker also gained access to music by meeting musicians and asking for the use of their material. The filmmaker took a long shot that eventually failed to get the required music, meeting Felipe Rose of the Village People after a concert, and asking if he could use “Macho Man” in his thesis production. Rose asked the filmmaker to e-mail him with the details, which he did. Unfortunately, the musician did not answer his e-mail and attempts to obtain the use of the piece via instant messenger always garnered the same “I don’t know what you are talking about” response from Rose. After multiple e-mails and attempts, the filmmaker decided he was not going to get the use of the music.

Shortly after production was finished, the filmmaker found himself burning out both from his responsibilities as a graduate assistant and from the attempts to get his thesis finished. He

attempted to take a break, dropping out of school for a while and working at a gay bar in the French Quarter. While working at the bar, the filmmaker met Glenn Clark, a visiting musician from Denver, CO. Clark who was a classically trained, modern composer, had recorded a couple albums of music. He was in New Orleans, attempting to gather sounds for a new album, while taking a break from his full-time work in Denver. He brought one album to the filmmaker to review for his production. Most of the pieces were modal rather than melodic and the filmmaker was sure that this would give him various opportunities in terms of editing.

Editing

Probably the largest problem the filmmaker encountered from the beginning was with the insurmountable amount of footage recorded during the production phase of the project, he was unsure about where to begin. He decided that the first phase of postproduction should be to log and digitize the video footage.

He decided to begin this process by organizing the nineteen hours of recorded B-roll footage. It became apparent that even though he had increased his hard drive storage by initially almost eighty gigabytes, there would not be enough storage space to record all of the footage to the drive. He attempted to resolve this problem to some degree by using the computer's compact disk recorder to burn footage to CD-R or CD-RW, but even though this did help as a storage solution, it was a tedious and slow solution. The filmmaker decided to suspend this phase of the postproduction process after he digitized and logged approximately ten hours of footage because his computer began to act up.

As previously mentioned, around this period of time the filmmaker began to burn out and he made a decision to suspend the postproduction process of this production. During this period, he did on occasion continue to work on the piece, but eventually he would attempt to upgrade his computer's operating system from Windows 98, second edition to Windows XP. He found out after multiple attempts, that both a possible virus infestation and his computer's hardware were incompatible with the XP operating system. The filmmaker was then faced with a new dilemma where there was possible disk damage due to his numerous attempts to upgrade the system. Despite his best efforts, he was temporarily unable to get his desktop computer back online. This situation would result in several months worth of work being delayed until he was able to resolve the issue.

In November 2002, the filmmaker found himself being released from the job situation that he had left school to explore. He made the decision shortly after losing his job to put the production back on line and finished the thesis project. There would be several problems that the filmmaker would have to deal with during this transition period. The first problem was that his desktop computer was still not operating. There was concern that he could possibly not be able to get the system back in working order. Prior to leaving school, the filmmaker decided to purchase a lap top computer to use at school for the administrative duties of the classes that he was teaching and to work on his thesis while he was attending to his duties as a graduate assistant. The filmmaker decided that since the laptop had both a firewire port and also was outfitted with, Adobe Premiere and After Effects as well as the necessary digital video capture software, he would temporarily use this computer to begin postproduction of his project. He was aware that this was only a temporary solution because the hard drive on the laptop was very small, only approximately five gigabytes. When he initially purchased the computer, also purchased a seventy five gigabyte portable firewire hard drive at the same time, but this drive processed data at a slower rate than an internal drive. He also found that when After Effects or Premiere were used to access data from the portable drive, that it took the programs significantly longer to render video. This portable drive was not sufficient for handling the large amounts of data that he would need for this production.

Fortunately, the filmmaker was able to get his desktop computer operating. Yet, even the possibility that he might have to use the laptop computer for his postproduction, actually helped him to put the postproduction aspect into perspective. It adjusted his thought processing to a smaller, more organized scale. This was beneficial to devising a more concise plan of action, which would eventually prove essential to completing this production.

The first thing that the filmmaker did to put his project back online was to transcribe the interviews. Using a pair of headphones attached to the camera, the filmmaker began this tedious task. After several failed attempts to transcribe the footage directly into the computer and growing frustration from his inferior typing skills, the filmmaker decided to write out the interviews by hand, and then type the transcription into the word processor of the computer. It took a significantly longer period to finish the transcriptions than expected. It took approximately a month after starting.

After finishing the transcription, the filmmaker was able to start selecting the quotes and dialogue that he felt were important to the final piece. Using the highlighter feature on his word processor, the filmmaker surveyed the transcriptions and selected any quotes that he felt were essential.

The next step was to place those selected quotes into an organized fashion so that he could fashion a working first draft script. He attempted several different methods, both digital and manual, to organize the quotes, but eventually resorted to manually writing the individual quotes or summaries for the longer quotes along with the time code and the respondent that it was attributed to on 3”by 5” index cards. Then, by simply using his kitchen table to spread out his work, he was able to organize the quotes in an order that he was pleased with. Then, by using the copy and paste features of his word processor, he was able to begin fashioning a script with Final Draft screenwriting software.

After the quotes were organized and the filmmaker was satisfied with their placement, he began to work on the actual structure that the final piece would take. First, he had to determine which quotes he felt were better presented with the respondent on screen and which would be used to accompany the B-roll footage that he was going to include in the piece. To facilitate an easier transition from the planned script to the finished piece, the filmmaker at this point divided the script into eighteen separate sections. Each section representing a different discussion or issue that he wanted to include in the final piece and he created the storage folders on his computer’s hard drive to reflect these divisions. By doing this division of the script, the filmmaker was able to shift his focus from the larger looming final production to the smaller elements that would constitute that final piece. Eventually, he would begin to narrow down this division by actually combining and condensing footage, but at this point the idea was to cut longer than necessary and whittle the production down later.

The next step was to add the narration to the script. During preproduction, the filmmaker had wanted to have one coherent “key voice” that would guide the discussion from subject to subject. He became aware early in the production that his goal was not being achieved because of both the fact that he did not have enough respondents to justify this method and the discussion was too broad to facilitate this method. He accepted the fact that, it was necessary to use narration to move the discussion along. While writing the narration, he made a conscious effort to keep it to a minimum.

Originally he had planned to use both on-screen and off-screen narration, and began the process of selecting a person whose voice would be featured. He also began making definite decisions about how that narration the onscreen portions of the narration would be executed, production-wise. The filmmaker originally did not want a straight narration for this production and had considered several options, an animated narrator or using a narrator with a blue screen color keyed out in the final production. He decided both due to a lack of needed time to master the programs needed to complete this task and his limited facilities due to his computer still being inoperable to simplify the process as much as possible.

He began searching for a person whose voice he felt would compliment the piece. He did find several people who were interested but due to a combination of conflicts with schedules and transportation, he was unable to secure the necessary talent. As his search for an acceptable narrator was showing little success, the filmmaker started considering other options. He felt that at this point, lending his own physical voice to the production was going to be the only way he was going to be able to get the piece completed. The benefit was that he could easily be available to do retakes and adjustments to the narration where as if he had used outside talent, they probably would not.

After completing the first draft of the script, the filmmaker decided to streamline that draft, getting it closer to the finished production. At this point, the filmmaker began digitizing the footage from the interviews. He had stored several interviews stored on CD's around the same time that he was digitizing and storing B-roll footage, which made this process initially easier to execute. At this point, the filmmaker would face his first major hurdle. There was no way conceivable that the vast amount of footage was going to be able to be worked with the laptop computer. Also, there was a problem with the laptop digitizing footage. The filmmaker had downloaded a "Kleez worm" onto the laptop months before and successfully cleaned it off of his computer's hard drive. For some reason, probably attributable to the virus, the digitizing software was malfunctioning and the filmmaker knew that his easiest solution was to act fast to get his desktop back in working order. While accidentally trying to use the system recovery disk from his desktop on his laptop, he noticed that he had been loading the wrong disk on his desktop, which was causing the malfunctions. He corrected the problems and ran the necessary diagnostics. In a matter of a few days, he had the desktop back running.

With the desktop back in operating order, he needed now to begin digitizing the interview footage that he did not have recorded on CD's. As each piece of video was digitized, it was placed directly into the proper storage folders that he had created on the computer's hard drive. Around this time, the filmmaker faced his next hurdle. With only a couple tapes left to digitize, the filmmaker's camera began to malfunction. He had to either get the camera fixed or he had to purchase another camera, or postpone the production. He began researching camera and found a good low-end digital 8mm camera manufactured by Sony online for around three hundred-fifty dollars. Checking at several local retailers he found wide pricing differences for the same camera, and had initially decided to purchase the camera online. The filmmaker and his partner while shopping at Sears noticed the same camera on sale for about the same price as it could be purchased online, but since the only camera the store had left in stock was the floor model, they gave him an additional discount. The camera worked perfectly and the production was back on track.

After digitizing the footage, the next step was to take individual interview footage segments into Sound Forge and to normalize the dialogue, using the program's Noise Reduction tool to remove as much room noise as the program would allow. Most of the quotes cleaned up significantly well. A few quotes where either microphones slipped or the respondent lowered his volume, gave the filmmaker some problems. When normalized, these pieces had significantly louder room noise, but after repetitive attempts, most of these difficulties were remedied.

Next, the filmmaker took the interview footage and began the process of lining the footage in each of the separate folders into a trail string out. Performing this function actually assisted the filmmaker in a number of important ways. First, it allowed an opportunity to double-check the interview footage against the script, allowing him to be certain that all footage was digitized. It also allowed the filmmaker a chance to view the footage together as a unit. He could actually listen to the commentary that was going on, seeing if the discussion on the footage actually flowed as well as it had on paper. Also, from a production standpoint, was the dialogue sounding approximately the same from piece to piece. It also gave him a chance to hear if his narration was sufficient or if he was going to have to amend what he had written.

After viewing and listening to the quotes and making whatever adjustments that were necessary, the filmmaker then began the process of recording the narration. He originally wanted to record the narration directly into the computer but found that his attempts to do so

were clipping the meter. He decided to record to the camera and then digitize the narration just like he had video footage. He found that the camera he had purchased did not have a microphone jack, thus he was restricted to using the camera's microphone. Though it picked up more room noise than the filmmaker wanted, he was able to get a sufficient volume to eliminate the majority of the noise in Sound Forge.

Once all of the narration was processed through Sound Forge, the filmmaker then began incorporating the quotes with the narration. He began the process of cross-referencing the script, cutting out whatever parts of the discussion that were redundant with each other and with the narration. At this point, the filmmaker began identifying what pieces of music would go in what section of the piece, and began initially placing the music into each section to allow him to begin pacing the sections. He also used a black video space as a marker to begin the process of deciding where the B-roll footage was going to be incorporated into the piece.

Once the filmmaker was satisfied with the way the individual sections were cleaning up, the time had come to begin actually working the musical pieces into the segments. The filmmaker found that in most cases, the music selected was significantly shorter than the segment that he wanted to incorporate them into. In other pieces, the vocal performances were overshadowing or drowning out the commentary in the interviews. Not a single piece of music could be simply dropped into the piece and by tweaked a bit, fit in perfectly with the commentary. What the filmmaker found himself doing was actually remixing the music, using the multi-track functions of Premiere in a similar fashion as Sonic Foundry's ACID. He first scanned the music, identifying those segments that could be easily repeated. In most cases, the beginning of the song proved beneficial to the process, but in longer renditions, other portions of the song needed to be incorporated. Most of the music was recorded in either a simple 3:4 or 4:4 meter, with few tempo variations, which made this process easier. By using the same processes that club disc jockeys use to spin a dance track, the filmmaker was able to take a two minute piece and increase it to six minutes when necessary.

Once the music was incorporated into the segments, the filmmaker began the process of combining the segments together, whenever possible, especially those segments that shared or had cross-fading music or similar themes or progression of thematic material. He paid close attention to keeping each new segment under the nine-minute mark, which is the largest segment that Windows 98 could handle with a FAT32 file system. The filmmaker began at this point to

make major adjustments to the production. He began to observe how the quotes and narration flowed together and began to make adjustments accordingly. He also observed the flow of the combined segments, and made adjustments to rectify any problems. He realized that considering the vast scope of the piece, that this process would continue until the finalization of the production.

Once the filmmaker had a trial editing decision list in place, which incorporated the music placement, the quotes and narration, and the rough placements of supportive images, he began the process of selecting, digitizing and processing B-roll footage. He started by first organizing the folders that he created on his hard drive. In each of the segment folders, he created three additional folders. One folder was allocated for those files that contained sound. In this folder, he included any music files and sound effects as well as video footage that had sound that he wanted to use. One decision the filmmaker had to make concerned the use of contest footage. He had recorded three contests at three different events in their entirety, and all contained footage that complimented and supported the discussions being created. In the end, he decided to not use the clips and quotes from the footage realizing that he would probably have to obtain clearance to use these images outside of a pedagogical setting.

The filmmaker also created a folder in each of the segment folders for the storage of MOS video files. In many cases, the footage had been already digitized. The filmmaker found himself in those cases moving footage from the CD's back into folders set up for each individual segment. As he began to digitize and process footage into these file folders, the filmmaker became aware that each folder could easily have thirty to fifty individual files, and that he was going to have to devise a way to organize the large numbers of individual files. Prior to processing this footage, the filmmaker had placed a black video spacer on his time lines to mark where the various B-roll sequences were going to occur. Using the script and the timeline as a guide, he decided to simplify the process by creating an individual folder for each black marker, inside of each of the segment's MOS folders. He then placed in each folder the footage that he was planning to use in the area of the timeline that correlated to that black marker.

The final folder in each segment folder was for any still images that the filmmaker was planning to include. The filmmaker began the process of collecting stills footage from a variety of sources early in the production. The largest source of stills came from the video that he had recorded during production. Many times an interesting or important shot that was not acceptable

as video would provide numerous stills that could be used in the production. The filmmaker also had collected a large quantity of paper resources that he needed to scan, which included magazines, club material, advertisements, run packages, commercial brochures, etc. In a discussion about the Internet, the filmmaker was faced with the dilemma of how to illustrate this section. Rather than use a video of a computer screen, which would result in poor quality footage, the filmmaker decided to use a freeware screen capture utility, Screen Grabber. This program captured the information on the computer screen and saved it as a .jpeg file that was compatible with Adobe Premiere. Also, there were other materials that the filmmaker wanted to use, such as web banners, other advertisements, graphic files, etc. In those situations, the filmmaker was able to download the desired files as either .jpegs or .gif files.

The next step was to begin the process of incorporating the B-roll footage into each segment's timeline. In many cases, the filmmaker placed the footage on the timeline and by using straight cuts or dissolves, created a video segment. In other cases, the filmmaker knew that he was going to manipulate footage. For example, in a segment where he has two dancers moving too rapidly for the slow waltz that the filmmaker was using, required the dance footage to be slowed down. He was able to accomplish this within Premiere. He also wanted more advanced manipulations that he could not accomplish with Premiere such as moving wipes, multiple layers with color keying, motion graphics, three-dimensional graphics and controlled image transparency, among other effects. The filmmaker had taught himself the operation of After Effects many months before starting postproduction. He felt that this program was essential to his production because it gave him flexibility to be able to manipulate and adapt footage to the production. In some cases, the filmmaker was able to set the sequences up on the timeline while in other cases the footage had to be processed and completed sequences were utilized instead of individual footage files.

Once the filmmaker had all the B-roll segments set in place on the time line, he began the task of tightening up the production. He also continued to look for footage or sound files that were not working as part of the production, as well as any holes that he may have left blank accidentally. The filmmaker also at this point, decided to simplify the process as much as he possibly could, by compiling the individual segments together whenever possible. He realized early on that he was going to have to work in individual components that were under nine minute in length, due to the limitations of the Windows operating system he was using. He would then

be able to assemble the individual segments together with the digital capture software on his computer for output.

After combining the individual timelines together, the length of the finished film was almost an hour. Knowing that the Department was more amenable to film that ran half that length, the filmmaker decided to evaluate the content of the film, considering what message he wanted this production to reflect. For example, in the previous version, the filmmaker included a large section of the film that discussed the influences that formed the *Bear* community. Though he felt that this was an important discussion, he decided to exclude it and concentrate more on the issues of coming out as a Bear from a more personal perspective. By limiting the scope of the discussion, the filmmaker was able to produce a finished film that has a running length of slightly over twenty-eight minutes.

CHAPTER FOUR: CONCLUSION

From the very beginning of the process of making the documentary, *ASKING TO SEE THE SOUL*, the filmmaker had established definite learning objectives that he wanted to take away from this production. Before starting this production, the filmmaker was aware that he did not have all of the skills needed to complete the project the way he wanted it to be.

As an undergraduate doing research on digital television, he hoped that his post-graduate career would allow him the opportunity to work in that medium. By perseverance, he worked to achieve that goal, and he learned that during the period that he began production, there were few books or other forms of information to assist him. What he accomplished was by trail and error, and in many ways that proved the most effective way to learn this emerging medium. The only regret that the filmmaker had was that he wished he had been able to shoot on Mini DV rather than Digital 8, but that desire concerns the shorter tape life of the Hi 8 tape, not the techniques or the experience he garnered from this production. The filmmaker is certain the experience he takes away from this production will prove beneficial to his professional developments as this medium becomes increasingly more significant to both commercial broadcast and theatrical image productions.

The filmmaker wanted to improve his postproduction skills, especially advanced applications of both Adobe Premiere and After Effects. Prior to starting this production, he had only the rudimentary understanding of Premiere from the instructions given to him to be able to administer assistance to students completing their eight-millimeter film projects. His initial exposure to After Effects was as an observer, viewing the finished projects of a selected group of students, and his own request to learn these new technologies were consistently denied. The filmmaker set his goal to learn these programs by whatever method was available, and began collecting a group of reference books to accomplish this goal. Though he feels he has become proficient in both programs, the filmmaker knows that there is more to learn. In very many ways, this production gave him the opportunity to meet and exceed those goals.

Probably the greatest hurdle the filmmaker had to face, concerned the fact that he had not worked on a documentary of this scope before embarking on this project. In the beginning, he was not sure where to begin. He searched for resource and books on the subject, and found that there are very few. He pretty much had to learn the process rather quickly by just doing it. Despite his continual planning and organizing, the filmmaker faced multiple problems during the course of this production. Some of the problems he faced came from his own mistakes and he feels that he learned a great deal about documentary film production by making those mistakes along the way, facing them, and then finding the most logical solution.

He realized when starting this project that documentary filmmaking had not been a popular genre, and was being explored significantly less by filmmakers. Over the past few years, as the writers in Hollywood threatened another strike, the networks embarked on the production of inexpensive, situational reality programming as an alternative to more expensive scripted narrative and comedic programming. What no one could expect was that these programs would become instant successes. The filmmaker hopes that as the new documentaries, the “reality” television and film become more prominent in the marketplace, the degree of support materials and resources for documentary moving image making will also reflect this shift.

There were numerous other learning goals that he did not accomplish with this project. He had wanted to use this production to learn various other programs and to develop other skills, such as two and three-dimensional graphic and animation programs. Though the filmmaker did use Crystal 3D Pro, a three-dimensional program to create the opening segment of the piece and a combination of Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator, Jasc Paint Shop Pro and Macromedia Freehand throughout the production, he does not feel that he is proficient in these programs. The filmmaker feels that even though he did not accomplish these goals, he may have been trying to accomplish too much with this one production. He looks at these programs and skills as future challenges rather than losses.

When evaluating this production and its strengths and weaknesses, the filmmaker wished he had been able to delegate some of the duties. Throughout the production, there were areas that he could see where he needed additional assistance. Though he realizes the incredible amount of experience he gained by performing all of the duties involved in this production, he knows that the size and scope of the film could have been more manageable by simply having other people dedicated to the same vision working with him. To some degree, that was where

the difficulty began, because he was having problems finding people who wanted to work on this project. He found himself having to fight every step of the way to get the production made, and he is afraid that this is reflected in the final product. The struggles he faced with this production probably accounted for a lot of the reasons why he would eventually become disillusioned going into postproduction and would have to take time away from school and the project before finally finishing it.

This production would have not been made without the dedication of those members of the Bear community who gave their time and talent. The filmmaker feels that the seven men who told their stories openly are the real stars of this production. He felt obligated to complete this project just to be able to share with his peers the simple acts of courage that these incredible men have displayed in the various stages of their lives. Also, he is grateful for the assistance he received from the numerous musicians who shared their music with him to help make this production a success.

The filmmaker also felt a huge degree of pressure to complete this production due to the fact that he felt it was important to produce a realistic media portrayal of this community that was positive. To the best of the filmmaker's knowledge, there have only been two independent films made about the Bear community, with this production being the first documentary to be completed. (A previous documentary production was started many years back, but was not completed.) The filmmaker had to face the challenge of how to accurately represent the community, which has many different facets in the condensed format he had incorporated. He knew from the start that he had to keep this project simple, though he feared this simplicity would censor the obstacles faced by the community.

Though the filmmaker felt that the continual resistance by some member of this community and their persistent mistrust of photography in their spaces may have contributed to the difficulty he had in recruiting respondents, he has no ill feelings toward the community. He feels that the only way to begin to break down the walls of resistance is by promoting goodwill and showing good intentions. As a filmmaker, he knows that the only way to do this is through positive media representations. He hopes that this production will go a long way in helping to heal the wounds of the *Bear* community.

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APPENDIX A

Budget

Cost Summary

Item	Cash	In Kind
Fees and Salaries		12,250.00
Travel	5,918.00	
Supplies	643.00	
Equipment	5,762.00	370.00
Music	101.00	8,000.00
Graphics	670.00	
Administrative	130.00	
Subtotal	13,224.00	20,620.00
Contingencies (@10%)	1322.40	2,062.00
TOTALS	14, 546.40	22,682.00
GRAND TOTAL	37,228.40	

BUDGET BREAKDOWN

Attachment	Amount	Rate	Cash	In Kind	Total
Fees and Salaries					
Writer/Producer/Director		contract		2500.00	2500.00
Videographer		contract		2500.00	2500.00
Production Assistant	15 days	50.00		750.00	750.00
Transcription		contract		500.00	500.00
Editor		contract		3000.00	3000.00
After Effects Editor		contract		3000.00	3000.00
Total				12250.00	12250.00

Travel					
Food			496.00		496.00
Lodging			1931.00		1931.00
Transportation					
Air Travel			2235.00		2235.00
Car Rental			488.00		488.00
Parking			223.00		223.00
Fees			545.00		545.00
Total			5918.00		5918.00

Supplies					
Videotape			327.00		327.00
Camera			61.00		61.00
Editing			233.00		233.00
Miscellaneous Supplies			22.00		22.00
Total			643.00		643.00

Equipment					
Video Camera					
DCR TRV-103			699.00		699.00

DCR TRV-140			395.00		395.00
Camera Accessories					
Vanguard Tripod	1 day	10.00		10.00	10.00
Velbon Tripod			60.00		60.00
Velbon Monopod			40.00		40.00
Sony NP-F950 Battery			150.00		150.00
Tiffen ND Filter			15.00		15.00
Tiffen UV Lens			4.00		4.00
Preview Monitor			30.00		30.00
Sound					
Senniheiser Lav Kit	1 day	10.00		10.00	10.00
Radio Shack Lav Kit	2x	35.00	70.00		70.00
Electrical					
Lowell Light Kit	10 days	35.00		350.00	350.00
Utility Lights	2	20.00	40.00		40.00
Reflector			5.00		5.00
Power Cords			37.00		37.00
Editing					
Sony Computer			1400.00		1400.00
NEC Monitor			326.00		326.00
Sony Laptop			1299.00		1299.00
Portable Hard Drive			347.00		347.00
80 Gig Hard Drive			289.00		289.00
128 MB Memory Upgrade			43.00		43.00
Printer/Scanner			150.00		150.00
Headphones			20.00		20.00
Fire Wire Cords	4x	35.00	140.00		140.00
Fire Wire Hub			90.00		90.00
USB Cords			44.00		44.00
USB Hub			20.00		20.00
Other					
VCR			49.00		49.00
Total			5762.00	370.00	6132.00



Music					
Recordings			101.00		101.00
Music Copyrights				6000.00	6000.00
Mixing/Sampling		contract		2000.00	2000.00
Total			101.00	8000.00	8101.00

Graphics					
Photography					
Sony Mavica Camera			349.00		349.00
Still Camera			285.00		285.00
Film			36.00		36.00
Total			670.00		670.00

Administrative					
Phone			100.00		100.00
Photocopies			30.00		30.00
Total			130.00		130.00

APPENDIX B

Script

	<p>FADE IN: OPENING SEQUENCE</p> <p>FADE UP MUSIC (“Aire” by Dennis Milone.)</p> <p>NARRATOR (VOICE-OVER): Do you know what this creature is?</p> <p>(Sound of a Bear growling.)</p> <p>NARRATOR (VOICE OVER): Here is a clue. □</p>
<p>FADE IN to a night sky, moving from left to right across the screen. FADE IN composite shot of crowds scenes and nebulas.</p> 	<p>NARRATOR (VOICE OVER): This theologian, William Gronbech wrote: The universe is crossed by millions and millions of threads, each one spun by an isolated individual. □</p>
<p>Composite shot FADES OUT. Slowly, the stars in the constellations Ursa Major and Ursa Minor form in the left-hand corner. The constellations slowly zoom to full screen.</p> 	<p>NARRATOR (VOICE OVER): According to primitive experience, the facts arrange themselves into a different pattern. “HE” is of the same soul and every new appearance of a HIM...</p>

FADE IN graphic of a Bear, with the constellation in its belly.



NARRATOR (VOICE OVER): ...whether it be no other than that we saw yesterday or the most distant of all among the kin, as we reckon-□

FADE OUT the constellation.

NARRATOR (VOICE OVER, WITH EMPHASIS)□...is a new creation from the soul. □

MONTAGE of the Bear graphic with picture of a Native American with a Bear claw necklace and a Northern Pacific totem pole. Background of a night sky with a moon traveling in an arch to the right corner.



FADES UP “The Bear Dance Chant.”

NARRATOR (VOICE OVER): His very existence is explained in myths and legends. To some Native Americans tribes he was akin to a god and the father of all men. □

FADE OUT the night sky and the Native American images. FADE IN to a background shot of a fire behind the Bear graphic and an Ainu man in the foreground.



FADES OUT “The Bear Dance Chant.”

NARRATOR (VOICE-OVER) □ To the Ainu, he was the bringer of fire. □

CROSS DISSOLVE to a graphic of the god Odin riding an eight-legged horse. Fire continues in the background.



NARRATOR (VOICE-OVER): The Norse would wear his skin into battle, hoping to evoke his power to be victorious

FADE OUT the fire and the Norse image.

FADE IN image of the Edward Curtis photograph, “In the Bear’s Belly.” Fade up in transfer mode, another photograph from that series of two men in Bearskins dancing.



FADE UP “The Bear Dance.”

□ NARRATOR (VOICE-OVER): He was revered for his ability to be reborn each spring. In some Native American tribes, in initiations rites into manhood, the young men wore his skin and were “slain,” thus having a rebirth as adults.

FADE IN a series of images of ancient people using Bears or Bear products.



FADES OUT “The Bear Dance Chant.”

NARRATOR (VOICE-OVER): He was food. He was magic. He was medicine.

Behind the Bear graphic, background changes to one of the Bear Flag. Over the Bear claw in the left side is a “slide show” of gay Bear men.



NARRATOR (VOICE-OVER): At the end of the twentieth century, gay men again, evoked his tenacity, blended his many attributes of nurturing and tenderness. □

FADE OUT the graphic of the Bear, the flag and the “slide show.”

DISSOLVE TO MEDIUM SHOT OF LES







LES WRIGHT (Tape 1, 0:29:52): ...about gay men embracing their masculinities yet embracing those aspects of themselves that are traditionally devalued as feminine. Being nurturing, being tender, like being protective of your brood, or you know, and on and on like that. □


<p>DISSOLVE in image of a Bear, manipulated as an animation</p> 	<p>NARRATOR (VOICE-OVER): If you guess the Bear, you guessed right. And this is the story of those gay men who have forged community in his honor. □</p>
<p>OPENING CREDITS IN a composited montage.</p> 	<p>FADE OUT MUSIC (“Aire” by Dennis Milone.)</p> <p>FADE UP MUSIC (“Bears” by Mark Weigle)</p>
<p>Section Title with “What is a Bear?” printed. From the right corner walks Bear animation, eventually blacking out the image when he walks into it.</p> 	<p>NARRATOR: Hello folks! This is Barth Cox. I am going to take you on a journey of what we call Beardom. We’re going to take a look at the facts and issues that affect the Bear community. Scritch’n’ your head cause you don’t know “Sam-Hell” what a Bear is? Tell us Bill, what makes a man a Bear?</p> <p>FADE UP MUSIC (“Everything’s Gone Muscoviet” by :Embryofile)</p>
<p>A montage created in After Effects of different Bears. A Bear in the foreground, still and matted with other images of Bears edited together as a background image.</p>	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (VOICE OVER)(Tape 1, 0:01:36): ...a bit more of a physical image. A Bear is big. A Bear is cuddly. A Bear is furry. A Bear has facial hair. A Bear is-someone that is...</p>

	
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Hargreaves</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (Tape 1, 0:22:08) ... easy to socialize with. Easy to talk to.</p> <p>□</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape 2, 0:21:09): Historically there have been two camps. □</p>
<p>Montage of nine different Bears images.</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (VOICE OVER) (Tape 2, 0:21:09): One that says Bear is a state of mind, which is to say, and attitude, i.e. lack of attitude. The other camp says that Bear is a physical type, specific male secondary sexual characteristics, you know. So one is mental, the other is physical. So, mind or appearance.</p> <p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:01:56): I guess more along the lines of it's not that plastic surgery looking...</p>

<p>DISSOLVE TO MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek.</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:01:56): ... heroin chic, skinny, I starved myself, go to the gym six hours a day just average human being.</p>
<p>DISSOLVE TO MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams.</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:27:52): So, I am identified by others as a Bear but I secretly say that I am a wolf hiding in a Bear's body.</p> <p>□</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:00:48): I'm just kind of carefree and, I don't know, my attitude is just-I love hugging everybody and that's kind of what I've known the Bears to be</p>
<p>MONTAGE of four Bear images.</p> 	<p>NARRATOR: Still scratching your head? Don't make much sense, does it? It's really very simple. All kinds of things can make you identify with being a Bear.</p>


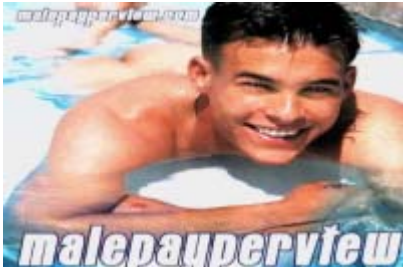


<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger.</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:01:29): I just really think it's in here, you know..</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape2, 0:24:19): It's the self-defining process. If you say you're a Bear, you're a Bear.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger.</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:01:29): If you want to be a Bear, you can be a Bear, you know.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape2, 0:24:19): If you're a seven-legged rabbit from the moon and you say you're a Bear, you're a Bear.</p>





<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger.</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:01:29): We're not going to—at least in my opinion, I'm not going to ostracize somebody if they think they are a Bear and I don't.</p>
<p>MONTAGE OF seven Bear images.</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (VOICE OVER) (Tape2, 0:24:19): But that for me gets into the whole idea of self-determination and people empowering themselves and Bearness being about self-empowerment and self-esteem and accepting who you are and defining who you-taking the power to define who you are and so on and so forth.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Hargreaves.</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (Tape 1, 0:01:36): I'm not blessed with a hairy chest, so therefore I didn't really ...</p>
<p>MONTAGE OF four Bear images.</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:01:36): ...look at myself as being a Bear. (Tape 1, 0:20:11) It's okay. I'm not big, I am-Actually-I consider myself quite thin, but that's okay.</p> <p>NARRATOR: Being a Bear is so broad based that most anybody can find a trait or two that applies.</p>

<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape 2, 0:21:09): And my personal definition is a Bear is...</p>
<p>MONTAGE of four Bears images.</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (VOICE OVER) (Tape 2, 0:21:09): ...a gay man who is as comfortable being a man as he is being gay</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright.</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape 2, 0:21:09): ...and has a warm heart.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger.</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:02:10): I think there are just... so many different definitions and we all agree on all of them, I think. □</p>

<p>MONTAGE of five Bears images</p> 	<p>BILL LEININGER (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:02:10): There's no formula that makes someone a Bear. There can be a whole bunch of different characteristics</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Hargreaves.</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (Tape 1, 0:04:46): With being a Bear, it's just being comfortable and being yourself . It doesn't matter if you're dressed up all messy.</p>
<p>MONTAGE OF two Bear images.</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:04:46): As long as you are warm person. That's all that matters ☐</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright.</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape 2, 0:21:09): And a lot of people disagree with that vehemently.</p>

<p>Montage of two Bear images.</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (VOICE OVER) (Tape 2, 0:21:09): But I think that's good, that's not resolved and I hope it remains unresolved cause I think that's where a lot of the life and energy comes from.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape 2, 0:21:09): ... one of the things that I often suspect is, when people are out all of these definitions it's either they mean people who look like themselves or they mean people who are look like their sexual ideal, you know.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek.</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:18:29): The term Bear is just so, a big umbrella thing.</p>
<p>MONTAGE of three Bear images.</p> 	<p>NARRATOR: I guess you're asking: How big is that umbrella? How inclusive has the Bear community become?</p>

<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger.</p> 	<p>FADE OUT MUSIC("Everything's Gone Muscoviet" by :Embryofile)</p> <p>FADE UP MUSIC ("Topanga" by Van Dyke Explosion)</p> <p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:01:29): I guess, even a twinkie can be a Bear.</p>
<p>MONTAGE of multiple twinkie images from print media.</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:01:29): But I think we all know what a twinkie kind of is.</p> <p>NARRATOR: (VOICE OVER): The Twinkie. The name that Bears give to the men who comprise the predominate image in the gay mass media. The perpetual boy, who is usually hairless, usually Beardless, and usually thin, to the point of being too thin. Sometimes he is gym toned.</p>
<p>MEDIUM CLOSE SHOT of Les Wright supered over the montage.</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape 1, 0:09:41): If you like, your sexual taste or the way you look yourself doesn't conform to this kind of mass media consumer image of what a proper, you know, socially upwardly mobile homosexual man is supposed to look like and desire. And I think there comes that kind of then a lot of people feel rejected or themselves turn away.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Hargreaves.</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (Tape 1, 0:27:28): I think to be accepted in normal gay community. You have to keep up with the fashions and go to the right places. And do the right things.</p>

<p>MONTAGE of Larger Bears</p> 	<p>NARRATOR: If you believe what you see in the mass media, then every gay person is young, attractive and skinny. The Bear community has given a place to gay men who don't fit that narrow mold.</p> <p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:03:42): I was never thin, I was never going to be thin. It's not in the genetics. It's not in my family anywhere. □</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:03:42): That dreaded word in high school or even earlier elementary school, The Husky Pants. I hated that. □</p>
<p>Montage of Larger Bears</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:03:42): ... The Husky Pants. I hated that.</p> <p>BILL ADAMS (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:54:09): I think that there's a lot of unhealthiness ...</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:54:09): ... where people are justifying their weight by, "Oh, I am a Bear."</p>

<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek.</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:18:29): Maybe like the groups in Phoenix, thought it was a little more polite than Girth and Mirth. □</p>
<p>Montage of Larger Bears and Older Bears</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:18:29): ... It's a little bit more inclusive and a lot kinder than some of those.</p> <p>NARRATOR: And the older guy. Shunned by the mainstream gay community.</p> <p>BILL HARGREAVES (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:23:09): And, you know, I thing in the normal gay world if you're-</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Hargreaves</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (Tape 1, 0:23:09): once you become older it's very lonely. Very sad.</p>
<p>Montage of Older Bears</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:23:09): ...Like no one wants an old queen I think that's very frightening for a lot of people. But I think in the Bear world, old is sexy.</p>

<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Hargreaves</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (Tape 1, 0:23:09): ...Well, I know as I get older I'll always going to find someone that I like and -yeah,</p>
<p>Montage of Older Bear images</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:23:09): ...and be cuddly with. I don't have any-I'm not worried about getting older, but a lot of my friends, they think about that and it does scare them to be old and alone. And to be an old queen.</p>
<p>Section title of Bear walking through a door made of the title.</p> 	<p>NARRATOR (VOICE OVER); It's these unreasonable fears of loneliness that permeate the whole gay experience. Even in coming out, Bears have to face the insecurities of a larger gay community.</p> <p>FADE OUT MUSIC("Topanga" by Van Dyke Explosion)</p>
<p>After effects montage with changing foreground and background images.</p> 	<p>FADE UP MUSIC ("Narcissus" by Martin Stähl)</p> <p>NARRATOR: In simple terms, coming out is the process by which gay people assimilate a positive identity and become part of the larger community...</p>

After effects composite of layers in the colors of the Bear flag and still images.



NARRATOR: ...And Bears, like all gay people, have to come to terms with their same sex attraction.

Still images of Bill Hargreaves and Les Wright separate from the rest of the images. Other images fade out. Bill Hargreaves' image then converts to video image.



BILL HARGREAVES (Tape 1, 0:16:58): But if I really look in it, I've always been attracted to men, from quite and early age.

Bill Hargreaves' images reverts to a still. Les Wright's image reverts to a video image and occupies the greater space on the screen. Still image of Bill Leininger fades in behind Bill Hargreaves' image.



LES WRIGHT (Tape 1, 0:09:41): When I can remember my earliest memory of being like four years old and seeing my ten year old cousins, three of them walking across the backyard, and I just-I now recognize what I felt for them was pure lust.

Bill Leinenger's image increased to the greater area of the screen. Les Wright's image fades out. Layers behind composited image re arrange order and size.



BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:06:55): I think it might have been kindergarten. And I remember telling her one morning I had a dream that I married Robin from Batman and Robin.

Six background layers morph to puzzle pieces. In a clockwise motion from the left corner, six short high contrast black and white video clips run consecutively, then freeze on the last frame.







NARRATOR: Like most gay people, they go through a number of steps before coming out. They have to face the adversity of being gay place upon them by society, and they usually go through a stage of denying their true selves.

DISSOLVE TO MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams.



BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:23:43): I always had an awkwardness, particularly with guys my age.

<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:09:16): I buried myself in my work...</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:23:43): Got along with adults better than I did with people my age.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:09:16 From high school-Well in high school, I was going to conservatory ...</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:23:43): Excelled at the more feminine things, music ...</p>

<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:09:16):...opposed to teaching music, I was going to be</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:23:43): ...mathematics...</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:09:16): ...the, you know orchestral player. So, that was easy to fill up my time</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:23:43): I just wasn't in the band, I was in the orchestra, you know.</p>

<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:09:16): ... distract myself from everything else.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Hargreaves</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (Tape 1, 0:32:25): I think that in the beginning, it was...</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:23:43): I never was in the athletic group.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Hargreaves</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (Tape 1, 0:32:25): ... I don't want to be what we used to call a "poofster" ...</p>



<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:23:43): I always kind of stood out in the class</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Hargreaves</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (Tape 1, 0:32:25): So I have to- I just have to be tough and act tough.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:23:43): Second to last picked for teams, for sporting.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:08:08): I had a much stronger attraction for my phys. ed. teacher I think at that point than I did for any girl I knew.</p>





<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:34:39): I didn't know I was supposed to be attracted to women. I didn't even have a clue.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:08:08): "Okay," if that's what I'm supposed to be doing.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:09:18): I had a series of girlfriends. Not a whole lot.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:34:39): I knew that people dated but it wasn't me dating, you know.</p>





<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:09:18): But, you know, I had a few.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:08:08): Not my thing. You know, you do it because people want you to.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:09:18): And I eventually became engaged and married.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:09:16): I was a public school teacher</p>





<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:09:18): And, that's just how I chose to hide it.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:09:16): ...scared to death of losing my job.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:09:18): I think I just did what I thought they wanted me to do</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:09:16): I was amongst the first where they started fingerprinting for people employed in any kind of school district in any way, shape or form.</p>

<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEININGER (Tape 1, 0:09:18): ...what society wanted me to do.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:14:17): Scared to death that some reason the school board was following me.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEININGER (Tape 1, 0:09:18): And while I married, I was becoming really, really unhappy</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:34:39): through my teens I was a very sad person.</p>





<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:09:18): I just realized there is no way that I could go for the rest of my life, living this façade. So, I had to end it</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:34:39): I didn't have a lot of confidence and I wasn't fitting in with the boys in school</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:09:18): So, I had to end it</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:34:39): I even say to this day, my teens and twenties were very awkward for me and my life.</p>

<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:09:18): I was severely depressed. I contemplated suicide many times.</p>
	<p>NARRATOR: Eventually, Bears begin the process of accepting their homosexuality and finding ways to integrate it into their lives.</p> <p>FADE OUT MUSIC("Narcissus" by Martin Stähl)</p> <p>FADE UP MUSIC ("Trois" by Conjoined Fetal Twins)</p>
<p>DISSOLVE TO MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:06:55): I don't know that there was any one day that I woke up thinking, I was gay. Just from way back, as far as I could remember.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Hargreaves</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (Tape 1, 0:16:58): I think the first person was really myself. Because it took a lot to accept it within myself, I think.</p>

<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:06:55): When I understood what being gay meant, I knew I was gay.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 2, 0:04:14): Coming out to me is a special -it was like an event.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:23:12): Closeted to me was more suffocating.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:37:39): It was an initial euphoria.</p>




<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:23:12): Where as coming out was, though now I can exhale and you know, breath easier...</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:41:12): And all of a sudden, all of the shame that I felt growing up, feeling different, not knowing.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:23:12): ...the coming out process was very difficult.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:41:12): Kind of converted from shame to righteousness in a way. Not self-confidence. It wasn't confidence. It was righteousness...</p>

<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:25:02): I knew what I liked but really didn't know anything about the gay community. I didn't know any friends, who I knew for a fact, were gay. So, it was a learning process for me.</p>
<p>LONG SHOT of Bear swimming in the moonlight.</p> 	<p>NARRATOR: After disclosing that he is gay, a Bear begins the process of integrating into a larger community. How does a Bear integrate into the gay community where the type of man he is, is not welcomed.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape 1, 0:09:41) But in ten years as I came to understanding more and began to see, "homosexuals," I didn't fit the stereotype.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:03:42): And when I finally came out, I still wanted to be that, I guess that skinny, thin. Couldn't get that out of my head.</p>




<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape 1, 0:09:41): I had this split consciousness of “I’m attracted to men but that is what homosexuals are like and that’s not me.”</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:03:42): Couldn't get that out of my head.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (TAPE 1, 0:09:41): I think that is also common thing that many Bears have, that you go through that process of trying to assimilate into whatever mainstream collective identity is and still is- It's not me for a lot of gay men. And for a lot of gay men it is not them, you know. And I think that's part of the trial by fire that sets up the second coming out.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:04:04): Finding the Bears I think was a really good thing for me, It helped open my eyes and realize there are other groups of gay people. There's not just the stereotypical gay people out there.</p>


<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:04:53): The first time somebody looked at me and went "WOOF," I went what the hell is that.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:25:02): When I found them which was about a year after I came out, I was relieved. I was like, "Wow! There are men who like me and I love this." And I was completely enamored with the whole lifestyle...</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:04:53) ...some gentleman called me a Bear, a very attractive Bear and I had to stop and think what the heck he was talking about.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:42:44): Really, my first experience of the Bear community was Bear Rendezvous. It was my first year in San Francisco</p>





<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Michael Tomaszek</p> 	<p>MICHAEL TOMASZEK (Tape 1, 0:14:17): He did one of those things like, "You have any idea what I was talking about, did you?" He said, "okay, larger than average, facial hair, the attitude, the non-swish?"</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:25:02): there is this group called the Bears and, you know, they love me.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 2, 0:23:16): I think the path to coming out for a lot of Bears was different as a result of-maybe they were more masculine identified. Maybe there were married and had kids. They're people who came out later. There are people who came from different backgrounds that were more repressive. And that, you know, I'm almost more unique in that. I know a lot of people who were married and have kids. And I think that more a uniqueness in the Bear Community.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:25:02): I think more just coming out as a Bear was just more to myself.</p>





<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 2, 0:02:05): I didn't experience the same euphoria off of it. It certainly was a lot more fun to cruise men at the Bear bars where guys were actually interested in somebody who has a belly and was hairy.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:04:04): The Bear community is where I feel the most comfortable being gay. And I definitely felt like I fit in.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape 1, 0:08:26): I think a lot of people experience a kind of-I don't know, kindred spirit. There's something about when you walk into a room and there's another Bear there, there's some kind of non-verbal, some kind of immediate connection that happens. That seems to be very common among Bears.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:05:50): I don't think that you have to be gay to be a Bear, but I think on the other hand, if you're part of the Bears, the assumption would be that you're gay.</p>




<p>Section title that had the Bear cartoon marching then the letters appear to stop his progress. ZOOM OUT to full title with the small Bear image.</p> 	<p>FADE OUT MUSIC (“Trois” by Conjoined Fetal Twins)</p>
<p>MONTAGE of four images of Bears.</p> 	<p>FADE UP MUSIC (“Teddy Bear Lullaby” by Martin Swinger)</p> <p>NARRATOR: The Bear community has been accused of being non-political. Not active or committed to any cause.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape 2, 0:21:09): ...Bears are about ...</p>
<p>MONTAGE of three images of Bears</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (VOICE OVER) (Tape 2, 0:21:09): ...embracing our masculinity.</p> <p>BILL HARGREAVES (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:29:45): ...there's always the gay side ...</p>


<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Hargreaves</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (Tape 1, 0:29:45): ... me that people pick out with the way ...</p>
<p>MONTAGE five images of Bears acting more natural and relaxed.</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:29:45): ... I behave and the way I act. There's also the masculine side. I just like being a boy.</p> <p>NARRATOR: But coming out and creating a social identity is in itself, a political move.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape 2, 0:42:10): To me, the idea of Bears ... □</p>





<p>MONTAGE of six images of Bears.</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (VOICE OVER) (Tape 2, 0:42:10): ... being just like men, heterosexual men, to me a very political aggressive or politically provoking stance.</p> <p>BILL LEINENGER (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1 0:55:34): Just because I am a gay man, ...</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1 0:55:34): ...doesn't mean I fall into the same stereotypes of ...</p>
<p>MONTAGE of three images of masculine Bears.</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1 0:55:34): ... of what they may think a gay person is.</p> <p>BILL ADAMS (VOICE OVER) (Tape 2, 0:00:33): My identity as a man has been created...</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 2, 0:00:33): ... by many different aspects of my life. □</p>

<p>MONTAGE of eight images of masculine Bears</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:41:48): We look like normal men. We're not so disconnected from the rest of society. I think it's important to not separate yourself from the straight world. Yeah, maybe some of us do imitate straight men or straight people, but that isn't so bad. I don't know. Imitating normality, I mean if you're trying to imitate a normal heterosexual man ...</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Hargreaves</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (Tape 1, 0:41:48): ...I think maybe it just comes easy, cause you know all about it...</p>
<p>MONTAGE of two images of Bears</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:41:48): ...Not from the heterosexual side, but you know how to be a man,</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape 2, 0:42:10): And yet, I think most Bears take the opposite reaction. They're happy...</p>

<p>MONTAGE of SEVEN Bear images</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (VOICE OVER) (Tape 2, 0:42:10): ...I can relax and just be me. I don't have to put out to the world that I'm gay or challenging people. And they just-It's very easy to be a Bear because in many places people don't pick up that you're gay. The ability to pass becomes a luxury that people take again.</p> <p>FADE OUT MUSIC("Teddy Bear Lullaby" by Martin Swinger)</p>
<p>MONTAGE of SEVEN Bear images</p> 	<p>FADE UP MUSIC ("Two Cowboy Waltz" by Mark Weigle)</p> <p>NARRATOR: Sexual desire is just a part of human nature. It neither right nor wrong. Every person wants to be desired sexually. And Bears are no different in the need to be desired.</p> <p>BILL ADAM (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:46:45): I'm just a guy, you know. I'm out there having a good time...</p>
<p>INTERCUT to shots of Bears slow dancing</p> 	
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAM (Tape 1, 0:46:45): ... And I happen to have a great time with big hairy guys.</p>



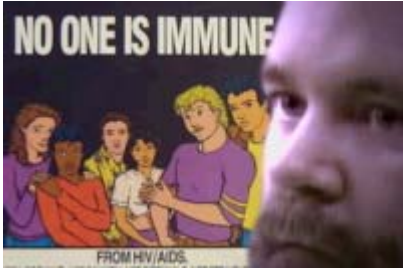

<p>INTERCUT shot of two Bears dancing.</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (VOICE OVER) (Tape 2, 0:21:09): How do we accepted and deal with being gay ...</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape 2, 0:21:09): ... without really spending a lot of time focusing on what does it mean far us to be men in a society that defines men who are attracted to men as by definitions, not men.</p>
<p>Shot of two Bears in intimate moment</p> 	<p>NARRATOR: How does a Bear define himself as a man, when society doesn't?</p>
<p>INTERCUT with quick shot of two Bears dancing</p> 	

<p>MEDIUM SHOT of</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape 2, 0:21:09): You know, we are men.</p>
<p>INTERCUT short shot of two Bears dancing</p> 	
<p>MONTAGE of two shots of Bears getting intimate</p> 	<p>NARRATOR: The issue gets trickier when you add the dynamic of a passive sexual partner.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Hargreaves</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (Tape 1, 0:44:02) I just think, well, yeah, a bottom can be a man. I think a lot of people want to be a top cause that is where being a man is and ...</p>

<p>INTERCUT shot of two Bears dancing</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:44:02) ... one really, you know, there are more comfortable about being a bottom.</p>
<p>Shot of two bears playful in the pool</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (VOICE OVER) (Tape 2, 0:05:23): That we all have the ability you know, in some we have physical differences. We all have differences in our body makeup. □</p>
<p>INTERCUT to two bears dancing</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (VOICE OVER) (Tape 2, 0:05:23): And maybe it is uncomfortable to the point of not being ... □</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 2, 0:05:23): ... pleasurable for some people to be a bottom. □</p>

<p>DISSOLVE to two Bears dancing</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (VOICE OVER) (Tape 2, 0:05:23): But it doesn't identify me as being masculine or feminine or passive.</p> <p>BILL HARGREAVES (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:44:02): I've known many people that are ...</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Hargreaves</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (Tape 1, 0:44:02): ... very masculine and a bottom and actually I like that.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape 1, 0:33:43): It just goes to show you, that I think everyone's sexuality changes and evolves over time.</p>
<p>DISSOLVE to shot of two Bears dancing compassionately.</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:33:43): And there are not like two or three sexualities...</p>

<p>DISSOLVE to two Bears kissing</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:33:43) ... I think there are as many sexualities as there are people on the planet.</p>
<p>INTERCUT TO two Bears dancing.</p> 	
<p>Close shot of two Bears kissing. A slightly transparent shot of two Bears dancing slowly superimposed on top of the shot. Supered image dissolves out</p> 	
<p>FADE OUT the shot of the two Bears kissing in background with superimposed shot of two men dancing into the darkness of the fade.</p>	<p>FADE OUT MUSIC (Two Cowboy Waltz" by Mark Weigle)</p>

	
<p>FADE UP a composite shot of the AIDS virus in Background with a Bear in the foreground</p> 	<p>FADE UP MUSIC (“I Am Here” by Martin Stähl)</p> <p>NARRATOR: The majority of Bears have grown up in the shadow of AIDS...</p>
<p>DISSOLVE to composite shot of AIDS prevention posters</p> 	<p>NARRATOR: ...A community that was born out from this disease. Every Bear faces the disease and it's consequences everyday as gay men.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape 2, 0:51:26): Living through the genesis and transformation of AIDS into a moral disease ...□</p>

DISSOLVE UP second AIDS sequence. Individual panels from the AIDS memorial quilt zoom up in sequence over composite made of a number of different panels.



LES WRIGHT (VOICE OVER) (Tape 2, 0:51:26):
...and living through an epidemic, watching everyone literally around me die. Like virtually all my friends in San Francisco have been dead for years now. I stopped counting at 500 and it's into the thousands. You know, of the people I know who've died

Composite image flies off to be laid into stock picture of the AIDS quilt. DISSOLVE UP picture from AIDS memorial service at March on Washington.



MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright masked and super over second AIDS sequence.



LES WRIGHT (Tape 2, 0:51:26): Plus I've lived with HIV for almost twenty years myself.

<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Hargreaves masked and super over second AIDS sequence.</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:44:48): I have brown hair, green eyes and HIV. It's a part of my body.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Les Wright</p> 	<p>LES WRIGHT (Tape 2, 0:51:26): I spent fifteen years of my life waiting to die, you know, in my thirties and forties.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 1, 0:44:48): ...and until there's some change in what's available for the treatment, that's what is so.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Hargreaves</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (Tape1, 0:45:46): At the moment it appears as if it's going away but it's not. And I think it is easy for people to make mistakes. We're all human. I think the message has to be drummed continuously.</p>

<p>MONTAGE OF four shots of Bears in social situations.</p> 	<p>NARRATOR: Despite the challenges, Bears have come together to form a community, and in that community they have found a sense of pride.</p> <p>BILL ADAMS (VOICE OVER) (Tape 2, 0:09:16): I moved to San Francisco and the pride banners were up year round in certain neighborhoods. It was just amazing to me.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 2, 0:09:16): It was just amazing to me. I took a lot of pride seeing the flag. I even take more pride out of seeing the gay pride flag ...</p>
<p>MONTAGED SEQUENCE of shots of Bears masked and supered over a looped shot of multiple gay pride flags.</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 2, 0:09:16): ...than I have ever have out of seeing the U.S. Flag. It is a sense of identity for me before I had knowledge of my sexuality. I was a very unhappy person and it took years of developing after that, but I really, truly have pride in who I am. And the symbol of the flag happens to express something in that for me.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Leinenger</p>	<p>BILL LEINENGER (Tape 1, 0:56:51): I think my pride is internal ...</p>

	
<p>MONTAGE of two images of Bears</p> 	<p>BILL LEINENGER (VOICE OVER) (Tape 1, 0:56:51): ...and I'm proud to be who I am. So, I don't need to march down the street.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Hargreaves</p> 	<p>BILL HARGREAVES (Tape 1, 0:01:36) (18-PBP, CLIP 8) Now I feel very accepted within the Bear Community.</p>
<p>MEDIUM SHOT of Bill Adams</p> 	<p>BILL ADAMS (Tape 2, 0:17:17): I think any community should be proud of who they are.</p>

MONTAGE of three images of confident BEARS.



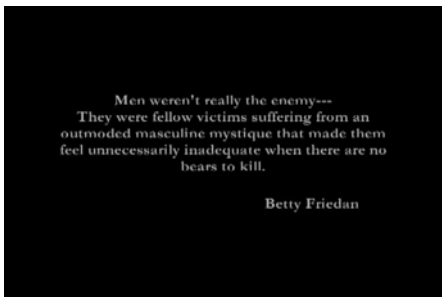
BILL ADAMS (VOICE OVER) (Tape 2, 0:17:17):
...Every human being has a right to a sense of
community and what ever the right grouping is for
them.

MEDIUM SHOT of Bill
Hargreaves



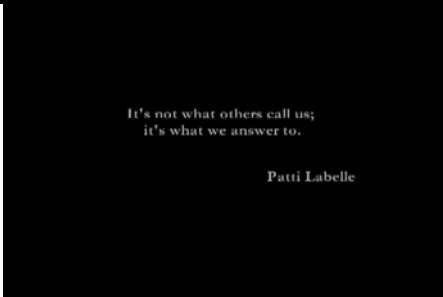


BILL HARGREAVES (Tape 1, 0:01:36): If somebody
calls me a Bear, I'll be quite happy to say, "Yes, I am!"

FADE UP TITLE. 10 SECONDS.
FADE OUT



FADE UP MUSIC.

FADE UP TITLE. 10 SECONDS.
FADE OUT

 <p>It's not what others call us; it's what we answer to.</p> <p>Patti Labelle</p>	
<p>FADE OUT titles. Cartoon Bear walks into frame to blocking the frame.</p> <p>FADE TO black.</p> 	<p>FADE OUT MUSIC ("I Am Here" by Martin Stähl.)</p>
<p>TITLES ROLL UP. Various short clips of Bears on the far left border.</p> 	<p>FADE UP MUSIC ("Waiting for an Echo" by Freddy Freeman.)</p>

APPENDIX C

Transcripts

Bill Adams
Tape 1
September 7, 1999

Time Code	Interview:
	<i>(small talk)</i>
0:16:20	You know, doing the videos, my parents don't know I do the videos. <i>They don't?</i>
0:16:27	No reason for them to know. They're 75 years old; they live in Reading, PA. Where are they going to see a Bear video? I'm just worried that Brush Creek would come up with a T-Shirt with me on it and they'll be walking in the mall <i>They know that you're gay?</i>
0:16:40	Yeah. <i>They don't know about the other stuff?</i>
0:16:43	They don't know about the pornography. They know I have HIV, you know. I called them about two days after I found out. <i>How did they react to that?</i>
0:16:56	Well, my dad—They reacted like you'd think parents would react. I mean, they too it really hard. But I also felt responsible to say something to them, cause I was very angry the year before that my parents hadn't told me that my dad had prostate cancer and I found it out kind of in a round about way. So, you know, wasn't going to be a hypocrite. And, you know, I also set some ground rules like if their worrying makes them crazy, it'll make me crazy. So, I prefer if they are—if they are going to worry to the extent of get crazy, they need to take care of. And I am not going to deal with it, you know. I was pretty straight with them about it. I also said, you know that understanding that parents worry anyway. I don't expect you to not worry. And, you know, I trained my mom to only ask—if I—she like always reminds me when I am going on vacation to take my meds with me. "DUH!" "You don't forget them." Believe me. I am not interested in not taking them. <i>(Small talk about friends experiences with cocktails)</i>
0:18:45	I think people who started off on just the single or, you know, the double situation, don't do as well cause they are just adding a drug to something

0:30:50	<p><i>done pageant work, right?</i></p> <p>You got to call it that? Yes, I entered—I have the title of Mr. San Francisco Bear 1997.</p> <p><i>We pulled the BEAR magazine out to do our research last night.</i></p>
0:31:07	<p>That’s what you pulled it out for. Yeah, “Big dick, hairy bastards dropping their drawers” right next to my—I said to the editor, when it came out, “Bastards? What do you mean, bastards?” (Laugh)</p> <p><i>You have some stuff on your dance card?</i></p>
0:32:06	<p>I’m an “out” person. I don’t—I did that as a lark, really, you know. I moved to San Francisco. I—It was just there, you know. Somebody asked if I wanted to be in the magazine. I said, “Why not!” Too them six months of convincing me. Finally I said, “Why not!”</p> <p><i>Where did they find you?</i></p>
0:32:33	<p>Bear Rendezvous. Yes, editor approached me at Bear Rendezvous and then he asked me and I said “I rather date you.” We dated for a long time then we broke up. And then the editor, he asked me—he called and up and said, “I’d still like you in my magazine!” “Oh, well! What the hell! Why not!” And so, that’s how that part of my life got started. Kind of an interesting thing cause, you know, I’m an accountant. Really fits with being an accountant. People go, “Do you make pornography professionally? Is that your full time work?” Yeah, right! I could survive on that !</p> <p><i>(Spoke about white-collar porn.)</i></p>
0:33:30	<p>It’s a rarity that you deal with anybody like the ladies of the Spice Channel, you know, where they’re full-time pornographers. Really, in San Francisco, it’s almost blasé to say you’ve made porn.</p> <p><i>Everybody has?</i></p>
0:33:52	<p>Enough people have that it isn’t special. It’s not different, unique. It’s hard to be unique in San Francisco.</p>
0:34:39	<p><i>Did you go through any of the stuff lots of kids went through? Depression? Suicide thoughts? Any of that kind of stuff?</i></p> <p>When I was eleven, along with the whole nature of realizing sexuality, my older brother died. And, so that like started the source of a very unusual part of my family life. You know, my parents acted the way they did and I</p>

0:37:02	<p>acted the way I did. But at the same time, I started to deal with the questions about what is sexuality. I didn't know I was supposed to be attracted to women. I didn't even have a clue. No one—I knew that people dated but it wasn't me dating, you know. I went on a date with a girl one time, where we went to the movies and afterwards she suggested she would give me a blowjob and I freaked. I didn't know anything about it at that point yet. I didn't do it. Was kind of righteous with her about it. Didn't know. Anyway, with my brother's death and sexuality, through my teens I was a very sad person. I didn't have a lot of confidence and I wasn't fitting in with the boys in school. I even say to this day, my teens and twenties were very awkward for me and my life. And oddly enough, I'd say the slap that came across my face with testing positive, that really altered—altered my perception of the value of my life. And I don't recommend it as the source, but it's definitely shifted where I look from, in a very positive way.</p> <p><i>Were you rejected by your peers?</i></p> <p>Yeah, I had a few close friends. I've always kind of had a few close friends. I didn't hang out with the guys. I didn't really want to. There stuff wasn't my stuff. I didn't know what my stuff was but I knew that wasn't it.</p>
0:37:39	<p><i>How did it feel when you finally came out?</i></p> <p>It was an initial euphoria. They were playing, "It's Raining Men" and, what was the other one? "So Many Men, So Little Time." And I just started living my life that way, right off. The day that I came out, the guy who picked me up, we went back to his place and we fooled around. And then he and his lover and I fooled around. And that night, when we went out to the bar, we picked up a third—another person. So the day I came out, I had a two-way, a three-way and a four-way.</p> <p><i>You blast the closet door open?</i></p> <p>0:38:22 And got righteous about it right away. I didn't go through a long term—of—I didn't feel guilty about it. My mom figured out pretty quickly that something had happened. Questioned me on it. Said, "What are your friends, a bunch of fairies?" I got pissed off. I said, "I prefer to call them gay!" And she said, "Oh well, what are you?" I didn't want to tell her that way, but, "Yes!" And we went through our thing, about a week between talking, a rarity between my mom and I. So...</p> <p><i>Was it difficult coming out to your parents?</i></p> <p>0:39:10 Well, my mom kept it a secret from my dad for a long time, till I was having problems in my first relationship. And my first lover and I went to war at some point. Just—In the insanity of drinking and his use of drugs.</p>

<p>0:40:10</p> <p>0:40:14</p> <p>0:40:20</p>	<p>And so I—I was absolutely freaked out and they came down from Reading to Philadelphia. It’s really hard for me to even remember much. It’s kind of like a strange—I didn’t want to think about it reaction.</p> <p><i>Was it hard coming out to your friends? At work?</i></p> <p>Now?</p> <p><i>Now, then, whatever!</i></p> <p>Once I was out, I was out!</p> <p><i>Are you out to everybody?</i></p> <p>There are people, family, I’m not out to. They don’t talk to me about their sexual practices. Why do I need to tell them about mine? I don’t have a lover. I’m sure that a thirty-five year old guy who stays single might be an indication of something, for them. But, it’s kind of the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.” And, that’s fine with me. My father’s side, my uncles both know and it’s non-issue. So, just a matter of religious background and upbringing.</p>
<p>0:41:12</p>	<p><i>Was there a point in your life where you thought coming out was more difficult than staying in the closet? Was there any point you wished you were back in the closet?</i></p> <p>No. No, I—And all of a sudden, all of the shame that I felt growing up, feeling different, not knowing. Kind of converted from shame to righteousness in a way. Not self-confidence. It wasn’t confidence. It was righteousness and I was very righteous with people about my sexuality for a long time. To some extent, maybe I am still. Just a different expression. Making pornography.</p>
<p>0:42:07</p> <p>0:42:44</p>	<p><i>So when did you come out as a bear? When did you tend to go toward that? Did you come out as a bear at the same time?</i></p> <p>No, I didn’t know there was such a thing. As a matter of fact, this was back in 1983. I don’t think there was bears? The movement started in what? Late 80’s Early 90’s, earliest?</p> <p><i>It was around 1984.</i></p> <p>Well, my first real interaction as that was when I moved to San Francisco. There was a new Bear group on the west coast of Florida when I lived there. It was new. Right when I was leaving. I had only become aware that was there then. Really, my first experience of the bear community was Bear</p>

0:44:48	<p>Rendezvous. It was my first year in San Francisco and I had a blast, needless to say. They had a blast with me. And that's where this whole part of my life began really.</p> <p><i>(Talk about the process I was using to put the documentary together.)</i></p> <p>Well, I started right off with HIV. I have brown hair, green eyes and HIV. It's a part of my body and until there's some change in what's available for the treatment, that's what is so. I learned pretty quickly I had good source of support when I first tested positive. What it would take, you know, for me to live my life normally like me feeling full, full-filled. Fullfilled! It took several months, till I didn't look at my skin and see HIV and didn't get in the shower and wash HIV, you know. It no longer occurs to me, outside of that I take medication twice a day. I get blood drawn every eight weeks or so. And I take life a little bit slower. Probably was a good idea anyway.</p> <p><i>How long you've been HIV positive?</i></p>
0:46:05	<p>Found out last June so it's been a year and a few months.</p>
0:46:45	<p><i>As a Bear, you've done what you've done! You've helped to create the image. How does that affect your identity?</i></p> <p>I'm just a guy, you know. I'm out there having a good time. And I happen to have a great time with big hairy guys. I happen to have a great time with smooth guys. I picked up a cute little swimmer's-build yesterday. He's fine. Twenty-five years old. Fresh out of Tampa. Woof! Had a blast. More out of the novelty, probably. Cause I'm getting to be a dirty old man. I supposed, but dirty middle-aged man.</p> <p><i>Do you think it makes it difficult at times? Do you have a responsibility because you created the image?</i></p>
0:47:43	<p>In a way, it feeds into that, my background of being an individual, alone. Someone who doesn't cling to a group for identity. Because the pressures of that imager to go to bear bars and bear events and be around it for long periods of—as a regular thing, I even have, I don't know. I've talked to Jack (Radcliff) and he also has said he just doesn't feel all that comfortable going to the Lone Star. Cause there's an image there and it's not him. And that 's what pornography gives. People are in a fantasy. You know, my life and my reality and that fantasy. That fantasy is a tiny chunk which is everything that a whole community knows about me basically. There's all the rest of my life. There's my being an accountant. There's my having just quit my job, you know. There's my life in the Castro. The reason I make those choices. And I do lead a phenomenal life as a result of living in San Francisco. You know, I was thinking about when I overheard some of</p>

0:50:12	<p>your questions with the last person. Like how differently I live my life cause I take for granted that I'll walk down a street with arm around a man. Or how, you know, it's a non-issue now, in a very small place, a couple of small places in the country or the world really. And I'm just in one of them. And I moved there because of it. I wouldn't live in the most expensive city in the country by choice otherwise. Weather's pretty good.</p> <p><i>(Talk about San Francisco)</i></p> <p>Yeap. Part of the pressure, you know—it's a highly desirable place to live from several aspects. Obviously Silicone Valley is one thing and the whole internet explosion. But the other thing is and you can see it happening, like the Castro is no longer all gay but the whole city is diverse. It's a mixed city. You go out into other neighborhoods and there's a couple gay households within a block or two. It's not like you have to have that concentration to be protected from anything, you know. I was talking to an older guy in the city in San Francisco who described how in the 70's, people were afraid to go to the Twin Peaks bar, which is a bid glass paneled bar. It's like the first gay bar in the country to have glass windows, because their bosses would see them there when they went by on the streetcar. That doesn't exist today, you know. And I wouldn't want to work for a boss that had a problem with me being out. I couldn't. I just couldn't.</p>
0:52:40	<p><i>Is there a new clone occurring in the Bear community?</i></p> <p>Well, there is—It's true, you know. I think that for as much as the idea of the Bear Community as a place where anyone would be accepted is an ideal, creating pageants is completely contradictory. You know, my participation in Bear Rendezvous was actually quite an eye opener. That was major. I was such... Winning Mr. San Francisco Bear was a lark. It was on the pool table at the Lone Star. It put beer boxes up and there were five of us crowded on this pool table. We went out and sold raffle ticket and I had enough to drink in me that I came up with some witty answers to some questions that were asked. But when you take it to the level of Bear Rendezvous, where you have, you know, thousand, you know, guys in this hall listening to something you're saying, like it means something, or looking at you because you're one of the ones—Might as well be Miss America, at that point. I don't know that's necessary but it does draw a crowd. I don't think the crowd's there for that either. I think the crowd's there for to be in camaraderie, you know.</p>
	<p><i>Casey Scot who is a photographer for <u>American Bear</u>, said to me in a telephone conversation that he thinks the image of Bear is changing to a more "mind and body" type image rather than the bigger Bear image. Do you see any changes?</i></p>

0:54:09	<p>I don't know that. Cause if you look at the early issues of BEAR magazine, they're thin. They are hairy; they have beard; they are thin. They're bikers. I think it has gone the other way to encompass more people. I just think that the action of having the pageants causes an ideal to be created. If you were just having Lazy Bear Weekends, we'd just be all out thee having a good time drinking beer and people could have their body image the way it is. You know, I like muscle bears. I've been going to Gold's Gym to try to become one. I don't go as much as I need to but I pay a personal trainer for it. And I feel better when I workout. And from a physical standpoint, I actually think that people should be more concerned with taking care of their bodies. Not necessarily being gym tone and all that but just being healthy. I think that there's a lot of unhealthiness where people are justifying their weight by, "Oh, I am a bear."</p>
0:56:01	<p><i>How do you see yourself as a role model?</i></p> <p>Probably in the domain of sex and sexuality. Being comfortable with having sex. Being comfortable with my sexuality. Not just... It's—You know I was in Germany and Germans are a lot more suppressed than we are when it comes, than we are when it comes to sex and their sexuality. I mean, they can be really wild and out there, but my experience of working with some German men was, these guys are way more conservative than even the Americans I know. Though I don't hang out in the Bible Belt.</p> <p><i>Do you see yourself as a role model for young men thinking about coming out?</i></p>
0:56:57	<p>I don't really. I don't even think about it. It's not what motivates it. It's kind of, just a playful aspect of me living my life. Living out a certain exhibitionist bend. And that people happen to enjoy it, I figure what the hell, why not, so...</p>
0:57:37	<p><i>I assume you see yourself as masculine. Do you see yourself as masculine as in the heterosexual definition of masculine? (Describes the masculinity issues of power over women and procreation.)</i></p> <p>I think that their definition—I f I were to perceive what you mean as a heterosexual definition of masculinity—No, I wouldn't want to be. I actually wouldn't want to be the general public, heterosexual, masculine. There are cool straight guys. Those are truly masculine. From my aspect, masculinity and femininity—I have been dealing with my relationship to my feminine side over the last several months. I was actually seeing a psychiatrist to some extent and I recognized that I have a lot of prejudice against feminine qualities, including my own. And I started addressing, you know, looking at that. It's really kind of playful, you know. I think that true masculinity is realized when one encompasses all and have to portray, you</p>

0:59:05	<p>know, machismo.</p> <p><i>(Disturbance)</i></p> <p>And I think in our community, we look at effeminate men with a disparaging image they don't deserve any more than we deserve—we deserve to be considered special for being masculine. I don't particularly go to hand out in bars where Nelly boys hang out, but I give them their right to exist, you know. And I even, I kind of inject myself into that community. I go to circuit events and I go to dance clubs in San Francisco and I don't have a problem with them being, however they're expressing themselves in the dress and styles that they do. And I had experience where I've come up against prejudice from them. At White party in Palm Springs, where this one queen just looked at me and I had my shirt off and I was sweaty and she saw my chest hair and my belly and –“YEWH!” And looked right back and went, “YEWH!” and walked away. I think that's a shame too. That's immaturity on both of our parts after I participated. But actually, what motivated it was you're different than me so you less than me. That's the whole problem with any of the segregation in the community. I have an issue against the gay community segregating itself.</p>
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Bill Adams
Tape 2
September 7, 1999

Time Code	Interview:
0:00:33	<p><i>How is the Bear Community helping you with your identity as a gay man?</i></p> <p>Well, you know, I don't see it as being specific to that. My identity as a man has been created by many different aspects of my life. My identity as a man is from my professional life as an accountant. My confidence certainly came as a result of realizing my abilities in that area as well the importance in my public life. My pornographic life has caused me to really be aware of who I am when I'm out and who other people perceive me to be. You, know, I mentioned it's that one little piece of my life, but that's all that people know of me. But really—that's really what the bear community is to me too. It's just one piece of what has contributed to me today. So...</p>
0:02:05	<p><i>In the <u>Bear Book</u>, Les Wright talks about that we come out twice. We come out once when we come out and we come out again when we go into the Bear Community. Do you agree with that?</i></p> <p>I think that 's a source of identity in a way. See if you –what to use the words coming out as for realizing identity. Then yeah, but I didn't experience the same euphoria off of it. It certainly was a lot more fun to cruise men at the bear bars where guys were actually interested in somebody who has a belly and was hairy. Compared with, you know, what was there before that. But I never had an issue before that, the way it was. There was always somebody who was attracted to a hairier guy around. We just weren't segregated at that point, yet. There's always those swimmer's build boys who like big hairier older guys. Yeah! I keep telling Brush Creek Media that they should do a mixed video. Not have it be ALL the same type because in the real world we are not all the same type, all the time. It's more of that same image thing.</p> <p><i>What is their reaction to that?</i></p>
0:03:27	<p>They listen to me. In this ear and out this ear. I've also come up with other concepts, which are pretty wild. I don't think that they see it yet. They don't get it. To me, that would be the ultimate, hot tape. I like watching straight porn for that matter, you know. So—Cause there's differences. Different body types there. Not just, all the same. All about the same thing.</p>
0:04:08	<p><i>Sociologists say that we come out daily. Do you believe that we do?</i></p> <p>Come out daily?</p>

0:04:14	<p><i>That every day we come out. That we never stop coming out?</i></p> <p>Well, I think—I thing that you—that’s another way that you further realize your identity on a daily basis. I wouldn’t use the words “coming out daily.” Coming out to me is a special –it was like an event. My daily life is not an event. But I do discover things about myself on a daily basis. What my boundaries are. Whether or not I am willing to let someone cross them. When, you know the choices you make—the little choices, you know that have a ripple effect through the rest of your life that you don’t know, even realize at the moment you make that choice. But...So, that’s where I go with that.</p>
<p>0:05:12</p> <p>0:05:15</p> <p>0:05:23</p> <p>0:06:31</p>	<p><i>Can you be a bottom and be masculine? People, even in our community think that you can’t.</i></p> <p>Do you perceive me as masculine?</p> <p><i>Yes.</i></p> <p>Have you seen what I do on video?</p> <p><i>(small talk)</i></p> <p>My joke is, “I’m a top but I don’t play one on TV.” (laughs) I don’t identify myself as a bottom or a top. It’s the thing that Danny Williams always goes, “Bottom!” You know, versatile. I think that—My joke is that there’s two type of men, bottoms and liars. That we all have the ability you know, in some we have physical differences. We all have differences in our body makeup. And maybe it is uncomfortable to the point of not being pleasurable for some people to be a bottom. But it doesn’t identify me as being masculine or feminine or passive. I am an active bottom when I am a bottom. I’m not a passive bottom. I am not submissive. I am hungrey when I bottom.</p> <p><i>You don’t see difference between masculinity and being a bottom?</i></p> <p>I think that a good bottom is a hot masculine man, who wants to be fucked by a hot masculine man.</p>
0:06:48	<p><i>Are you involved in the gay community? Are you politically involved in the gay community?</i></p> <p>I’m not political.</p> <p><i>Is that by choice or just by...?</i></p>

0:06:53	<p>I listened to my dad bitch about government through all of my growing years. And I just kind of went, “UGH! God, NO!” I definitely have my social opinions and a political desire how things go but I am not out there making things happen for any cause. I have a roommate whose trying to get involved in politics and I’m kind of entertained by watching him cause I haven’t get a clue what would motivate him to do that.</p> <p><i>(Conversation about where this line of questioning came from.)</i></p>
0:06:17	<p>I think on an individual basis—I don’t think politics—I don’t think politics belong in a sociological grouping or else you’re going to segregate it one more time. You know, the Log Cabin Bears of San Francisco, you know. Sounds kind of rugged, if you would want to be one.</p>
0:08:57	<p><i>Are there any of the issues that the gay activist have been working for that you feel are important about? You feel important?</i></p> <p>Obviously, anything that forces public knowledge of—public knowledge and more research for HIV prevention and that area. I am not a supporter of ACT-UP personally. I think that there’s complete space for ACT-UP to do what they do at that level as—so long as there are other avenues being sought by the community, too. If that was the only way we express ourselves—of course, it’s the one that’s the most public and shows up on CNN the most frequently. But that’s an in your face thing that needs to be there—I wouldn’t do it. That’s—</p> <p><i>So there’s another way? What do you think is another way?</i></p>
0:09:51	<p>There are—There are other ways that are already there, you know. There’s the e-mail campaigns. What was it, American Airlines was under siege from which ever church. I image the Baptist Church since we seem to have such a brotherly relationship with them. The Reverend Phelps.</p> <p><i>(Talk about religious right)</i></p>
0:10:14	<p>Our friend, Jerry and Tinky-Wink. That was actually humorous. He did us a lot of good by that one. Just showing the absurdity of that being there. And I think that—so long as we don’t forget that twenty years ago they were afraid to be seen sitting at the corner of 17 and Castro, in the bar of you know. That for me there—I live in a really unique spot. Alas, I would not live anywhere else in the country at this point, after living there. Cause I wouldn’t want to live the life that people have to live in rural America. In Northern California, two guys were shot to death in their trailer, not to long ago. That—who I didn’t know personally, but friends of mine knew personally. And that’s only a couple of hundred miles from San Francisco. It’s not far off that little island, basically the peninsula, but an island of</p>

0:13:40	<p>freedom that you go to have worry about where you walk and what you do. When I moved across country I took the gay pride stickers off of my car specifically to drive through this state. Cause I was moving from Florida and to California and in Tampa or Fort Lauderdale, it was alright to have a gay pride sticker there. It wasn't like I was out on Lake Okeechobee, but when it came time to move cross-country, I figured I don't want to get harassed as I go on I-10. That was exactly what had me take them off. Get across county without the hassles. And I would, I couldn't imaging living that way.</p> <p><i>(Talk about the political climate of New Orleans city government)</i></p> <p>Even when I lived in Philadelphia. Where Philadelphia is today has shifted incredibly. I think that the major urban centers—I think that there's a realization that it's a political forces to be reckoned with, the gay community. That and the bear community is a part of that and there the portion of every aspect of being gay, the different types of people, that there will be political people, individuals, in each of these communities. I don't think any social club should take on a political position. That would be discriminating against member. And bears should remain purely social—and fun!</p>
0:14:50	<p><i>As I said before, straight people are going to be seeing this. If there is one thing I want to say to straight people?</i></p> <p>I don't judge you for the type of sex you have. That's about it. It's not like it's not right or wrong. Human sexuality is not right or wrong and –That's really all there is. It's like we are how we are. We are all at different degrees and different levels of sexual expression and I think that everybody should have the right to be right where they are.</p> <p><i>Are you comfortable with the concept of pride in the gay community?</i></p> <p>Before the—I think, I know—I moved to San Francisco and the pride banners were up year round in certain neighborhoods. It was just amazing to me. I took a lot of pride seeing the flag. I even take more pride out of seeing the gay pride flag than I have ever have out of seeing the U.S. Flag.</p> <p><i>(Spoke about rainbow flag)</i></p>
0:16:18	<p>It is a sense of identity for me before I had knowledge of my sexuality. I was a very unhappy person and it took years of developing after that, but I really, truly have pride in who I am. And the symbol of the flag happens to express something in that for me.</p> <p><i>(small talk)</i></p>

0:17:17	<p>Pride. I think any community should be proud of who they are. Any aspect of—Every human being has a right to a sense of community and what ever the right group is to is for them. And so, gay pride happens to be oour grouping. If you go to the gay, lesbian, transsexual, transgender, Pride Parade (<i>corrects himself</i>) in San Francisco, not in the right order. It's pretty wildly encompassing. That's who we are.</p> <p><i>Lots of members of our community get upset by the extremes in our community.</i></p>
0:18:23	<p>There are extremes in the Heterosexual community. What is this, the Goth movement? Heterosexual sex clubs? I mean, they may not be prevalent but they're out there. We are just a little better at being out about our extremes.</p> <p><i>We accept them a lot better?</i></p>
0:18:53	<p>I saw some women walking around with their husbands in some of those sex shops on Bourbon Street the other day. I got a kick out of it. Big-breasted woman leading her husband into the sex shop in her little sexy black number. I got a kick out of that! I think that the extremes—Like I said the extremes like ACT-UP, they have as much right to their expression as—It upsets me whenever somebody says that they have a problem with somebody being different, because that is just hypocrisy I this community.</p> <p><i>It separates us</i></p>
0:19:45	<p>It does. I'm not going to go hangout with—Like I said, but their right to exist and to be who they are and express how they do, is their right. And they happen to be extreme and the new media picks up on that, that's the fault of the news media. You know, the bear community isn't exactly an extreme group. We're a bunch of big, hairy guys who happen to be pretty social and outgoing and like to have fun with one another.</p> <p><i>A friend of mine began to think that the difference between a drag queen and bear is just the costume.</i></p>
0:20:33	<p>The difference between a leatherman and a drag queen is just a costume. And an image. A self-image. And each one of them have the right to portray themselves however the hell they want. It's just smoke and mirrors. I make pornography. I am an accountant. You know, you want to see me in drag, put me in a necktie. I have a friend who told me this, "We were born naked. Anything we have added after that is drag." There's professional drag. There's leather drag. There's country western drag. There's yuppie drag. That's another thing. I am secretly a yuppie.</p>

<p>0:21:41</p> <p>0:22:05</p> <p>0:22:12</p> <p>0:22:46</p>	<p><i>You're secretly a yuppie. Is that contradictory to bear program?</i></p> <p>I love wearing chinos and a Ralph Lauren pullover shirt to the bear bar, just for the hell of it, you know. Just to blend in with the flannel shirts. That's part of the play. I love wearing leather to a twinkie bar.</p> <p><i>Do you really?</i></p> <p>It's exhibitionism!</p> <p><i>Would you call yourself an extremist?</i></p> <p>I'm playful. I like to fuck with reality. I don't like when we get all hooked on things being a certain way. Course, there not. It's all made up. The bear community did not exist and somebody invented it. Now there's a right way to be in the bear community.</p> <p><i>I heard that before, too. I recently had someone tell me that the only way you could be a bear was to be in a club.</i></p> <p>Maybe the only way they could be human is to be identified with something. I don't think so.</p>
<p>0:23:12</p> <p>0:23:16</p>	<p><i>When we look at the issue of pride and apply it to the bear community. Do you think the issue of pride in the gay community when applied to the bear subculture?</i></p> <p>It's synonymous.</p> <p><i>It's synonymous?</i></p> <p>I don't see a reason to pull it out as being different. I think the path to coming out for a lot of bears was different as a result of—maybe they were more masculine identified. Maybe there were married and had kids. They're people who came out later. There are people who came from different backgrounds that were more repressive. And that, you know, I'm almost more unique in that. I know a lot of people who were married and have kids. And I think that more a uniqueness in the Bear Community. You don't have twinkies out there with kids. Little club kids that came out when they're sixteen don't have families. Maybe that's what it is for me too. I was a club kid. When I was nineteen, I was out there dancing and playing and I just happened to grow up and turn out a certain way. And I'm lazy and I don't shave.</p>

Bill Hargreaves
Tape 1
February 22, 2000

Time Code	Interview:
0:00:48	<p><i>Please identify yourself for the purposes of the tape</i></p> <p>I'm Bill Hargraeves. I come from Sydney. Born and bred there in Sydney. Left there about two and a half years ago to do some traveling. I went to Europe. Traveled throughout Turkey for a few months. Traveled throughout Europe for a few months. Then I went out to the U.K., lived in London for six months. And soon I decided I wanted to move to Holland. So, I moved to Holland and found a job and that's where I am now.</p>
0:01:36	<p><i>So you're a Bear? Why do you say you're a Bear?</i></p> <p>It's funny—Well, it's not funny you'd say that. I don't know. I supposed up until this weekend, I wouldn't have really considered myself a Bear. I knew that was the type of people I liked. Where I wanted to be. What I wanted to socialize with. But for me the image of being a Bear is a bit more of a physical image. Some one who was big and cuddly and full-bearded and hairy. I'm not blessed with a hairy chest, so therefore I didn't really look at myself as being a bear. But now I feel very accepted within the Bear Community. I don't think I'll—If somebody calls me a Bear, I'll be quite happy to say, "Yes, I am!"</p> <p><i>You basically came to an acceptance this weekend?</i></p>
0:02:46	<p>I think so, I'm...</p> <p><i>How long have you been contemplating if you were?</i></p>
0:02:58	<p>I guess you could probably say for the last six or eight months. It wasn't really contemplating; it's wanting to be. Wanting to be part of the crowd and to...</p> <p><i>Why?</i></p>
0:03:19	<p>I'm just very attracted to it. It just—I really like big, hairy, cuddly men. But then again, over the past few years, that's all my friends have (Laugh) Kind of been, so...</p> <p><i>Why do you say that? Do you think that people choose to fit into the community?</i></p>
0:23:52	<p>I think so do and I think some just fall into it and are quite happy when they</p>

	do—Yeah, I think some people do, when they get to a certain realization that when they start growing facial hair or start wearing checkered shirts, taking off their shiny girly shirts. Not that I ever done that!
0:04:46	<p><i>To you, how is being a Bear different from being gay?</i></p> <p>There's no—no pretense. No There's no—With being gay or being on the gay scene, there's a lot of —It's not always that nice. There's a bit of fake... going on or you have to wear the right clothes and go to all the right places and things like that. With being a bear, it's just being comfortable and being yourself and it doesn't matter if you're all dressed all messy as you are a warm person. Then, that's all that matters. If you're warm and cuddly. So that—</p>
0:05:49	<p><i>How long have you been out? When did you come out? What age?</i></p> <p>I think I was nineteen.</p>
0:24:08	<p><i>The period prior to that, what was it like. At what age did you think that you might be?</i></p> <p>I think probably around fourteen or so. But if I really look in it, I've always been attracted to men, from quite and early age. But between the ages of—up to fourteen, both, you know, sexes that I was quite attracted to. I guess that was really you until about the age of seventeen or so. But as I just got older, it was like I was more attracted to the one sex, which is men. And when I was about eighteen or nineteen, I was dating both guys and girls. I was having a lot of fun. But I thought it was time to just make a choice. And if I had the idea to being bisexual, then—I think bisexual seem to always go back to the opposite sex or always go back to the same sex. They're never really happy. So, at that time, I think I made a choice. It was an easy choice to make but I just had to. (Laughs) but, huh!</p>
0:07:18	<p><i>Do you think that we choose to be gay or is it something else?</i></p> <p>It's something else. It's just your hormones, inside you. You don't—you can't really control them all the time.</p>
0:07:52	<p><i>In the country that you grew up in Australia, do you think it as more accepted in the culture than it is here? In America? What I am trying to get at, what was the social atmosphere when you were growing up?</i></p> <p>All throughout school, there was no way that you would admit you were gay or had feelings for men. It just wasn't done and there would have been a lot of negativity. Or I think there would have been a lot of negativity if I had come out. It is any—after school and finished when you got to know</p>

	<p>who your real friends were and that just made it a lot easier. That's when I started dating guys and stuff back then. So, with the Australian culture, when I was growing up it wasn't—There wasn't too much tolerance there. There's still a lot of bashings that go on in Sydney and around but in some ways it's very good because there's a very good gay scene and they have the Mardi Gras once a year. And for me, the Mardi Gras is a family event. My sister's also gay. My mother comes, my friends come, my aunts and uncles come. (Laughs) So, in the later years, it's really nice. Now, I think it's quite accepted, now.</p>
0:09:42	<p><i>What group of people was it hardest to come out to? Your family? Your peers? People at work?</i></p> <p>I think the most difficult person to come out to was my mother. I mean I know she wasn't stupid and she kind of knew. I think it upset her a lot, because, well, she wanted grandchildren. And also she just wanted me to be happy and she was concerned that I couldn't be happy being gay. That I possibly will be lonely, as I get older. So, I think that was the most difficult to come out to. Also, when I was coming out, I had a group of my peers, my young friends, and for some reason I felt if half of them like, just smothered me in kindness and the other half just didn't really talk or just couldn't accept it. So, that was a bit odd.</p> <p><i>You think that you lost most of them, would you say?</i></p>
0:10:56	<p>Probably about half of them. But the strange thing is that other half became closer friends. It's—obviously I don't regret it. You know, I'd still—If I was doing it all again, I'd still come out.</p> <p><i>What was your reaction to them as you were coming out? This half being cold and half being over kind? How were you protecting yourself?</i></p>
0:11:31	<p>Well, with the over kindness was okay. It just felt a bit strange. With the people being cold. I think I rejected them as well, you know, it they showed a bit of coldness. I just said, "Well, fuck it!" Especially around that time, which I moved out of home and moved into the city, which was only about ten kilometers away from where I lived. But—And that's when I started going out a lot and making new friends, so—</p>
0:12:41	<p><i>How do you describe the closeted phase in your life? I mean, were you, did you feel actually closeted and it was a confining closet? What type of emotions? What were your feelings? The time you were going through realizations and fear of being found out?</i></p> <p>I guess a little bit of panic. I panic in some ways. If it were new people, it didn't bother me. But with—with older people, older friends, whatever I</p>

	<p>know it was a little bit panic. I would avoid subjects, if I could. And around that period, you know, seventeen, eighteen, you know, I would often have a girlfriend, but she'd just be—We weren't sleeping together. I was still a virgin then. In some ways it was very important just to have some one there so—I also like them as well. So, I just wasn't using them for protection. But in some ways, I still feel that I am closeted. I want people to know, like in colleagues and stuff. But I find it difficult to just come out with it. I'm out at work but they had to sort of drag it out of me. I still get those little feelings of panic. Like I still do avoid subjects. When they ask me if I'm married, do I have children or do I have a girlfriend. It's like, "No!" Sometimes it goes on from there but sometimes I just won't say anything.</p>
0:14:26	<p><i>Do you think we come out every day?</i></p> <p>I don't. Depends on the day!</p> <p><i>Do we come out progressively? Do you think our coming out process is a progressive process?</i></p>
0:14:45	<p>Yes. If you just look twenty, thirty years ago when it was all illegal back then. And then we managed to get it legal. And now we are managing to get equal rights. Until recently you can't get married. In Holland, they're trying really hard to push for gay adoption. Which is—I think it may well come through. It may take a while but it will come through. So, yeah, yeah. We are coming out more and being much more assertive and powerful in just getting our rights. I think that'll keep on going till we reach a certain point when there will be no difference.</p> <p><i>You think that there's a hope that at some point we'll be equal?</i></p>
0:15:41	<p>Yeah. Provided that the society goes on as it does now. I mean if. I don't know if tragedy happens or we will go into—it may bring us back a bit. I don't know. It things go on like they have done for the last forty years or so. I think it will still take a few generations before it is completely accepted and respected as normal. So, maybe a hundred year or so. It's getting—we're getting there. We've come a long way, yeah.</p>
0:16:39	<p><i>Who'd you come out first to? Who came out first, you or your sister?</i></p> <p>I did.</p> <p><i>Who'd you come out first to? Who was the first person you told?</i></p>
0:16:58	<p>When you ask that quest-...I think the first person was really myself. Because it took a lot to accept it within myself, I think. Okay, this is it. I</p>

	<p>have my hand around another guy and I'm quite enjoying it. And I remember walking back from a party one morning. (Laughs) That's when I thought, "Well, okay. I'm gay!" I went, "Yeap." But I can't remember the first person I told.</p>
0:18:10	<p><i>Was there ever a point that you felt coming out was as difficult as staying closeted?</i></p> <p>I don't think so. I think it's—I think stay—Maybe I never reached that point, yet. But I think staying closeted is always the easy way out. Denial or just avoiding subject so it's much easier now, I just get things straight when you meet people or something. Yeah, but—I think maybe a point where coming out just going to be just like that, easy. And I think I'm almost there. But I'm not there at the moment.</p> <p><i>So what was your reaction—You began to identify with the community this weekend? What was the point when you finally found it? Finally said, Voila?</i></p>
0:19:22	<p>I think it would have been Thursday night. I almost got a little emotional on Sunday, Sunday evening, just when people upstairs on the stage talking about what it is to be a bear and you know, and it's not just the people that fit the Bear image that are Bears. It's more accepting to many people. So I think that was when I said, voila!</p> <p><i>What happened Thursday night that kind of hit you? Made you think...?</i></p>
0:20:11	<p>Well, it was I saw these big, hairy men that I liked just around and they all seemed to like me. And it was like, it's not so difficult? (Laughs) I know it sounds silly but in—I don't know—Where I am in at the moment in Holland, it's really hard to find a nice big, cuddly man, a gay one. Plenty of straight big, cuddly men, but not gay ones. And when you do, they either have lovers or—Well, most of them just have lovers, so nothing can really come of it. And they all same to—I think it's cause the bear community is quite small so they all seem to like other big hairy men. So, I do—Back there I feel a little bit intimidated some times. That, you know, I don't fit, you know, their physical categories, they desire. But coming to the states and coming to this event that kind of changes. It's okay. I'm not big, I am—Actually—I consider myself quite thin, but that's okay. That's okay to wear thigh jeans, it doesn't—it feels nice!</p> <p><i>Was it like a religious experience, in a way?</i></p>
0:21:49	<p>Possibly.</p>
	<p><i>What is your definition of a Bear? If you had to define a Bear right now,</i></p>

0:22:05	<p><i>what is a Bear?</i></p> <p>A bear is big. A bear is cuddly. A bear is furry. A bear has facial hair. A bear is—someone that is easy to socialize with. Easy to talk to and someone who likes to cuddle.</p>
0:22:49	<p><i>But you are none of these things. You're not hairy? Where do you fit into the definition?</i></p> <p>Cuddling!</p> <p><i>That's enough?</i></p>
0:23:00	<p>I can be big. I just have to work on it!</p>
0:23:09	<p><i>Can you separate being a bear from being gay?</i></p> <p>Yeah—being —the image of being gay—it's normally—to me it's one—one whose—the physical image is being young, pretty, clean shaven...the—goes to the disco. It's nice, but very girly. I'm not saying that Bears are not girly, but—(Laughs) And, you know, I thing in the normal gay world if you're—once you become older it's very lonely. Very sad. Like no one wants an old queen. I think that's very frightening for a lot of people. But I think in the Bear world, old is sexy, so—And you're always going to find someone. Well, I know as I get older I'll always going to find someone that I like and —yeah, and be cuddly with. I don't have any—I'm not worried about getting older, but a lot of my friends, they think about that and it does scare them to be old and alone. And to be an old queen.</p>
0:25:22	<p><i>Can you separate a bear from being a man? Can a woman be a bear?</i></p> <p>I try to be open-minded, but I can't really see a woman being a bear. And I think the community is accepting enough to have a woman as a bear, but I can't see it.</p> <p><i>Why not?</i></p>
0:25:41	<p>It just doesn't fit the picture.</p> <p><i>Why?</i></p>
0:25:46	<p>Don't misunderstand me. I do like a bigger woman. There are some very attractive bigger women out there with the big curves and that. I don't find it sexy but I find it very nice. And I don't know—with me the facial hair just goes with being a bear. The image. It's not everyone. It's not everyone has that and I don't meet too many women with facial hair, or</p>

	<p>enough. So, the answer is no.</p>
0:26:47	<p><i>Is being a Bear different than being an ordinary gay man? Is it different? Is it more privileged? In what ways, if you say yes?</i></p> <p>Yes, I think it's separate. I think it is different. I think being a Bear is very sensual. Yeah, very sensual. Very warm and very fuzzy. Where as the normal gay community, I think, I don't know, It think it's a little bit harder.</p> <p><i>In what ways?</i></p>
0:27:28	<p>You have to, I think to be accepted in normal gay community. You have to keep up with the fashions and go to the right places. And do the right things. Not all the time. I think the leather community is a little in-between. The leather community is very sexual and very trusting, but I don't see it as being as sensual as the Bear Community.</p> <p><i>So what you're saying basically, you think that in the ordinary gay community you have to keep up the image of being gay? That people who are out in the ordinary community? The clone community is trying to keep up the image, right?</i></p>
0:56:57	<p>I'm not really thinking of the clone community. I'm thinking of the young, fashionable community. I think the clone community doesn't have to worry about fashion, cause it's the same thing all the time. But I am thinking of those between eighteen and thirty or so. I think, you know, they have to. I think it's a bit hard for them, because, you know, they have ... but you have to keep up the fashions and go to the right places. It doesn't happen so much home. I know over here, like they have to go to the right nightclubs where everyone is the same age. Everyone's twenty-six or...</p>
0:29:26	<p><i>Do you see yourself as masculine?</i></p> <p>I do.</p> <p><i>Why do you say that? In what ways?</i></p>
0:29:45	<p>I just think it's the way I present myself. I know there are—I mean, there's always the gay side of me that people pick out with the way I behave and the way I act. There's also the masculine side. I just like being a boy, you know. Unfortunately, I could never get into spectator's sports. So I can't really sit down and watch football and watch a ball game and things like that. I really enjoy socializing with straight guys and drinking beers and getting all pally with them. I very much enjoy that. Yes, I see myself as masculine. I also get reconfirmed that as well with mainly straight friends and the kind of things—that if we go to a gay bar—</p>

0:30:54	<p><i>(Disturbance)</i></p> <p>I have a very good friend at work and we went out to a gay bar about a year ago, and he was kind of—he got a bit nervous. And—although he was not trying to show it. But he said, “You’re not like them.” I get reconfirmed in that way as well</p>
0:32:25	<p><i>Do you see your masculinity as being put forth by the heterosexual community? In the heterosexual community, all the things that we associate with masculinity, such as power, wealth, authority, and many other things we associate as masculine traits. Two very strong things have to do with procreation and power over women. As gay men we don’t have to deal with either. Where does our masculinity come from?</i></p> <p>I think as growing up there’s a lot of denial. When you’re growing up—Okay, as I was growing up, I knew that I liked guys but I liked girls at the time. I think that in the beginning, it was, you know, I don’t want to be what we used to call a “poofster.” So I have to—I just have to be tough. Where does it all come from? I guess, I know, it’s cultural but I guess it’s also hormones as well. I think that’s an easy answer. I say—(Laughs)</p> <p><i>Where does it come from for you?</i></p>
0:33:22	<p>To me, it makes me feel better. If I—I’m feeling masculine at the time. I just feel more confident. If I go to the gym and I come back to the gym and I feel all pumped up. I feel great. It also feels a bit tired, but I feel sexy, masculine. I feel good. So.</p>
0:34:27	<p><i>Is being gay and being a man synonymous with you?</i></p> <p>Probably sometimes, but not—not all the time. (pause) I thing being a manly man is very nice but it’s something you share with many other people, you know. And also with being gay but I don’t see them being the one thing. They have—there not the same thing. Like I really enjoy being with straight men, so I don’t see the tow as being synonymous.</p>
0:35:44	<p><i>Has being a member of the bear community, even contemplating being a member, helped you in any way with your identity of being a man?</i></p> <p>I think so.</p> <p><i>In what ways?</i></p>
0:35:48	<p>I just know that I’m going to go back home being a lot more confident. I have a feeling I’m going to be a lot more open. It’s funny, six months ago,</p>

	<p>friends and colleagues, it was, it felt a bit strange to tell them the type of man I liked cause it didn't fit the—what society believes is the man—or the sexy image of a man, but I'm going to have no problem saying, well, I think he's nice or describing the type of man, I really like to be with my old friend and some more of my colleagues. I've never denied it or anything. They all know. But at first it was—It feels a bit strange. It feels as if you're not going to be accepted from them. For liking this other community in life. Yeah, so I think I am going to be much prouder to be associated with the Bear Community when I return, you know.</p>
0:38:00	<p><i>Les Wright talks about the fact that Bears commonly go through a double coming out. (Explain) Do you think this is true?</i></p> <p>To me I think it's more like a triple coming out. For a period I got into the leather scene and getting into that was like the double coming out. I do enjoy it still. However, finding the Bear Community, it's just, viola. It's just where I want to be and where I fit, you know. So, it's the triple coming out for me.</p> <p><i>(small talk)</i></p>
0:38:52	<p>But, I don't know, with the leather community, I think it also, it just drags on a bit. It's like another—I had a boyfriend who said, "It's just another form of drag. Leather Community, cause everyone dresses up and there's a lot of—There's nothing more of a turn off when you see a very small built man, very high camp, dressed in his full top leather gear, camping it up and prancing around. It's a real turn off. But with the Bear Community, there are still small guys, high camp but hey just being themselves. They're not dressed up pretending to be something different. I think that's the difference.</p> <p><i>Bear drag, isn't that still drag?</i></p>
0:40:52	<p>I guess so, but it blends with reality a lot easier. I think because there are a lot of men out there what do, who are bears, who are like bears or straight people out in the country or whatever. I think—yes you're right, it's drag but it's just not so over the top. It just doesn't—</p> <p><i>Would you say we are imitating straight people? Why is it beneficial?</i></p>
0:41:48	<p>Perhaps I think the reason why it would be beneficial we look like normal people. Normal men. We're not so disconnected from the rest of society. I think it's important to not separate yourself from the straight world. I think you have to interact and get to know people in your community and stick with your family members and your friends from school. Yeah, maybe some of us do imitate straight men or straight people, but that isn't so bad. I don't know. Imitating normality, I mean if you're trying to imitate a normal</p>

	heterosexual man, I think maybe it just comes easy, cause you know all about it. Not from the heterosexual side, but you know how to be a man, I think.
0:43:47	<i>Can a bottom be masculine?</i> Yeah. <i>Why do you say that?</i>
0:44:02	I don't know. I had a lover and I was a bottom for him. And it worked out very well. I didn't feel any less that man for being the bottom. I don't think there is any real, no magic answer to the question. I just think, well, yeah, a bottom can be a man. I think a lot of people want to be a top cause that is where being a man is and one really, you know, there are more comfortable about being a bottom. But I think, I've known many people that are very masculine and a bottom and actually I like that.
0:45:23	<i>Are you politically active in the gay community?</i> No. <i>Are there any of the issues the politically active gay community is trying to get that are important to you?</i>
0:45:41	Oh, yeah <i>Which ones and why?</i>
0:45:46	I think that total equality—I think that's the most important one. Cause I think once you have that—once you reach that goal—when that goal is reached, all the other issues will just—well, they won't be that important cause they'll be included in total equality. There's the other issue about HIV and safe sex. And I think that also needs to be—that's also high on what I think is important. Just getting the message out. Making sure people don't forget. At the moment it appears as if it's going away but it's not. And I think it is easy for people to make mistakes. We're all human. I think the message has to be drummed continuously. And I think that's the only way it's going to be controlled, until there's a cure or prevention or something like that.
0:47:49	<i>Why do you think bears are not politically active?</i> I don't know. Perhaps they are just comfortable with themselves. I don't know. I think we're very lucky that we can be—the whole gay community can be politically active, but don't think the subculture—I—there isn't—there isn't specific subjects we want to promote politically as being

0:49:49	<p>members of the bear community. So, I don't think there's any subject which are specific to the Bears, that we need to march down the street, you know, give us our bear rights? It's just...</p> <p><i>Do you think that since we can blend that we might not need as many rights? And why would you say that?</i></p> <p>Perhaps it—Yes, we feel more comfortable and we—Yes, we do feel more comfortable with in the straight world. But I also think we don't get directly a lot of ignorance or bigotry from the straight world because they probably relate to us easier as well. Just because of the dress down look and so, they can probably relate to us much more so we don't—we won't get called manes walking down the street so we probably—it doesn't—it's not so bad for us in the straight world.</p> <p><i>(I disagreed with Bill, to a degree. I related to Bill, a story about homophobia toward "straight acting gay men" by a heterosexual man I had encountered.) Is it such a terrible fear to be a man, to be a bear and gay, especially for straight society, in particular, straight men?</i></p>
0:51:46	<p>Now that you mention that, I do remember having a conversation with a boss of mine a while back, It was a group conversation and I don't think I he knew I was gay at the time, But he did say that he had been to San Francisco and he did mention of the big gay men there at the time. And when he was talking about it, he was—cause he was thin, and not short, but still a small-built guy, you could tell he wouldn't be comfortable at all in that situation. And I think, what you said there—It may be because, also if they're in the presence of a big, powerful man, they're going to feel helpless, if something happens—yeah.</p>
0:53:31	<p><i>Are there any aspects of the political gay community that offends you? Make you not so proud to be gay?</i></p> <p>No. Well, I guess sometimes there's a little misbehavior at gay marches or parades and things like that. Which—when people start showing their dicks around or something like that at a gay pride or something like that—I think—I feel—what does the straight community think about that? I don't like it when gay people misbehave in that way. I think that they can be over the top, dress up in drag, be really funny and dress up like nuns and all that—I find that quite acceptable. But if people start having sex on the streets and that—that's where I think it turns a bit ugly and that's what I don't like. Cause it's not a good image. It's just ruins a lot which people have been working hard for, you know, past century, you know.</p>
	<p><i>Could you see yourself as a role model for young men looking at this community?</i></p>

0:55:29	<p>I think I'd be a good role model.</p> <p><i>Why?</i></p>
0:55:38	<p>I'm a good person. I am a—Yeah, I'm just a descent guy. I've got good qualities. Why not?</p>
0:56:20	<p><i>Needless to say, some straight people are going to be seeing this video. Anything you want to say to them?</i></p> <p>Just to—just try to be accepting. If you can't be accepting, to be tolerant and don't let it bother you. They don't have to go the other way. They don't have to. You don't have to have gay friends. You don't have to be friends with someone because they are gay. I know a lot of straight people who are quite happy to have their gay friends, but just be friends with people that you like.</p>

Bill Hargreaves
Tape 2
February 22, 2000

Time Code	Interview:
0:00:18	<p><i>What does gay pride mean to you?</i></p> <p>It means a lot. It means assertiveness. It means identification, very genderwise. It means acceptance of the public and accepting yourself as well. I guess I can answer the question two ways. Gay pride is being proud and also in the political group, sense. It's a little bit strange. When the political start—first started to be political in Australia, it felt as if the Americans are taking over. Cause we already had our gay political groups there. But also, when we started seeing Pride and seeing all that political activity, at first it felt a bit strange or we couldn't do it on our own. But after a while, it felt more worldly. More international. More of an international identity. So it doesn't bother me anymore.</p> <p><i>Have you been in the (Sydney GLBT) Mardi Gras Parade? (Spoke about the re-enforcement of being in the parade.)</i></p>
0:02:27	<p>I can understand why because you've got hundreds of thousands of people all cheering you on. So, it's got to be nothing but positive. And it's nice to know that most of those people are straight people.</p>
0:03:22	<p><i>How does pride correlate to your self-concept of being a Bear?</i></p> <p>I could answer this question much better in about six months time.</p> <p><i>How does pride fit into your personal life?</i></p>
0:03:34	<p>I don't—I don't know. Just in little ways. I—around my house there are little hints of homosexuality. There's no—</p> <p><i>(interruption)</i></p>
0:05:11	<p>I tend to give a lot of little hints. In my apartment at the moment there aren't any pictures, black and white pictures of half-naked men every where which I don't really like but I do have a big picture of Bert and Ernie. I identify them as being a gay couple. Okay, they're puppets. (laughs) I also have—I love Xena. I have pictures of her all around my house. I mean she's sexy, butch—she's also—I think the gay community identifies with here. We all know she's a lesbian. I also have pictures of Goldberg and my colleagues know that I like him. He's my favorite. So those images to me, that's how I show people in a positive way that, you know, I'm proud to be gay. Cause I like these icons. They're not—I also like big, hairy men, but I</p>

	don't put the posters up everywhere in the house.
0:07:50	<p><i>This is everything I have. Can you think of anything you want to add?</i></p> <p>There's a group in Holland, which is Dikzijn Maats, which translates into Fat Buddies. There's also a double meaning, which means close buddies. Sounds awful, but I kind of know the people who are—I don't really—There not—I don't feel like joining that particular group. It's also very small. Just about twenty people. I don't know, I don't think there that many opportunities in Holland. I think that's why you had 4 people come here.</p>
0:10:16	<p><i>One of the problems in Australia is that there isn't a native bear species. In Australia, the closest thing to a native bear-like totem is koala and wombats?</i></p> <p>There is a group in western Australia and they call themselves Wombats. Wombats something. When you mention that could be the closest animal that you could relate to down there, because it's kind of big—well, not that big, grows to about that high and kind of wide. I don't know. I never actually thought of it as a problem because it's one planet. There are bears in other parts of the world and we all see bears at the zoo. Maybe it could be a good thing that if we go out camping that we don't meet one.</p>

Bill Leininger
Tape 2
March 2000

Time Code	Interview:
	<i>Do you identify yourself as a bear?</i>
0:00:48	Yes, I do. More of the mentality—just I don't seem to have too many stereotypes of my own and I just, I don't know, I think, one of the classification of a bear that many people think, or one of the definitions that's pretty common is, you know, a bigger bear, or you know, a bear with facial hair. So, I classify myself as a bear, mainly because of that and just my attitude. I'm just kind of carefree and, I don't know, my attitude is just—I love hugging everybody and that's kind of what I've known the bears to be. So.
	<i>You realize I haven't got a clear definition of what a bear is, yet?</i>
0:01:29	Oh, no. There isn't one. There's just of many—Everyone has a different definition of what is a bear. I just really think it's in here, you know. If you want to be a bear, you can be a bear, you know. We're not going to—at least in my opinion, I'm not going to ostracize somebody if they think they are a bear and I don't, you know, I mean, we are—I guess, even a twinkie can be a bear. But I think we all know what a twinkie kind of is, but, you know.
	<i>I think we have a clearer definition of what a twinkie is than we do of a bear.</i>
0:02:10	Yes. I think there are just so many different definitions and we all agree on all of them. I think, you know, there's nothing that says you have to have this and this or you know, there's no formula that makes someone a bear. There can be a whole bunch of different characteristics.
	<i>How do you identify yourself as a bear? Do you use and adjective, such as polar, grizzly?</i>
0:02:41	No, I just. If someone was to ask me if, you know, I'm a cub or polar, what ever. No, I'm just a bear. No, I don't use an adjective with it or anything else to describe myself as a bear. Just a bear. Just a regular bear.
	<i>Are you active in the community? Are you in a club?</i>
0:03:05	Yes, I'm in the Motor City Bears in Detroit. And we just recently started a Gen X Chapter back home. And before I started my project with Bear Exposed, I was started questioning what I think that bears really wanted, so

	I started visiting more bear clubs and bear runs just to, you know, evaluate other clubs and other bears. So, I kind of separated myself from the Motor City Bears a little bit, jump into the Gen X Bears,. I was pretty active with them and now I've just been spending a lot of time doing my own business.
0:04:04	<p><i>Would you say that you chose to be a bear?</i></p> <p>Let's see, I don't know—No, I wouldn't say that I chose to be a bear. I think that I just realized that the bear community is where I feel the most comfortable being gay. And I definitely felt like I fit in. So, I don't think I chose to be a bear, I think that the bears were out there, being relatively new to the gay community, I've only been out for five years and finding the bears, I think was a very good thing for me. It helped open my eyes and realize there are other groups of gay people. There's not just the stereotypical gay people out there. So, there are several niches with in the gay organization or gay group.</p>
0:05:21	<p><i>For you, how does being a bear differ from being gay? Is there is a difference?</i></p> <p>To me, I don't think that there is a difference. I don't see one.</p> <p><i>Do you think a bear has to be gay?</i></p>
0:05:30	<p>Ah, no. I've certainly seen many heterosexual people, you know, my assumption is that they're heterosexual. I don't know them all, you know. I don't think you have to be gay to be a bear.</p> <p><i>That is one of the most argued questions I have asked.</i></p>
0:05:50	<p>Really. I think it is a niche with in the gay community, as to be labeled as a bear. I think other people fall into the bear category, whether they want to be a part of that or not. I don't think that you have to be gay to be a bear, but I think on the other hand, if you're part of the bears, the assumption would be that you're gay. You know, so—But I wouldn't go as far as to say that you have to be gay to be a bear, I wouldn't say that.</p>
0:06:55	<p><i>When did you come to the realization that you were different? Did it happen to you I your teen years? Did you start to question then? When did you first become attracted to men, I guess is the real question here?</i></p> <p>I don't know that there was any one day that I woke up thinking, I was gay. Just from way back, as far as I could remember I—just when I understood what being gay meant, I knew I was gay. I chose not to lead that lifestyle for a long period of time, just because, I mean, I was growing Catholic and I knew –not that it was being preached upon me everyday but I just knew it</p>

	<p>wasn't completely accepted in society. So I, of course, wasn't very comfortable with the realization that I was gay. So I just chose to hide it. But as long as I could remember, I've always been attracted to a masculine man, you know. Even to this day, I'll tell some one, when I was, I think I was four or five—my father would get up and go to the shop. He was one of the guys who worked for the factory. I would go crawl into bed with my mother, before I got up and whatever, if I was going to school that morning. I think it might have been kindergarten. And I remember telling her one morning I had a dream that I married Robin from <u>Batman and Robin</u>. That was so long ago. But at the time, I did not understand what that meant. I'm sure that in her mind, I mean, knowing now what I know, you know, what adults can know and everything, I would have immediately start questioning it. But she didn't and I didn't know what I meant, but I just—Even way back then I had some fascination with men. So, go figure, you know. I know it was like early years, four or five. And then just of course, growing up and going to Junior High and then just starting to really go through puberty and realize what is really appealing to me and what's not. I knew that I was gay.</p> <p><i>How did you protect yourself? I mean you obviously didn't want your peers to know.</i></p>
0:09:18	<p>No, I basically just—I think I just did what I thought they wanted me to do—so—or what society wanted me to do. And that was a male finding a female to date and you know, I went through—I had a series of girlfriends. Not a whole lot. But, you know, I had a few. And I eventually became engaged and married. And, that's just how I chose to hide it. I dealt with it—I don't even know how I really dealt with, I just blew it off. And just—It wasn't a bad life. I mean, I did love my wife and—but I wasn't happy. And it took a toll on me. And while I married, I was becoming really, really unhappy and at the time I was only twenty-six, twenty-seven and I just realized there is now way that I could go for the rest of my life, living this façade. So, I had to end it and ever since then I've been very happy. I went through a period of mourning, per se, you know, because it was a lifestyle I was used to living and I was more or less burying the actor, you know and so—and a family that I no longer talk to now, you know, because of the divorce and everything.</p> <p><i>You disclosed to her, right?</i></p>
0:11:01	<p>Yes, yes, yes. She did—I didn't immediately because at the time I wasn't very comfortable with the notion of being gay. I just—I had to go through counseling and therapy—so—that was a rough process for me, but I would say within the first thirty days of telling here I wanted a divorce, I admitted to her that it was because I was gay. She was a little relieved, you know, she realized there was nothing she could do about it and you know, she was</p>

0:12:29	<p>sad. I was sad. But there was, I mean, we just realized, you know, I had to let it go. I had to lead my life for who, what wanted and I didn't feel it was fair to keep her in my nightmare,</p> <p><i>(Conversation comparing experiences with wives)</i></p> <p>Well she, I think just out of fear and just being alone—she didn't know what was going on. She did mention she would be happy staying in the marriage without sex. And I told her, I said, "But I wanted to have sex with men." And she said, well, "I wouldn't want that." I said, "well then we have to separate, cause that's why I want the divorce," so....</p>
0:13:16	<p><i>How was it coming out to your family? I want to hear about this. Roman Catholic family?</i></p> <p>It actually wasn't that bad. My father had passed away twelve years ago now. So he was—it might have been a little more challenging had he been alive. I'm not sure how it would have all played out. Because I was never that close to my father, anyway. But in telling the rest of my family—well it started out, coming to terms with it myself first. As soon as I told my wife, it wasn't that I told everybody. It was over the course of the next twelve months of being divorced or separated, divorced, I started telling very close friends, trying to build my support group for when I did get into the core of my life, you know, my family, relatives, so forth. So, I just slowly but surely telling my close friends I was gay and of course everyone's reaction was disbelief, they just couldn't believe it, because here's this guy, who, for twenty-six, twenty-seven years had lead the lifestyle of, you know, a heterosexual and that all they had known in their minds so they just couldn't comprehend how someone who was dating women, liked men. So, a lot of the responses was just, they were skeptical, they were thinking I was confused or that I was making a choice, and they didn't—even though I told them that it was something that I was hiding and you know, just living with more or less living a double life for so long, They finally, I guess just accepted it, but you know, it was disbelief at first. It was kind of funny when I was telling my aunt and my biological mother, it all started out as a joke. I had left the room—I had invited them over specifically to tell them. And I had left the room and I had come back. And when I had come back into the room there were chuckling and I heard my aunt say, "Well, maybe that's what Bill's problem is?" And I said, "What? What's my problem?" "Oh, we're just laughing. Never mind, it doesn't matter." And I said, "Tell me what?" They said something about maybe that's why Bill hadn't found another girl because he's gay. And I looked them right in the face and said, "Well it's true." (laughs) And they just looked at me for maybe a second and they laughed. They thought I was kidding. And I said, "No. I'm serious." They are like, "Are you serious? NO! You're just kidding!" And so it took me about three minutes to</p>

0:16:46	<p>convince them I was gay. And they just, I don't know, they were like, "Oh, okay!" My mother got really nervous and she opened up a bag of potato chips. She didn't even eat anything out of them. She was just fussing. She didn't know how to deal with it. So, but to this day, they, you know, they've known for almost five years and they still treat me like a normal person, I guess.</p> <p><i>That's good.</i></p> <p>Yes. And my sister and my other mother. The mother who raised me basically. I do have a relationship with my biological family. And of course I told the mother who raised me first. Or told her before my biological family. And she was skeptical. She was like, "No." That was her exact response. "No!" I was like, "Yeah, that's true." And here immediate response after that was "Oh, well, I once watch Oprah and she had on there, mothers, who, you know, their children came out to them." And she quoted something, you know, to paraphrase, "even if my child came out gay, I would still love them so." So that was pretty much how she accepted it and we actually became a lot closer after that. So, she was really the one person in my life, of my family and friends that I told, that it definitely drew me closer to. And she was, I think a little more accepting of it than everyone else at first. Because she was the only person in my life who would as me if there was, you know, a man in my life or what I did. She would be willing to hear me talk about going to a bar or meeting some guy. And you know, she was very open to that. Where as my sister and—and everyone else—they were reluctant to accept it and to even want hear it. They just didn't want to even see me with another guy. So—things have come around. They have come around quite drastically—just as I needed time to accept myself; they needed time to accept who I really am, too. SO, I don't expect them all to immediately embrace the fact that I'm gay and—"Hey, here's a man. (laughs) And I'm going to kiss him now." You know, I hope so.</p>
0:19:37	<p><i>Did you ever go through times of depression or things like that?</i></p> <p>Oh goodness, yes. I went through that whole year, well, I mean, before—I would—I mean say after the honeymoon was over. After the first year of marriage, things with me kind of started getting kind of depressing. I was just not happy. I was gaining more weight and our sex life had kind of come to a nil. And I wasn't happy with my body. I wasn't happy with my lifestyle. I just—I was very unhappy with a lot of things. And at the time, my job was starting to get a little bit more frustrating and stressful. So, I had a lot of factors that for some reason, it was like the climax was of course, coming out or getting a divorce or separation from my wife. And that—the course of the next twelve months really played heavily on me. I didn't have, let me see, it was August, September, when I told my wife and</p>

	<p>from them, through I would say, February, March is when I finally got the courage to tell one of my friends. And from that period of time, my family and friends all kind of shut me out. They didn't understand why I was getting a divorce. No one was really supportive of me. They were just, I don't know, they were just not there for me. Even though they didn't know what I was going through. They didn't care either. And—I went to therapy in, I started that June, which, you know, was much delayed but I was severely depressed. I contemplated suicide many times. Contemplated it before I even asked my wife for a divorce. And I just, I knew I was a stronger person than that anyway. And I knew that I didn't want to take the easy way out. That was the easy way out for me and I didn't want to do that. So—and then the Catholic thing was in my head. I'm going to go to hell if I do. So—(laughs) I, I don't know, I just didn't want to do that. But I seriously—I'd go home from work at lunch or at the end of the day and just cry. I would just cry. And I would beat myself. I would start punching myself because I hate myself for who I was and what I've done. And of course, at that time, I was feeling so guilty, you know, over hurting my wife and her family. I was just—I felt like an awful person. So—you know that was a very rough time, so I started seeing a counselor and she helped me and she put me on medication. So, I've been doing very fine, very well, since then.</p>
0:23:12	<p><i>Was there a point where you felt that coming out was as difficult as being closeted?</i></p> <p>I think coming out was worst, to be honest. I think I was—being closeted was something I had to deal with myself. Everybody else thought I was “normal” already. Coming out was, I think it was worst than feeling of just being closeted. Closeted to me was more suffocating. Where as coming out was, though now I can exhale and you know, breath easier, the coming out process was very difficult. I would not want to go through that again. Never.</p>
0:25:02	<p><i>Did you come out as a bear at the same time you came out as a gay man?</i></p> <p>No. No. There was a year that I came out and I still just trying to realize what I was and I knew what I liked but I didn't really know anything about the gay community. I didn't know any friends, who I knew for a fact were gay. So, it was a learning process for me. And I didn't even know that the Bears exist. And when I found them which was about a year after I cam out, I was relieved. I was like, “Wow! There are men who like me and I love this.” And I was completely enamored with the whole lifestyle, the you know—not necessarily going to the bar, but just there is this group called the bears and, you know, they love me. It's what I needed at the time. Definitely what I needed, because that was right at the when I was just going, you know, through the worst period of my life and I needed</p>

	<p>somebody to embrace me at that time. And the bears were willing to do that. So, I think more just coming out as a bear was just more to myself. I didn't feel there was anything my family needed to know differently about the bears versus just being gay.</p>
0:27:59	<p><i>Since your involvement, have you seen changes in the Bear Community?</i></p> <p>I would say, yes. Mainly just from what I've noticed, it seems, well, Gen X, I think started up, you know, just within the last two or three years. And, just aside from that, I think there are other little cliques of bears that are starting, you know. The pretty boy bears, you know. Then there are the chubby bears and you know, I just think that even with in the bear niche there's some segregation going on, I think. And, so I see some attitudes changing. Kind of more along the lines of image. If you don't fit the image that is being published in the magazines, then you are not in the clique or you don't belong in this group of people. So, yeah, it's like you don't sit at this cafeteria table. You know, unfortunately. Or if you don't have a position in a club or—there's a lot of classification going on.</p>
0:30:30	<p><i>How does being a bear fit into your idea of your masculinity? Your self-identity?</i></p> <p>I don't know if this is going to answer the question, but—I don't think you necessarily have to be masculine to be a bear. And I might have said that—earlier, because I was masculine, you know, I felt that I was somewhat of a bear. There are a lot of—I don't know—feminine bears and they're not all—I don't think that masculinity or that a bear is only masculine. I think that there can just be many types of bears. And—you know, you can have feminine bears, masculine bears, so to say that a man can't be feminine I think is true. I think a man can be feminine. I mean, even in the heterosexual world I think that there are some—I mean, just because a man is sensitive doesn't mean that he's gay, just means that he is sensitive and he's not necessarily masculine. Masculine is the rugged outdoorsman, fisherman type person, lumberjack, where as, you know, someone who might not fit that bill, they could still be a man.</p>
0:23:09	<p><i>Your work creates an image to some degree. Do you feel that in anyway you're steering that image?</i></p> <p>I would hope that I am steering that image. My intention with my playing cards and with whatever I am doing is to show more of what the bear community is like. One of my whole beliefs is that, you know, the magazines are not showing or depicting the true community. It's only showing one little segment. So I want to show—I do have some discrimination with, you know, what I am going to choose for my decks and calendars and so forth. I want to show the no-hair bears. I want to show the</p>

0:34:37	<p>chubbier bears. I want to show, if you will, average looking bears. I just want to show the whole diversity of the bears that are out there. I don't just want to show one particular type. There—I will have special editions, you know, that feature one specific thing. I hope that, with my cards, I am able to expand everyone's sights and beliefs about what a bear is. It's not just the one hundred-eighty pound hairy guys that make the cover of the magazines or possibly even get into the videos, you know. They don't all have to have eight-inch cocks, you know. That's not what we are all about. So, I want to be able to show everyone.</p> <p>(conversation)</p> <p>You know, I really hope to capture more of the true essence of the bear, you know, with my playing cards. I hope that I can do that.</p>
0:35:23	<p><i>What images are we getting in the magazines? What types of, you know; you talk about the one hundred-eighty pound man. We do have <u>BEAR</u>, which is one image. <u>American Bear</u> which is another. Then we have the Bear stuff given to us by the mainstream gay porn industry. What do you feel about them and what harm is it doing to us as a community?</i></p> <p>I think it's alienating a lot of people. I think it's making people feel they're not appreciated for who they are. And—I think, you know, it's telling us we all have to have hairy bodies. We all have to be somewhat in shape with the exception of Grizzly. I think Grizzly, well bulk make is something completely different to, but with the general Bear magazines, I think that they're all—you have to have body hair to some degree and, I mean, not just little peach fuzz here and there and you have to be relatively average weight or you know, well proportioned. And some may even be muscular. But, you know, like the Jack Radcliff, I think and the Busters, I think, a lot of people idealize those, or that image and that's what these magazines are showing. Unfortunately a lot of people do buy it up, you know. I, you know, I have to say I still have some <u>American Bears</u> and <u>American Grizzlies</u> and <u>BEAR</u>, I mean I appreciate what I can see in those magazines but I think it's also shaping the opinions of some bears and some of their viewpoints and I think that they're missing a whole segment—quite a few segments, really.</p>
0:37:59	<p><i>What about the pageants? Are the bear pageants for creating an image?</i></p> <p>Well again, I think—there, I mean, I have personally never been through that process. I don't feel that I would even make it, you know. And I think, gosh, you want to think that they're being fair, but they're still—for instance, Tim Martin of <u>American Bear</u> was a judge today. And, I mean, what's his image of a bear? You know, there were presidents of other bear</p>

0:39:40	<p>clubs there, but I don't know. <u>American Bear</u> was more or less sponsoring the whole event and a lot of weight on his shoulders to say who was who. I think again we fell into who his—or the magazine or what the stereotypical bear should be. And I think unfortunately, Tim Martin has more or less defined what he thinks a bear is and in the contest more often than not, do I see I see bears winning or those certain types of bears winning the contest where the average bear doesn't make it.</p> <p><i>The average bear could be a better role model?</i></p> <p>The interviews don't mean anything. Doesn't mean a thing. It's all about looks. That's all it is, you know and I didn't even see every contestant tonight but I am sure that the interviews probably didn't even have to do with who made the finalists. You know, so—I'm very skeptical on those things. I don't put much credibility in those contest, I think that they're fun to the extent that's exactly what everybody comes to see, you know, that's exactly what it is, they want to see something. Miss America for the Bears. Who's got the best furry chest! Who's got, you know, who fits the mold of what a bear is! Who better yet to have as a judge than Tim Martin, who's defining that mold.</p>
0:40:58 0:41:20	<p><i>Do you see yourself as a role model?</i></p> <p>In general?</p> <p><i>In general, for the bear community, for kids who are coming out?</i></p> <p>I don't know. I don't praise my self too well either. As a role model—I don't know, I just—I guess I don't really look at it that way. I just, I feel that, I want to again, to show who the bears really are and if and if I get a following, great. If not, I'm still doing what I think is right. So, you know, I think there is a large segment of the bears or men that want to be photographed that feel, "I'm worth being published somewhere." That represents our community as well as everyone else. But I feel I'm just another person. I'm just trying to express what I am as a bear.</p>
0:43:35	<p><i>How do you see that virtual community? What role does the virtual community have—the Internet community, in forming and maintaining the Bear Community as a whole?</i></p> <p>Well, it's definitely making the world a much smaller place. I think it is great if it's not abused and I think a lot of time it is abused. Just, I don't know—I think we're learning more about other countries and what their bears are like. Other states, like when I wanted to learn more about the bears at the time—I know computers aren't knew. At the time I was very naïve of the Internet and the Internet is relatively knew, though. And I felt</p>

	<p>the only want to explore what other bears were like was to actually go visit other cities and now, I think with all the technology that we have and how the internet has expanded, I don't think that everyone has to go do that. I don't think that they have to go to different cities. I think that with the chat rooms and videocams and everything, I think it's bringing everybody closer and bringing it right into their own homes. It's definitely giving them something, somewhere to tap into. Something that they can still do on the privacy of their own home. That they can research before they come out if they're not out already and just learn more about it, to feel safer about it rather than during head in, or head first into it all.</p>
<p>0:46:45</p> <p>0:47:33</p>	<p><i>Do you see your masculinity to be different than the definition of masculinity as put forth by the straight community?</i></p> <p>I think that it's within, to be honest. I just think that I don't think that I'm all that masculine compared to some other people or guys or even other gay guys, but compared to some other guys, I'm definitely a lot more masculine. How am I different?</p> <p><i>How is it different? Or is it different?</i></p> <p>I guess I don't know. I never really thought of it. Of course I worry if I'm out in public and not that I—I don't really care what too many people think, but if I'm out in public, and you know, I'm like, "You go girlfriend!" I don't want to do that so I'm cognizant to my place. I guess my masculinity is a little more controlled. I can control when it's on. I can control when it's off. So, that is where I think my difference is. Where other guys are probably just masculine all the time, meaning the heterosexual men. And I think that's pretty true of a lot of gay men in general. I think it's pretty controlled, you know, I don't think that everyone is masculine all the time.</p>
0:49:23	<p><i>Has being a member of the bear community helped you with your identity as a man?</i></p> <p>It hasn't had any effect on being a man. No, it's helped me accept myself as a gay man, not necessarily as just a man.</p>
0:50:02	<p><i>One of the things that occur in "coming out" literature is that we come out continuously. Do you think that is true?</i></p> <p>Yeah, I think so, because the whole society, in whole I mean, their first assumption is you're straight or you're heterosexual. So, I think that's true in respect to meeting new people. You are more or less coming out to new people almost everyday, whether it's the cashier at the grocery store or a taxi cab driver, you know, someone in a hotel. I think that, you know, just like the old cliché, you learn something every day, the coming out process</p>

	is pretty similar.
0:51:31	<p><i>I want to speak about coming out and sex for a moment. Society judges our relationship according to their relationships, meaning a male being dominant and female being passive. In our relationships, can the passive partner be masculine?</i></p> <p>Yes and that's something—that's something I've had to come to terms with even—just because they call it tops and bottoms and so forth. I think it, in my opinion I think it—I don't like going off base here.</p> <p><i>Interruptions</i></p> <p>I know that growing up, leading the heterosexual lifestyle, I always felt that the masculine role was the top type role and that the bottom was more of the feminine role. Yeah, it's been a struggle to deal with all that.</p>
0:52:47	<p><i>Are you politically active in the gay community?</i></p> <p>No.</p> <p><i>Are there any issues that the political part of the gay community has strived for that are important to you?</i></p>
0:53:05	<p>I don't know, I just—I want to be accepted. I want to be able to walk down the street, you know, holding hands with another man and that old—I don't know if that's what they're truly advocating, you know, but that's what I hope for. I have that same desire. I want to feel comfortable wherever I'm at to throw my arm around another guy or put my hand on his leg or you know, I want the same courtesies that men are given toward women. I want the same courtesies, you know, as a gay man.</p> <p><i>In your experience, do you see the Bear Community as being politically involved?</i></p>
0:54:16	<p>I don't know. I'm not a political person and I just, kind of stay out of it all. I don't know if that's...</p> <p><i>Is there any aspect of the gay political scene that offends you personally?</i></p>
0:55:03	<p>None that I know of.</p>
0:55:34	<p><i>Straight people are going to see the video. Anything you want to say to straight people?</i></p> <p>Not every straight person is closed-minded either. I guess I would just say</p>

	<p>just because I am a gay man, doesn't mean I fall into the same stereotypes of what they may think a gay person is. I'm not promiscuous and you know, I am not the only person who can contract AIDS. I guess I would just like them to be a little more educated. Not that I'm going to be the educator. Before a label is quickly thrown on someone, I think that there should be a little more research done. Little more education.</p>
0:56:51	<p><i>What does gay pride mean to you?</i></p> <p>I think that it is great that the community can come together and express themselves and be together and have a good time. I think it is, also important because, not that I think that a lot of people at that time would venture out to those events. Because that might be drowning in an ocean, you know, that they're not ready to handle. But I think it's a start of getting more awareness for the gay community and I think that they're getting bigger every year—not there are more gay people created every year, just more people are coming out. And I think they're pretty important to me, I personally need a gay pride. I think my pride is internal and I'm proud to be who I am. So, I don't need to march down the street. When there is a weekend event, similar to a gay pride and I think every metropolitan city has something, I like to go out and participate and be involved. But, I don't feel that it is necessary for me.</p>

Michael Tomaszek
Tape 1
September 7, 1999

Time Code	Interview:
0:00:57	<p><i>You're a Bear? Right</i></p> <p>Yeah, I guess so.</p> <p><i>Do you identify with the Bear Community?</i></p>
0:01:02	<p>Um, part of it?</p> <p><i>Which part?</i></p>
0:01:08	<p>The part that doesn't—and this sounds—I don't know how you want to put it? It might be just from personal experience there's that part that just sees it as way of—Oops, there somebody else—who it has been described as a disadvantage being a little bit heavier than the norm, and it so—here's somebody else who will have sex with me. I've declined joining an awful lot of bear clubs because that's what they were. You know, opportunity to have sex—and I don't need to pay dues to anything to do that. I'll get a gym membership if I want that.</p>
0:01:56	<p><i>So, how do identify yourself in the Bear Community?</i></p> <p>I guess more along the lines of it's not that plastic surgery looking, heroin chic, skinny, I starved myself, go to the gym six hours a day just average human being.</p>
0:02:20	<p><i>How active are you in the community?</i></p> <p>I am out of it at this point—having just moved back to a place I did live. Participating in I guess a—through various fundraisers, clothing collections for Organizational Vita, volunteering in Direct Aid, the Gay Rodeo, I worked at that as a volunteer. I manager to work a twenty-four hour day if possible thing, so a lot of volunteer opportunities outside are—community involvement doesn't exist. I also move like every two or three years. Just about the time I settle someplace, it's time to go. That's coming to an end though.</p>
0:03:42	<p><i>Why did you choose to become a Bear?</i></p> <p>I didn't. I came out late in life. And even then, I was never thin. That dreaded word in high school or even earlier elementary school, The Husky Pants. I hated that. I was never thin, I was never going to be thin. It's not</p>

0:04:53	<p>in the genetics. It's not in my family anywhere. And when I finally came out, I still wanted to be that, I guess that skinny, thin. Couldn't get that out of my head. Till—I never heard that word Bear until somebody had called me that. I had no clue what they were talking about, at first. This is in the—gosh, early nineties, late—</p> <p><i>Where did you first hear it?</i></p> <p>Where the heck was I? I was in Cape Cod. Summering. Summering! (Phew) Taking a week out of life to go and just get away. We had gone up there—Well, my family had gone up there for years. We had family had moved up there and friends and relatives. The first time somebody looked at me and went “WOOF,” I went what the hell is that. Just happened to be Provincetown. And just been going there since I was a kid. Penny candy shop. Ns some gentleman called me a Bear, a very attractive Bear and I had to stop and think what the heck he was talking about. And it didn't dawn on me at the time. I always had facial hair but not a full beard and I grew the beard at one point and I was teaching school and I looked twelve. So I grew the beard so I didn't. So I guess that was the first time where I was out with a beard and that was when I first heard it.</p>
0:06:17	<p><i>For you, is being a bear different from being gay?</i></p> <p>I don't think so. Well, they don't necessarily have to go hand in hand to begin with. I mean there are plenty of non-gay Bears. I guess you're probably talking more body style and well, just a physical stature versus what they do in bed. I mean, there are plenty of non-gay bears. You see them all over the place. In fact, that's what you see out on the media more versus the—I'm going to say those are probably a little more comfortable with themselves, have something other to do than spend time in the gym. Not that I'm putting that down. I would love to be a little trimmer. Trimmer, not thinner. (Laugh) I got other things to do and some are work. Some are play related. I rather spend the time soaking my feet in the pool then right now, than going up and working out for a while. That could change next week.</p>
0:07:53 0:07:57	<p><i>When did you first come to the realization that you were different from everybody else in terms of sexuality?</i></p> <p>When did I acknowledge it?</p> <p><i>First came to the realization?</i></p> <p>Probably real early junior high. Talking like sixth, seventh grade.</p> <p><i>What was going on?</i></p>

0:08:08	<p>I just liked men, I guess. You know, you start—I guess that’s the age when people start talking about dating and kind of. “Okay,” if that’s what I’m supposed to be doing. Not my thing. You know, you do it because people want you to. I had a much stronger attraction for my phys. ed. teacher I think at that point than I did for any girl I knew. But then growing up in a Catholic family, you suppose to put that away. OUT! OUT! OUT! As far as relaxing and coming out to myself. Probably mid to late twenties. Really.</p> <p><i>Why so long? Why do you thing so long?</i></p>
0:09:16	<p>I don’t know. Catholic family. Jesuit High School. I was a public school teacher scared to death of losing my job. It was, in the state I taught in. It was a very weird time. I was amongst the first where they started fingerprinting for people employed in any kind of school district in any way, shape or form. Bus drivers, cafeteria workers, teachers. And I guess that helped to put it down a little bit more. I buried myself in my work. That was real easy to do. From high school—Well in high school, I was going to conservatory as opposed to teaching music, I was going to be the, you know orchestral player. So, that was easy to fill up my time and distract myself from everything else. Not being—It was the distraction from not being what was on TV that everybody was looking at. I wrestled in high school and did all those kinds of things. It was kind of expected of you. But even then, I was in descent shape, but I wasn’t thin. So, It was weird. Very weird. I should have been happier with myself when I look back on it. Not saved a lot of time. Been a lot happier sooner.</p>
0:11:18	<p><i>You went through college not out? You went through high school not out? You went through junior high, not out. That is a long period of time between realization to actually coming out?</i></p> <p>Yeah, when you—It was really freaky. At the time, I had bought a house with a house with a good friend of mine. A female. She was wonderful. Still one of my best friends. I don’t get to talk to her all that often, but—She just all of a sudden one day, you know, came home, she like made a glass of wine. She sat down. And I think this had been eating at her for months. And she was like, “I don’t want you to be mad, blah, blah, blah!” She asked me, “are you gay?” I was just—I was kind of blown away. I was finally really relieved to say to somebody, “Yes!” You know, it’s not that she hadn’t known it. In fact, she probably knew more gay people at that point than I recognizably did. And she was actually, probably was the first—the first to kind of begin to hit—This keeps coming up in the conversation. The non six-pack, pec defined clone. That she knew who admitted but she was just like that there were other things that clicked in. And she—not that she didn’t understand. She just—I don’t know. She was wonderful in that, you know. To her, it didn’t matter. We owned a house</p>

	<p>together; we were still living there. She had her boyfriend and I had—Nobody! And the start of being comfortable with myself. God, I miss her. That was a shock and slowly—That was about the time I was moving again. She was getting married. We sold the house. I was going away to do the dreaded master's degree. That's was about when I finally said. "Okay. Chance to start fresh, new. Just go from there." It wasn't easy but it wasn't hard. And I kept kicking myself.</p>
0:14:01	<p><i>You were in New Jersey at the time? Right across from New York City, Mecca of the gay world?</i></p> <p>Drove by it on the way to visit the aunts and uncles and the grandma in Brooklyn. Drive by what was the Westside Highway at the time. Going past the piers and...</p> <p><i>Did the ghetto lure you?</i></p>
0:14:17	<p>Little bit. I went a couple of times before moving. Talk about a crash course in bar etiquette? And this was prior to the P-Town incident. I hadn't heard the word Bear till later and –I guess if it went into that realm of the community five times it might be a lot. Still at the time I was teaching school. Scared to death that some reason the school board was following me. I had admitted to somebody else in the same profession that I was gay. I was with the young ladies, young men and began to sit back and say, you know if I were straight, nobody would have worried about me with the ladies to a point. There's always that. What's the difference? I guess about that time too that I was as much as I wanted to be that, the gym-rat clone, I was attracted to the older, less gym-rat like myself. But most situations you see older man, young thing. So I was okay do that. I—But then hitting P-Town, being called a Bear for the first time. Actually sitting, having a beer when he was just like—He did one of those things like, "You have any idea what I was talking about, did you?" He said, "okay, larger than average, facial hair, the attitude, the non-swish?" So it had been an education there. Moving to Arizona where there—not that the hit there, but it was much more in evidence. Still not—not real cohesive there. Lots of the people there who went the bear club route were doing the bear hugs, the group sex thing. Not only that, they kind of got tired with girth and mirth and decided to call it something else. So those that could show moustaches and/or beards called themselves bear clubs. It was weird. It was just strange. Very odd. And of course you came across things like BEAR Magazine, there was American Grizzly, American Bear, all these things. Even there are variations and you can flip through and find things that are very attractive and things that aren't. But somewhere in the world, somebody else finds that and that's great. That's what they want.</p>
	<p><i>(Personal conversation about Bill Adams who was going to be interviewed)</i></p>

0:18:29	<p><i>after Michael. Bill was a model in BEAR Magazine.)</i></p> <p>I met a couple of them. I have friends back in Phoenix, who have posed for them. One of them told me, yeah, he had finished his photo shoot and I was just like, “For what? What were you doing with them?” He said, “No, I’m doing a spread.” And I had to stop and think. I was like, okay, yeah I guess. The term Bear is just so, a big umbrella thing. Maybe like the groups in Phoenix, thought it was a little more polite than Girth and Mirth. It’s a little bit more inclusive and a lot kinder than some of those. And you know, but there’s a lid for every pot. I’m convinced. There are so many people who don’t attract me sexually but they are the so nice. I’ve got some of the greatest friends.</p>
0:20:01	<p><i>When you were in high school and junior high, what did you go through during that period? Ever go through periods of Depression? Thoughts of Suicide? Treated badly by your peers? Any bad experiences? Were you the popular kid in school?</i></p> <p>No, about the only thing I was popular for was that I always looked older than everybody else. And high school, I’d get a page to the student council office at the end of the day and be given the beer list for the weekend. Then I’d go to the beer store. Where I was living at the time had separate liquor and beer stores and I’d come out with my shopping cart, load it into somebody’s mom’s shopping cart and deliver it to whoever’s house was having the party that night. As far as feeling a bit removed. A little. But I went—I lived in a relatively small town, I guess by standards of where I’ve been living since. Rural suburbia. You know, beautiful tree lined roads, no street lights, no sidewalks. But everyone else knew what everybody else was doing, too. But far enough to drive to anything you wanted to do. I kind of burdened myself in my music at the time. I wasn’t on the “A” list but certainly wasn’t that far down, on the “B” list. And you know, I had developed this thing that I was just fine with a book at the library as I was hanging out with a bunch of people too. I guess, even my practicing was kind of a solitary term but gave me something to do and I took it pretty far.</p>
0:22:06	<p><i>During the time that you were closeted? What was closeting like for you?</i></p> <p>I’d just get, like that “dance thing.” Sometimes you’d be in those conversations and they’d go into that little uncomfortable tangent. “Oh, are you dating?” What do you say? No! Cause then they always wanted to fix you up with somebody. Yes? Oh, bring <u>her</u> along. I learned the pronoun thing game little bit later that. Oh yes and just substitute all those—I could bring my significant other, my date, blah, blah, blah! And at the last minute not be able to may it. Oh I strayed...</p>
	<p><i>(I spoke to Michael about the process I was using to make this</i></p>

	<i>documentary. I told him it was all right if he strayed or even didn't answer a question. Thanks to editing I could be able to assemble a coherent video from the bits and pieces he was giving me. I also told him that I had not assembled a crew for these first couple interviews mainly because I didn't see the necessity of having one.)</i>
0:23:41	I would have a problem—have a problem having this conversation beyond you and me. It's just... <i>Like what?</i>
0:23:52	Well, it's kind of like, oh God, I've been—nine, ten? <i>How old are you?</i>
0:24:08	I'm 36. <i>You've been out...?</i>
0:24:11	Nine, ten years. I was just sitting there doing the math. I couldn't picture having this conversation eight years ago. Seven years ago. Talking about it. By the time I became comfortable, uh—It was when I had moved and was rebuilding my life. Maybe more redefining the outer edges of it. Coming into contact with other people who were so comfortable with it that it just didn't matter. And far, I had that kind of shock. “Ok, there's one of my professors. Having a party at his house and there's his boyfriend. Nobody cares! Okay! Alright!” He was a handsome man. A nice man. And I guess he was in that Bear vein, too. But upon coming out, not that it was natural or felt right or whatever. I could have sat down and talked to a rock at that point and have a great time. You sit down and you're talking to people and I met my present other half, husband, husbear, whatever you want to call it. Chatting. Sitting there talking face to face. Was never—we joke. We dated for months. <i>Steve (Michael's then husband) calls himself a husbear?</i>
0:26:14	He calls me his husbear! <i>He calls you his husbear? What do you call him?</i>
0:26:21	Just about anything. <i>Cub?</i>
0:26:24	I don't use that with him.

	<p>The term roommate came up for one place that I was for a while. That relationship terminated. So there wasn't anybody again for a while and I met Steven. And I had a tendency to ignore my telephone if I had to or if I could. I guess we had been together for a while and he walks in one day to the office and hands me a pager and says, "Keep this on you at all times. I've been trying to call you for hours. You never listen to your voicemail. You know, this way you'll at least know I'm looking for you." And we developed that little code that followed. Are you calling to B.S., need some information, or CALL NOW! The people sitting around me at work, just kind of went, "Are you that hard to get a hold of?" "Uh-huh!" Nobody asked who was that. I guess they heard me call him Steven. And what's going on? Did I put myself without having to? Probably. But nobody at that point said a thing. Switched jobs again, involving a long move. Hadn't been offered the job. I asked my boss-to-be what was the company's view on alternative lifestyles was. He gave me one of those, "What are you talking about's?" And after hemming and hawing a bit, I just like—My boyfriend and I will be moving out here if you offer me the job. And was one of those, "Oh, don't worry!" responses. Until then, I caught the French manicure. He just—he was super about it. And there again it never came up. People were minded—not that they minded their own business cause he would come to see me, drop something off, pick me up, whatever. And I'd introduce to whoever was there. I didn't have to say this is my husband. This is my lover. This is my longtime companion! None of that. None of those euphemisms. But as nosy as anybody got was, "How long have you guys been together?" You know. That was here in New Orleans. Switched jobs again. Didn't even, never was an interview. Cause somewhere in the interview process, you know, how they kind of go off the tangent. I don't know how we got on it? Got onto hobbies and Food Network and cooking—that's my obsession. Sarah Moulton and Emeril. I mentioned, yeah that I got nothing but cookware and Cuisinearts for the last couple of Christmases. Cause, you know, Steven, comes home from work and dinner supposed to be on the table. And it didn't, you know, it wasn't one of those things that zoomed over their head. It went in one ear and stuck in the middle. And there wasn't a shocked look. It was more of a tilted head, quizzical thing and they went on. Of course that met him later and they go, "He's so sweet!" I was just like, "you don't know." Everybody has that evil side.</p>
0:34:54	<p><i>Have you ever had people thing, like women come on to you, that your couldn't possibly be gay cause you don't fit the image?</i></p> <p>In a shopping mall in San Diego. Wonderful Horton Plaza. Just fooling around, coming out of a William Sonoma. Sitting down, having a coffee. Some lady came sat down, wanted a light, gave her a light. Started talking, "Where you're from? Oh, you must not have eaten? Blah, blah, blah! Did you want to come home with me? And I have got food in the fridge, smoke in a bag, clean sheets on the bed?" I was just like, "Wow! Wooh, wait a minute. Wait a fucking minute!" She just looked at me. I just like, oh no, it's not going to work and she just didn't quite understand. I was like, "No,</p>

	<p>I'm gay." She just like, "No, really. Really? Did I not brush my teeth or something?" What had she done to turn me off? That was about a fifteen-to twenty-minute conversation of "Are you serious?" "Uh-huh, yep!" I was flattered. It was cool. Occasionally, I do have the wedding or social engagement to attend where someone who doesn't know, too busy to tell, or just doesn't matter and you get placed at the "table." There are three guys and three girls who don't know each other and they just assume there's going to be three male-female couples sitting there. I've been to a couple of those and all of a sudden it's like there are two girls, two guys and a guy and a girl. Kind of surprised. Maybe they knew, who knows. I just—you kind of laugh it off.</p>
0:37:19	<p><i>Since your involvement in the Bear community, have you seen changes? Good or bad?</i></p> <p>I don't know if they are changes or personal observations of as I have become aware. I'm fairly aware that the Hollywood Pride, and New York, the Village Halloween Parade, not typical of the gay community. I'm really tired of seeing photographs and things on the news of bad drag queens, you know, it's camp drag for today and today only. And little boys rubber pants holding signs that say fuck on a float going down, where ever it is they go down. I'm really tired of that. But they put it on the news, you know, but they do not the part of the parade that's the gay doctors, the gay lawyers, the teachers, the gay fathers. John Q. Public, who so what, that the only thing is that they are attracted to their own sex. It's a little scary now to go out to a bar or a club. Well, I don't even go do the club thing. You go to a bar and I see younger people as opposed to thinking for the future as to thinking for now. At least, most of the people I met are always looking toward some kind of goal. Finishing school, buying a house, even something as simple as a vacation. The younger crowd, the younger crowd... I wish there was an organization I could have when I was fourteen, fifteen and not understand what's gong on. Have you ever read that book, <i>Everything You Need to Know about Sex, but was Afraid to Ask</i>? Horrible book! The whole chapter on homosexuality should be torn up. Out! That was probably, I guess one of the first resources me—and oh my God. It's not erotic. It's not informative. It... I could probably write the chapter better now and I have no psychological training beyond what I needed for education and a little beyond in research. Ah, it's horrible. But you know, there are organizations out there for teens and young adults and I guess it wasted on some. Cause they're put there and score a bit of whatever the initial of the day is, "K," "X," "G," who knows. The laundry room of the apartment complex I'm in, some kid, you know finishing up his GED cause he couldn't stand high school any more. More concerned about how he was going to get over to his grand mother's house so he could bum some money sp he could go out that night. And I'm saying, stay home. Finish your laundry. Stay in and save the money. Such a weird conversation. He was</p>

	<p>talking to a friend about how important it so to have a grandmother so you can bum money from. I just wanted to reach out and slap him. You know, I lost both of my grandparents really early and –AH, I just....Crappy way to treat your relatives.</p>
0:41:40	<p><i>We're talking about being gay and being a Bear. We haven't talked about being gay and being a man. Can you separate the two? Do you separate masculinity from being gay?</i></p> <p>No, I guess, I.... I happen to be gay, I—Not I happen to, I am! I'm a man, male. It just it. I do sometimes joke about, well you know the joke, the only thing keeping his feet on the ground are those big heavy boots he's wearing. Otherwise they'd be right up there at the ceiling. You see the perfect lumberjack look until he opens his mouth and as one says, "B," "I" "double G," –irl. Big Girl, put it together. I hate that. I just wonder where along the way did being gay mean you had to be feminine or take feminine aspects of any kind. I don't understand that. People do it, okay. I talk with my hands because it's an ethnic thing, I think, but when you walk into people and they turn around and go, "Sister, girlfriend!" I just like go, "No!" I'm going this way. That is not. I am going to say that it's not acceptable? Where did you learn that? And no, it's not alright to mimic it. The drag thing. If it's a Halloween costume party, it's a joke thing. It's not—not like people have a wardrobe. Oh some do? Boy, you pick out—pick out which June Cleaver apron to wear that night. As far as gay and masculinity, are we yea, then looking lesbian sort of view and femininity. Then, I don't see that there need to be some kind of weird flip in there, you know, because you're male and you're gay it's separate from masculine. No. I think. Hey, I think the fact that you can still pee standing up...is that still a masculine trait. You know, if women master it. Great, Good for them. I don't know. But....</p>
0:45:04	<p><i>How about being a bear and being a man? Can you separate that?</i></p> <p>Can I separate that? I think that the bear thing is more of a out of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender list of descriptions. No, I just...the image, can you separate bear and masculinity? I don't think so. Hmm, Again there is going to be all kinds from white to black, gray in between. Of...on the scale of and everybody's scale is going to be a little different. It's really would, working as the bar back this weekend. People made admirers or comments or...</p>
0:46:28	<p><i>(Disturbance)</i></p> <p>As far as separating them. Oh, talking behind the bar. Yeah, I have to be nice, that's what they're paying me for. But in some ways, it's real easy. Now granted, it was a look, don't touch thing there. You know, two feet of wood between me. But you know comments were made of you get woofed</p>

	at and it's kind of nice. It's always is, you know. The gild is not off of the lily.
0:47:24	<p><i>You see yourself as masculine?</i></p> <p>I do!</p> <p><i>You have a masculine self identity?</i></p>
0:47:27	<p>Yes.</p> <p><i>How different is your identity from that put forth by the heterosexual community. It is a different, you know have to deal with procreation. You don't have to have power over anyone, especially over women to prove you are a man. So, how do you see... how do you define yourself as masculine?</i></p>
0:47:57	<p>I can pee standing up.</p> <p><i>Cheap shot!</i></p> <p><i>(Disturbance)</i></p>
0:49:02	<p>I have. Maybe I am just twisted. Uh, I still go home and chop the wood for my mom and dad on holidays when I'm back there visiting for the fireplace. I spoil my nieces and nephews rotten and then shove them back to their parents. On the other side, I cook, I clean, I make the bed. But you do that. That's just everybody's got to do. My wife doesn't do it. I don't have a wife! My husband,. He doesn't do it either. So, somebody got to. Something simple as cooking has been seen as a very male dominated chef world. I took up as an interest. Long time ago. Everything from Christmas cookies to—now it's a therapy. Christmas time is how many cookie recipes I have and I keep adding to it every year. And it's gifts and office treats and whatever. I never get my kind of odd response like, "WOW! A guy cooked this?" I guess they are more amazed at yes, you do sixty-five hours a week in the office and you still have time to cook? Yes.</p> <p><i>(Small Talk)</i></p>
0:50:55	<p>I have always used to offer that I would stay home and I would cook and clean and have dinner ready on the table when Mr. Right got home. Well, Mr. Right's home and I'm cooking and cleaning. However I'm not doing it full time. I'm going out ot work. But I think it would be that way. But I think it would be that way... Anyway, I think—My mom was a stay at home mom, however her job was three kids and a house and a yard and the cat. That was plenty, a full time job. I don't think I justify being kept at home. Not that my mother was kept. I think the masculinity issue is</p>

	<p>something you define yourself and then you impose it upon others. I you don't find it masculine that I can cook or I can make a quiche without a recipe these days, then—well that's your problem. I run into people like that. Oh, you don't drive a jeep. You don't drive a "this." It's like, "No! I have a Nissan." Oh! Sorry. That's what I have. It gets me to and from work and everything I need it to do. If my beard's not long enough or too long or the right color or different consistency than what you're looking for then, well, that's fine too. At least you treat somebody for what they are. All right, again you don't find them physically attractive? That's fine. Everybody has something redeeming in them. It could be, well, a sense of humor. They just might know how to tell you a great story. The might also just watched the news and they can tell you what's going on in five minutes so you don't have to spend an hour. But...</p>
0:00:00	<p><i>Has the bear community helped you with your identity as a man?</i></p> <p>Yeah, I think to be honest. Yeah, I think along the way the men that I've met who defined themselves to be bears as well as the non—the people who put themselves in the non-bear category who look in on it. Offering the opinion or seeing how they carry themselves. Do what they do. Do their everyday thing. We learn by example. By trying it out. I cut my hair this—This is long at this point. For the weather, that was have ending. It was longer that this when I lived here. I had it cut for all reasons to work at Mardi Gras in case I got into a fight. There's nothing there for somebody to pull. I mean it's still there but it hadn't been that short since my dad cut it in the basement many moons ago. And as much as my mother, I remember here saying, "Oh, it'll be fine. It'll be cool for the summer,"" I went home to visit and she's like, did you really have to cut it that short? Like all of a sudden you liked this how many years ago. Twenty plus. I was like, okay. The beard threw her. I went through. I don't know if you remember, not too long before we moved it was it was pretty thick. I slipped one day in trimming which is why it is cut down. And just trying to keep it short—cutting it back. A hundred ten degrees. I wondering why still I have it on. But I like it?</p>

Michael Tomaszek
Tape 2
September 7, 1999

Time Code	Interview:
0:00:09	<p><i>(Before starting the camera, I told Michael about Les Wright's theory about bears having a two fold coming out process. I asked him what was his opinion on this.)</i></p> <p>Probably in the realm of the bear community I can see a two-fold coming out. I thing I would say probably people in their mid to upper thirties and above that. Very much so. I think its...No, I think coming out if it's going to be a bear thing I think it s a two fold thing. Number one coming to grips, the admission, the relaxation that settling down, hey you're gay. That's the way you're made. If then the bear is the next thing, because not everybody goes that route. No, everybody I'm not going to say aspires to be. There are all kinds of breakdowns in the bear community as far as there's the otter, the wolf, the...God knows how many other titles. There's that whole Bear Code, where...Heck they just broke Metropolitan Phoenix area into three area codes. And I am supposed to remember that, let alone a bear code with all of its different pluses and minuses, uppercase, lowercase...Forget it! I can't remember which side of town is which area code. I've seen it. There's the website. There's the Bear Youth. I don't... If the community can land support for the young emerging teen, the fact that they're gay's beside the point. I mean they have their own issues growing up. To immediately force them inot that avenue or channel them down that... I don't think that... I mean, heck, some of these people, they have no clue if they're going to be growing facial hair of some sort. For most people... Or body size or shape or type. No, I don't think that's the way to go. So I think the first is got to be, yeah, the realization that you're gay. Later on... You don't categorize your neighbors as straight yatzhee players and they wouldn't dream of doing that with their youngsters. I think you need ...need to let the one thing happen then the other. Who knows, I might win a the million dollars and get the personal trainer and go down to the "V" shaped body, slimmer hips... Well, probably not!</p> <p><i>(We had a casual conversation about a friend of mine who had a dramatic weight lost.)</i></p>
0:04:44	<p>You know. Could I loose enough weight to be that thin? I doubt it. Would I want to? I think I could put my energy elsewhere. I've already developed the perfect chocolate cake.</p>
0:05:38	<p><i>Do you think that masculinity and the fact that someone is a bottom can go hand in hand?</i></p> <p>No, I guess. Is masculinity and the fact I can't stand fish to eat go hand in</p>

<p>0:06:03</p> <p>0:06:08</p> <p>0:06:34</p>	<p>hand. I think it's more of a personal taste.</p> <p><i>Do you think there's such a thing as a masculine bottom?</i></p> <p>Yeah, but a bottom in what sense?</p> <p><i>Sexually?</i></p> <p>That's how much of your life?</p> <p><i>Good point!</i></p> <p>How does it have to be... No. I mean I guess... Is that like saying that honest lawyers are oxymorons. That they don't exist? I mean what does what does their I mean if you what to call it sexual practice or how they practice their sexuality or what aspect of it they chose damn or enforces the masculinity part. I... Yeah, I think there can be masculine bottoms.</p>
<p>0:07:24</p> <p>0:07:42</p>	<p><i>Are you politically active in the gay community?</i></p> <p>No, unfortunately.</p> <p><i>Are any of the issues in the gay community important to you? That the activists are fighting for?</i></p> <p>I don't know if there's any one issue other than that, I guess it's that ... The equal rights thing. Whether you're masculine bottom or feminine top, whatever. What it matters? I just want to be able to park my car and not have somebody throw something at it. Just like and be defended by the police if somebody does, just like everybody else. I want to be able to, able to participate in my husband's flight benefits just like their married counterparts, their male-female marriage counterparts. Unfortunately... At the time, Hawaii was the only state to kind of identify a gay marriage. I'm sorry, I couldn't afford to go to Hawaii, at the time. Why can't my love for my husband be recognized as legal as my sister's is for her husband?</p>
<p>0:09:01</p> <p>0:09:09</p>	<p><i>In your experience, do you see the Bear Community as being politically involved?</i></p> <p>No</p> <p><i>Why do you think that the Bear Community is not politically involved?</i></p> <p>Like I said, the groups that I've run across hen I was first coming out... And rebuilding an image of my own and alone my own life at the time. And working on the degree and the whole bit... Were concerned about what was going to happen in that two-hour space at the end of their day</p>

	<p>that they had set aside for sex. Or twenty minutes, whatever you want to call it. That's what I think they saw the Bear thing to be. And at the time and even now, twenty minutes, I can set up coffee for the morning. I am not worried about that. I didn't need a Bear group to arrange a date for me. Although I am probably really different than so many people out there. I haven't been to a Lazy Bear Weekend. I haven't been to Bear Bust. I haven't been to a Rendezvous. I haven't. At the time, I didn't know about it. Now that I do, I have a husband that would kill me if I went. All you hear are the stories. You hear the stories. How much of it is true, how much of it is one... are you telling me to make yourself look better. Although I had heard stories about Decadence before I am here and started working it and man I never believed that would happen. And recently I asked people, "Could I go and not get into trouble?" Ninety-nine percent of the time I am told, "No!" People say, "Well, bring him along and at least he will get into trouble with you." That's not the point. He has to work that weekend anyway.</p>
0:11:56	<p><i>This video is going to be seen by straight people. Is there anything you want to say to them about being a Bear? Being gay? Whatever? It's a wide open question. Take it anywhere you want.</i></p> <p>Alright, the public service announcement? Treat them as you would want to be treated. And I mean just about anybody. The down and out bear sitting there, needing change for a cup of coffee. If you get the bum a jar of peanut butter and a loaf of bread, get him. No need to turn around when I'm in the line at the supermarket with the frozen filo dough or puff pastry, and "Oh, Frozen?" Someone actually made a crack about that. And the only thing I could say was, "I didn't have time to make my own. They just looked at me. "Okay!" What's the problem? I treat everybody nice, just treat me nice, that's all I ask.</p>
0:00:00	<p><i>What does pride mean to you?</i></p> <p>I wish some day. That's a weird question. Cause I never thought my sexuality defined me. No. I said, when I was teaching, I never walked into a classroom and said, "</p>

Les Wright
Tape 1
February 20, 2000

Time Code	Interview:
0:03:08	<p><i>The bear community started in 1982?</i></p> <p>It depends upon who you're talking to, right. I think currently the leading contender is an article written by George Mazai that was published in <i>The Advocate</i>. May have been 1982. That may be where people are getting that date from. But any rate, this is kind of a look at the animals in the zoo and it's describing gay types in terms of animal types and one of the types is a bear which matches up pretty closely to the general self-definition of bears now, in the year 2000. But in terms of community there have been isolated pockets for example in Florida, for example in the L.A. area in the seventies, maybe even as far back as the late 60's. Where a particular motorcycle group formed an offshoot and called themselves bears. So in terms of the word being used within a gay context, it has many appearances. If you want to talk of the Bear Community, as it exists today, I say the mid-1980's is when it started happening. And the argument I use in the Bear Book is, I date from the time, say about 85, 86, when BEAR magazine was founded, when a private social-sex group was started, also called themselves bears, the Bear Hugs group, and the first BBS's were going up and online communication was just starting and there were a lot of guys who rapidly identified—Self-identified as bears—were involved in the—it—That all kind if happened at the same time. This thing which was happening in other places, I think the difference was because of the critical mass of people in San Francisco. Through at least three different venues, the awareness spread rapidly, plus with the Internet, and BEAR magazine. People living in other different parts of the country or even abroad picked up on it rather quickly. In the sense, they were doing it themselves and there was this recognition that there was a kind of ground swell.</p>
0:06:22	<p><i>Why a Bear? Why was a Bear picked to represent this group?</i></p> <p>Why a Bear? Well, for me personally or do you want me to speak for all of Beardom? (Laughs) It's like Margaret Cho, "Are you the gay?" (Laughs) Well, you know, my own personal identification when I heard the term being used, you know, in the mid and late 80's, I identified with it immediately. And a lot of what drew me to it was, number one, I personally have—my personal sexual fetish is hair. Beards and body hair. And, also because I've always been, more on the fringe of the leather sex community than feeling a part of it. There was that sense of Bear to me. Bear spoke of warmth and gentleness and nurturing, which</p>

0:08:26	<p>I felt I was not getting from the leather sex community. And that's why I always felt I was on the edge of it. So, those are the two key things. Was the particular physical characteristics plus that nurturing, warm, touchy-feely, huggy stuff that was much stronger in those days than probably is now. Though people are certainly still very friendly.</p> <p><i>(Converse about the friendliness of bears)</i></p> <p>I think a lot of people experience a kind of—I don't know, kindred spirit. There's something about when you walk into a room and there's another bear there, there's some kind of non-verbal, some kind of immediate connection that happens. And that seems very common among bears. As opposed to at one time, isn't being gay enough to have in common to be friends with every homosexual on the planet? You know. No, it doesn't work that way. And yet with bears it seems to be, whoever the people are and whatever they do, there is that bonding. How can I put it? Not because you're a bear, but that shared thing is what is labeled, a part of what is called a bear</p> <p><i>Second coming out? Could that be part of it, the second coming out?</i></p>
0:09:41	<p>Yeah, I know—some of that is the, you know, the whole initial process of coming out and coming to terms with you own sexuality. For some people, it 's much easier than others, but I still think it's a difficult process for most people even though the environment is much more conducive to it. But you come out and you find out that you don't fit anywhere in the gay community. If you like, your sexual taste or the way you look yourself doesn't conform to this kind of mass media consumer image of what a proper, you know, socially upwardly mobile homosexual man is supposed to look like and desire. And I think there comes that kind of then a lot of people feel rejected or themselves turn away. Kind of like—Again if I could back up for a second—I've always been attracted to men, to males. When I can remember my earliest memory of being like four years old and seeing my ten year old cousins, three of them walking across the backyard, and I just—I now recognize what I felt for them was pure lust. It was just this overwhelming ecstatic experience I had for them. And I've always been attracted to men. But in ten years as I came to understanding more and began to see, quote, unquote homosexuals, I didn't fit the stereotype. So I had this split consciousness of I'm attracted to men but that is what homosexuals are like and that's not me. I think that is also common thing that many bears have, that you go through that process of trying to assimilate into whatever mainstream collective identity is and still is—It's not me for a lot of gay men. And for a lot of gay men it is not them, you know. And I think that's part of the trial by fire that sets up the second coming out.</p>

0:12:10	<p><i>Do you remember when you experienced your second coming out? When you began to be aware of this community? Was it a definite point or was it gradual?</i></p> <p>I was kind of a—It ended up being very definite. Originally, a friend of mine who was a waiter at “Without Reservations,” which is no longer there on Castro Street—This may be ‘86, I think. ‘86, ‘87. Told me about a playgroup that he thought I would really like the guys and they called themselves Bears. And I had also, like roughly within the same month or so picked up issue one of BEAR magazine, which was this little, you know, cheesy, little, you know, photocopy zine. I actually met a long-term lover through his ad in issue number two. But then I got a teaching job on the East Coast and I went away for a year and that was, I think, that’s ’88, ’89? So I was kind of aware of, there was this Bear thing going on in San Francisco that I was really excited about and sort of connected with. And that was the lover I met, I had met and he and I back east and we were living in the middle of nowhere, outside of Utica, New York and trying to connect with the local gay community or the leather—there was a leather club and anyway to make a long story short—the year was a terrible disaster. We moved back to San Francisco and Bear was happening. Beardom was happening and we both immediately just jumped into it, you know. I was like one-year delay. I was like, I was there in the beginning and I went away and when I came back it was, like, “Oh yes, this is it.” And then, easily within that first year after that, not even the year, I think it was very clear to me there was something much bigger going on. And I tried talking to other self-identified Bears about what I was observing going on. You know, this group dynamic and people were just, you know, “Forget about it, Les! You’re making a big, you know, you’re making a big deal out of it. It’s not that big deal, you know. It’s just a bunch of guys! Bunch of friends, kind of thing.” But, It was very clear there was something bigger going on. So, I had my critical academic eye focused, you know, at the same time I was, you know, myself deeply emerged in it.</p>
0:14:58	<p><i>When did you start the Bear history project?</i></p> <p>Actually, if I could back-up for just a second. The other thing too, for me, about when I say being emerged in bear stuff, it was—the sexual component was really the catalyst for me and I think that ‘s what a lot of guys who belonged to the Bear Hugs group saw it as. It was simply a name that they used for this group of, this extended, you know, kind of social, socio-sexual, quasi-family group or tribal group, however you want to think of it. But I’ve always been uncomfortable with bathhouses. And I have been decimated in, I moved here at the height</p>

	<p>of the party. When every night, every day, every night was a party on Castro Street. And then AIDS hit. And within eighteen months it went from this party to Castro Street was literally deserted. I'm—it was totally weird. It was a ghost town and for two or three years it was very, very quiet. You didn't see people out and about and, you know, people—It was like people went into hiding and you might cross tracks here or there. You'd say hello to somebody one day and they looked fine and two months later you'd see them and they were like, on death's door. Or two months later you'd hear, oh, they passed away and when you saw them, it looked fine. And so there was this big sexual shut down, that people, most people stopped having sex or were doing it with a lot of guilt and furtiveness. And little groups were started which I show the Bear Hugs group started. It was a bunch of people who got together in a private setting and agreed to, you know, safer sex rules as there first beginning to be established. So, it was an alternative to the bathhouse. It was the only avenue I knew to meet other men to have sex with, plus at that point was—well, the best part of it was, these are the kind of men I'm attracted to, rather than, you know, what I normally see and it was mutual: they were attracted to me. So, I just literally dove in head first and would just go, you know, the monthly orgies that last all night. And again that energy changed over time and once the commercial private clubs opened up again that pretty much killed off the private sex party circuit that had developed here locally in San Francisco. Although being in rural New England, that's the way things work as well. There are—there are a number of private sex groups and it's much more kind of underground than anything San Francisco ever is, I think. (laughs)</p>
0:19:37	<p><i>You talked about the online part of the community. How important is the online to maintaining this community? What do you see in the future from the Internet or online usage? That is quite a package!</i></p> <p>Yeah, and we could unpack it for quite a while here. But the short answer is, number one, I think the Bear Community is most likely the first bona fide cyber community to come into being, because so much of the social connecting that's taking place has been directly over the net. And it's literally spread around the world, so both the word of the idea of bear, of bear community is spread that way plus all the personal social connections have happened. And how much of it is social and how much of it is sexual and how much of it is virtual, as a virtual pen pal kind of thing, as opposed to people who really establishing longer lasting friendships is of course very hard to say. But also because whatever causes it—this inordinate concentration of gay men who are bear identifying in the computer industry to begin with. It's kind of like that's the stereotypical field of employment for a bear. We're there in such large numbers that it's almost inescapable.</p>

0:20:17	<p><i>(Conversation about how it is has become a joke; so many Bears are in the computer industries.)</i></p> <p>But they're also—But not everybody works in the field and I think, and with household computers becoming, going the way of televisions and cars, which is, you know, everybody's going to have at least one. I think fewer and fewer people are being left out, you know. Five years ago I can think of a friend of mine who's now in Boston who was upset at the idea that from most of the people he'd talked to, if you were not online, then you weren't really a bear, because all bears were online, if not actually in the computer industry. Which was like, where the hell that one come from. But there are plenty of folks who don't connect that way. But it is—it does—I guess what I'm trying to get a handle on—fairly early in my own adult life, I fled the middle of nowhere, upstate New York. I went to Germany as an exchange student, and you know, I very rapidly kind of plugged in to this, this kind of international gay circuit between all of the major cities in Europe, U.S., North America, Australia, and maybe a few other places and well, living in Europe, it's a lot cheaper to travel from one European capitol to another. But I found that I was moving in those circles, as you know, basically as a poor student, but I moved in a sense in a much higher social circle level. And I think the Internet for bears has become a cheap equivalent of that same kind of—people who are traveling on this kind of international circuit and then with IBR and the different kind of events that go on, as well as the personal friendships that—it's actually, simply an expansion or extension of and aspect of gay community that's been there for a much longer time.</p>
0:24:05	<p><i>(Comments on virtual community research)</i></p> <p>Which is faster and cheaper than telephoning or writing letters, which is what people would have done in the past, between physically getting together. So I can see—so in that sense, I see the Internet as simply an extension and intensification of the dynamic that's already been there. I don't—you know, so the virtual community—I think there's a lot of hype about—people don't live in outer space in cyberspace. It's a tool. It's another medium but it's not an actual place that people inhabit.</p>
0:25:24	<p><i>What we identify as a bear is basically European in terms of culture. I mean the idea of Bear, as the hairy man does not exist in the Black or Asian culture. Yet, we see a lot of Asian and Black Bears. What is your take on this cross-culturalism and how is it affecting the Community?</i></p> <p>That's one of the dynamics I find the most curious, fascinating—curious in that, the whole bear totemism is a cross between, you know, U.S.</p>

0:27:29	<p>American cultural values and imager and icons and European—either the European roots or kind of a hybridization with European values as well. The idea—on the one hand I think there's a kind of direct correlation that this whole social-homosexuality as—the politics of social identity, that Bears is an extension of that and I think this social identity may end up being historically limited phenomenon. Or it may not be, you know, like Pandora's box: once it's been brought into the word it may never end. But it is certainly something very new in the history of civilization. Not homoerotic desires, but certainly this social category as we understand it today and so on.</p> <p><i>(Move camera to better frame the subject.)</i></p> <p>And the other thing that is the notion of a gay social identity has spread around the world and as American cultural imperialism is taking over the world, this seems to be part of the whole phenomena. And yet, for those people who travel and/or live in other cultures, it's very—it becomes very clear that these identities are very different from culture to culture, you know. So, some of it seems to be part of the world, you know, either embracing or just saying we can't fight it and accepting whatever is being imported out of American culture and part of it is certainly is too a kind of gay sexual aesthetic that, big hairy, European, usually European, meaning Anglo, you know, White Caucasian type men is a specific sexual ideal that's embraced in different cultures in different ways. But, it is certainly embraced in that way, because the question then, you know, comes up, do bears have to be Caucasian? If you're Asian or if you're African American or Black, does that mean you can't be a bear, you know. Do you have to have a body hair? Do you have to have a beard, you know? This question that goes on and on and on and on. Which is why I prefer to let people define themselves. And as a couple of people pointed out, in some cultures, there is no indigenous bear, so when the bears is brought over as a totemic sexual image in the gay community, they have to do a certain amount of projection or extrapolation. Because it doesn't fit in there own culture.</p>
0:29:52	<p><i>Talking about totemic, we're talking about the tribal roots of the bear? What are the images that you know of tribally? The idea of Bear associated with masculinity goes back a long way, am I right?</i></p> <p>Yeah, depending on the culture that you—that one is referring back to a bear may be a masculine figure; it may be a feminine figure. Bears are totemic to European cultures and they are totemic to the Native American culture. And I think the contemporary gay bear concept is a blending of those two. At least, you know, European-American understanding of Native bear totemic ideas and values mix together with European ones. And bear—Bears can be different things in different</p>

	<p>cultures. But I think specifically, the idea that bears are nurturing—I mean that Bears—here’s what I think the thing with the contemporary bear, gay bear totemic system is: Beardom is about gay men embracing their masculinities yet embracing those aspects of themselves that are traditionally devalued as feminine. Being nurturing, being tender, like being protective of your brood, or you know, and on and on like that. There’s a kind of masculinization or appropriation of values as masculine that have tended to be split off, you know, that is what women are like.</p>
0:31:43	<p><i>When did you come out first?</i></p> <p>This is a whole other story, now. Oh my God. No I—well, I had one of those classically popular tragic childhoods these days. I’m the survivor of childhood sexual abuse and incest and so my first sexual, homosexual experience began around ages seven or eight. But, you know, kind of where I come into my own consciousness of my own sexuality—I mean I always knew I was gay, but I came out when I was nineteen, so it’d been 1972. And I’ve been kind of, you know, on the edge—on the edge ready to jump off or do I—do I, don’t I, and I spend two years—having had sex only with males from the age of seven or eight, till the age of sixteen, seventeen, then I was a year, celebrant for a year, then I had a woman love and I had heterosexual sex for about one and a half, two years period. And that’s what finally pushed me over the edge. I mean I was like, this is so awful to go through that no matter how socially disastrous, however horrible it is going to be homosexual and have to go into society as one of those people, is far preferable to forcing myself. So I came out at nineteen.</p>
0:33:43	<p><i>Did you feel shame? Shame is one of those things they keep throwing at us. We feel shame, many of us after coming out?</i></p> <p>Oh yeah. This was an interesting learning experience for me. And also key to my second kind of bear coming out or third coming out as from gay to leather to bear thing. At the time I was kind of like being GLF—Gay Liberation Front. In your face. I’m out and we’re going to change the world with the sexual revolution. And I was just very pushy and in people’s faces with it. In ways that certainly make me uncomfortable now. I was like, I wouldn’t want to be walking down the street and have somebody stick their crotch in my face and say, “I’m a heterosexual,” or kind of stuff. But I thought—I also developed a very early alcoholism problem, so what happened was, my coming out was also my initiation into the world of alcohol and recreational drugs and so, all, a lot of those negative feelings were masked or submerged and after I got sober at the age of twenty-six, twenty-eight, all of that stuff started coming up, you know. And in the process of sober was also a</p>

	<p>process of actually coming out again. Of coming to terms with my sexuality and working through all of the shame and quilt that I never realized, really, that I had, you know. And the Bear, the Bear coming out was kind of the last hurdle of that. On the other hand, I look back and I say, you know, “God, I should be so liberated and so loose and embrace the whole world, you know, and I have, you know, all kinds of, you know, hang ups and issues that probably will never go away, you know.” But other things, you know, other things happened like when I was young, you know, a trick a day keeps the doctor away, was my kind of working philosophy. I was promiscuous to the, you know, full stereotypical image of, as many men as possible and always with sex—always with drugs and alcohol to—well, about ten years after, into my sobriety—again, it’s a whole other story that I won’t go into right here, all the incest stuff finally started coming up and as I worked my way through that, there was this kind of barrier. Sex was here and emotion was here and the two had never met before and then once this transformation began happening, things got much more complicated and tricking as recreational sex became impossible for a long time. I just couldn’t. It was too emotionally painful. At this point in my life, I don’t really know where I am with that because it goes back and forth and I don’t know, you know. It just goes to show you, that I think everyone’s sexuality changes and evolves over time. And there are not like two or three sexualities, I think there are as many sexualities as there are people on the planet.</p>
0:38:19	<p><i>How active are you in the community? Are you real active in the Bear Community? Are you active in a club?</i></p> <p>Do you mean as in active passive or in (Laughs) activist active? I would say so, yeah.</p>
0:38:45	<p><i>Has it helped you with your identity as a gay man? How has it helped you?</i></p> <p>Again, I think something stemming from my background, partic...Both my childhood and being really that GLF generation, you know, it was a very short-lived idealistic generation, the values went on but the generation was very short, that I’ve always kind of—my gay identity is number one and again, while I’ve gone through various permutations, having discovered and come out s a bear and now that I have tenure, (laughs) at my college (laughs) I’m a full time professional homosexual gay bear. That’s how I—I mean, unlike other people. I see my primary social identity as a gay activist or a bear activist even, you know. Which mens speaking on behalf of and nurturing and spreading the gospel of the goodness of all humans, including the kind of human I am and the people who are like me. So, I mean, the other thing—I’ve done</p>

	<p>a lot of different things and I've been in—from street agitations to founding different organizations to you know, writing and publishing. When my partner Dale and I moved out of Boston to the country, I found myself, you know, becoming kind of, you know, a local grass root gay activist all over again. Because there are—there's actually quite a bunch gay folks out there, but there's not much sense of community and everyone's afraid to come out and so, you know, I founded the Monties—The Montetachet Bear Group. Partly as a way to meet other gay people, partly to create, to plant the seed of community which has come together in some ways. There a couple of native activist, but I'm kind of—I'm the spokesperson for Northern Worcester County. I was invited to speak at Gay Pride last year. They've done a couple of local newspaper articles on me and you know, that kind of thing. It's like, all the years I was in San Francisco, I was just another pretty face in the crowd. Now here I am on the front line again.</p>
0:42:03	<p><i>Do you think our liberation as a community, gay community, is more an economic liberation at this point as opposed to political? They are starting to look at us....</i></p> <p>Oh yeah, absolutely and you know, frankly, that's the thing I personally felt the most betrayed by. Also, why I am making explicit mention of being of the GLF generation, that to me, this was about sexual liberation and changing society. And hippies very rapidly became yuppies. And the same thing happened in the gay community. It went from gay liberation to gay equal rights. Assimilation, being absorbed as middle-class consumers. And that's the way all of our society has gone. And I think it's totally horrible in general. And, you know, gay folks is just as vulnerable as anybody else. So, in a sense, I can't fault the movement for having been sucked in the whole thing, but I'm really—very sudden that there is not more resistance. Not even loyal opposition, you know. People stand up and say, "What about the human thing, instead of all this economic stuff. And we've gone from discussions of how gay men objectify each other into their desired bodies to—all of us are walking self-advertisements but that's every one in this whole fucking society. It's inescapable in a sense.</p>
0:44:08	<p><i>What do you think is going to happen to the bear clubs in the future? Are we going to see an increase? I know many bear clubs are having problems; some like in New Orleans have talked of schisms.</i></p> <p>Well, I think that's also, kind of following the natural progression. Well that started happening early on and even as new clubs and new areas were founded for the first time, older clubs were going through schisms and break-ups and disillusion. One example was all the stuff that happened here in San Francisco. Which I won't go into because I'd get</p>

0:48:10	<p>sued by a couple parties if I get into it. I've already been threatened. Australia went through kind of similar thing, I want to say in Sydney, where there had been a strong club, it kind of died out. In <u>Bear Book I</u>, one of the leaders wrote about the tragic passing and in the mean time it's like gone from this big ot this big and I have another article by someone else saying well, in the meantime, you know, Bears are bigger than ever and they're striving all over Australia. And what I had to do is reflect how it parallels the rise and fall of the motorcycle clubs and the permutations of the leather community, of where it started out as a kind of disaffected minority group and built into something stronger, became subculture-wide, gay culture-wide, you know, fashionable, couple of different times and its changed from what it was before and at this point it's a very different phenomenon. It's much lower key, or even invisible in places where it used to be thriving, I think. And a lot of that is because the bear clubs have taken over the social functions and social spaces of what—where leather clubs, leather community used to be. I've also notice in some places, leather and bear is virtually synonymous and in other places, they're at tooth and nail, in opposition to each other. Again if you think of New England, which I've become—since that's' where I've been living for the last several years, there are six, maybe eight active clubs at this point. From small groups to huge ones. Northeast Ursamen and—it the enormous party club, it's like the Bear Frat Club of the east coast. It's party, party, party all the time. And their events are huge. And the New England Bears is also a big club because they're in the one real urban enclave in Boston. But these big—and the Ursamen have a lot of contact and do a lot of stuff with the New York City clubs. You got this urban club phenomena which is extremely different from most of the other groups that are much smaller, more rural, the membership comes from, you know, a lot greater draw from a lot larger physical space. And the interest and concerns of the people are different, you know, somebody living in Boston. Tend to have a very different lifestyle than somebody living in a tract house in a little town, you know, like us, fifty miles from Boston.</p> <p><i>Do you think the strength of the Bear Community, a lot of it lies in the rural bears, those that are not represented by the clubs and who are only peripherally, if at all in a club?</i></p> <p>Well, I think—Yes, that's the real test of, you know, where Bear Community or Beardom, you know, intrinsic qualities of beariness actually are because a lot of the club activities get caught up in club politics, you know, the beauty contest, the fundraising, the political infighting who's going to be on top of the heap, the political heap, you know, that kind of stuff. Which happens in any kind of, I think, social group function. But that's not bear, that's human. Where I think what happens the—in the more rural settings that people make friendships</p>
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	<p>and people do a lot of traveling, you know, and when you get together, it's almost, kind of like the pioneer day, you know, when you get the whole family because they've traveled from a long distance to do something, I just get –it's, you know, spending time together in that sense, as opposed to getting together and doing all this political infighting stuff. Although that certainly goes on as well.</p>
0:50:43	<p><i>You've mentioned the beauty pageants. Do you think that this is hurting in some ways? In some way, telling "this is what a bear is?" I mean, are we setting an image up there in the contest?</i></p> <p>Sure, the simple answer is definitely. The contest are an extension of the club dynamic. It's also a mistake of all of the bear community as clubs, you know, if you don't belong to a bear club you can't be a bear, seems like an extremely unbearlike attitude if bear's about inclusivity. And again, in the beginning, there was a lot of sense of camaraderie and inclusiveness and over time it's become more rhetoric and the practice had become more exclusionary by joining clubs and some clubs, you even have to like be initiated. And can't just pay dues and so, the ultimate expression of that are these contest, of having people compete to be who is more bear, in physical terms and other ones as well, of course.</p>
0:52:19	<p><i>The commercial media of this community also, tells us what a bear is? Most bears don't look like Jack Radcliff?</i></p> <p>But long before BEAR magazine discovered Jack, the models in BEAR magazine looked like the way bears actually looked, because it was kind of a—it was a local deal, where you walked—if you wanted to have your picture in the magazine and run an ad to meet people—it was kind of an elaborate personal column—so, you went in, you got your picture taken, and you were in the magazine and you met people that way and a community started to grow out of fuck buddies and ex-tricks and so forth. And that BEAR went the way of commercialization. But I don't know, I used to be extremely hostile to the whole idea of clubs and contest and I did write an article a number of years ago about the contest questioning, you know, because the original story, the first beauty pageant was Paris having to judge the most beautiful of three women from Greek mythology. And I forgot off of the top of my head the story, but of course by the very act of choosing woman over the others and these three having been singled out of among all of the other women, is kind of a Pandora's box. It was sowing the seed of dissent that could never be stopped. And so from that point of view, there's a built in hostility even, because in the competition some people are better than others, is the nature of that very beast. In the beginning, during</p>

	<p>Bear Expo, under Lurch's tutorage, the first bear contest were bear drag. They were parodies of beauty contest and they were consciously and deliberately done that way. And over time they have gotten more serious. You know, at this point, my personal opinion, there's something for everybody and the sash queens and the queen chasers have their thing to do and other people can choose to follow or not. But I think the problem is, where what becomes internalized, re-internalization of I'm not as good as those people. It does damage, it undoes the good of what bears at least were originally about, you know. And for some people it helps them tremendously. And for other people it's a very negative influence.</p> <p><i>Then we go to the adjectives where we further exclude. Jack is a Muscle Bear?</i></p>
0:56:26	<p>And again, that's a case for me. "Jack Radcliff," I find him physically extremely attractive. I'm very much attracted to his look. But, I know him, only slightly and I, you know, and we have plenty of friends and acquaintances in common. I mean, as a person, he's just a person. Rather than blow him up into BearGod, so I can say he's a lousy person, in reality, he's just a person. But the other thing I, I want to say about that too is, I mean, I went through a similar kind of experience in my sobriety days, my early year so sobriety when the Castro County Club first opened up which is on 18th Street. It was when it happened, it was the only social alternative to bars in the Castro, so all the guys in Gay AA used to go there cause you could drink coffee and recreate the entire bar atmosphere with all the negative attitude and the whole thing, the only difference was that there was no alcohol. Looking back, I don't think it was such a good idea, because it didn't help people change, it simply reinforced the behaviors that they picked up by habituating bars. I went through exactly that, where I could remember—at one point I made a conscious decision to be Mr. Gay AA and just put myself out there, and I was really friendly and very social. And I knew everybody and everybody knew me. And I did this for six months to a year, and what I found over time was, was all surface and I felt completely empty inside, you know, this isn't me and I'm not growing from this and putting all this energy into projecting image and keeping track of, you know, one hundred-fifty peoples, you know, sob stories so I could always plug into and follow everyone's—it's like, this is absurd.</p> <p><i>(Conversed about what Bill Adams said about porn in his interview.) Porno, they are haunted by the lifestyle, the porno...?</i></p>
0:59:49	<p>But here is—that. It does become that question of people either do it and it runs its course and people like move on or try to move on, because they continue to grow and mature and move in other directions</p>

1:01:38	<p>or they get really hooked on it like any other drug. Which brings me back to something I was going to say earlier—I forgot exactly but just this whole—we live in a culture of celebrity, you know. Being famous is the most important quality of any person in society today, you know. You can be super rich, you can be super powerful, politically, but you’ve also got to be famous. Because who cares about all the billionaires running things behind the screen, behind the curtains, you know, it’s the people whoa re famous. People who are famous for being famous kind of expose the whole dynamic of how that works. Zsa Zsa Gabor always used to say, what is it? Bad exposure is better than no exposure? You know, something like that.</p> <p><i>But is it so terrible being the un-famous one, which most bears are? Is it so bad, being an average bear?</i></p> <p>Absolutely not. But given our culture, it’s very difficult for a lot of people to accept that. I mean, Andy Warhol did promise us that everyone would have fifteen minutes of fame, right?</p>
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	<p>lot and that for me is also some of what Beardom I find appealing. That everybody kind of comes out on equal footing even though in real life one person is a part-time gas pump, gas jockey and somebody else is a \$300,000 a year computer whiz. When you're in the Bear Community, everybody is the same.</p>
0:10:01	<p><i>To some degree, there's no difference between drag queens and bears? All we put on is drag?</i></p> <p>That's very much my feeling. All attire or lack of attire is drag, you know. Business drag is no different from bear drag is no different from military drag. When you're in the military as opposed to when you're into a uniform fetish. I mean, it's all drag. This is very, kind of, you know, Barthian and (Roland) Barth and his whole semiotic of fashion that our clothing is all part of an extended language we were to communicate with other people in society.</p>
0:11:30	<p><i>(Discussion of clone) Where is the distinction between the Bears and the clones?</i></p> <p>Well, I think I mention a kind of track—bears is a re-incarnation of the clone in many ways. At least as I experienced it here in San Francisco. The original gay transplants to the Castro were hippies fleeing the Hate Asbury because it went from the summer of love to like total insanity and people came over the hill for cheap housing. And very rapidly, that kind of GLF, left hippie look became clone. All American boys kind of the factory for the new clone look which kind of ranged from preppie to rugged, you know, the flannel shirts and denim jeans look became the trademark of the clone look. And at the time, I was in the middle of it and I certainly, you know, identified myself as one of the last living clones after AIDS hit. I look back now and I realized how oppressive, how stiflingly uniform it was, And I see now the kind of Chelsea boy look, I don't know what it is called at the moment. But for example, in Boston, the south end look is very sleek, slender, gym-trimmed. Boston has a lot of ethnic gay men, Irish, Italian, Portuguese, whatever. And they shave completely, all their body hair so that sleek, young boy look is very in. I find it very oppressive to go into the south end, being in so, in such visual discord myself, my appearance with what most of the people in the neighborhood look like. I think back to the Bear look. AIDS—clones were identified with AIDS that—everybody went into hiding. As I described before, when people started to come out again, people were a few years older. They were no longer twenty to thirty-five. Some of them were over forty; some of them were hitting fifty and they had more body hair. In the early days of AIDS, lots of guys put on weight because if you were heavier that was interpreted as meaning that you were healthier. Because skinnier became equivalent to having AIDS. In kind of—a lot of clones came out and you know, got bigger waisted 501's. I</p>

	<p>think there was a certain amount that kind of—clones came back out and started wearing other clothes. That went on. Again, I can remember at maybe the third Bear Expo—prior to IBR was Bear Expo and each of those three, I always did a workshop called, “What is a Bear?” And get a whole bunch of people together and they’ll all argue about what is a bear, you know. Anyways...</p> <p><i>The argument still goes on.</i></p>
0:15:17	<p>Yeah, and it always will. But I can remember from the first to the third and commenting on the third one, you know, I went in and said, you know, when I started out bears were just guys and now there’s this regimented Bear clone look. You know, I’ve got my jeans, I’ve got my flannel shirt, I had my red—I forgot, red or black BEAR magazine baseball cap and you know, and it was like everybody was dressed more or less the same. And very rapidly this bear clone look came into being.</p> <p><i>Why do you think that is so? Are we really that comfortable with uniformity as a society that as, I mean, gay me we have to identify to some look?</i> <i>(Conversation) Do we throw open the closet, to look like every other Bear out there?</i></p>
0:16:46	<p>But not just that. We look like, at least where I live these days we look like everyone else. Part of the idea of the Bear look is this is what straight men look like. You know, I mean, working class men in America dress this way, anyways. You know, professional class men dress down this way, you know. When they’re not at work, whether it’s L.L. Bean or Dickies or whatever. The whole kind of, you know, outdoorsy is kind of archetypical American, since the advent of blue jeans as fashion and formal to informal attire. There’s this constant thread of, you know, rugged, outdoorsy look that’s stereotypical American. The two things I wanted to say about it is, number one, American society, American culture, there’s more pressure in American society for people to conform than in most societies. I am aware of, or lived in or traveled through. You know, this big, huge, diverse country partly survives on this pressure that everyone tries to be—we all follow the same American dream somehow. So, bears dressing up like straight men fit right in. You know, and again it blurs the distinction between what is gay and what’s not gay. I mean, I don’t know what the fashion look is San Francisco is these days, but I am telling you of I go out in Fitchburg (Massachusetts). If I’m using San Francisco standard I’d have to guess that every single man I see is gay. But in reality, there ninety-nine percent straight men. You know, and I and my partner don’t stand out in any way. He with his great big beard and his hair up in a ponytail. He just looks like some of the rural, local white trash, you know, even though he isn’t. But that’s the way people dress there.</p>

0:19:12	<p><i>So much of our identity is blue-collar.</i></p> <p>Again, I think a lot—At least in the beginning. This is something I found interesting about Eric Rofe’s essay that he wrote for the <u>Bear Book I</u>. Clones were about copying a blue-collar look. You know, I found it odd since when I moved to San Francisco I was dressing the way that I dressed when I was growing up. You know, and all these guys were putting on blue-collar drag, where as when the bear stuff started happening, these were really, were basically all blue-collared guys. Whatever their particular job was, they came from blue-collar backgrounds. They weren’t making a lot of money. And there is this dynamic in San Francisco that so many gay men are willing to give up everything else just to be able to live here. You have PhD dishwashers, you know. So people don’t have—I forgot where I was going with that anyway.</p>
0:20:58 0:21:09	<p><i>What is your definition of a bear? We’re running into a lot of problems here cause everybody has a different definition.</i></p> <p>Yes</p> <p><i>Why are there so many definitions? What is a Bear?</i></p> <p>From the historical perspective—Historically there have been two camps. One that says Bear is a state of mind, which is to say, and attitude, i.e. lack of attitude. The other camp says that bear is a physical type, specific male secondary sexual characteristics, you know. So one is mental, the other is physical. So, mind or appearance. My personal definition since before the days that Bears was getting, having all of these zillions of little subcategories. To me, Bears is primarily about—is gay men with the emphasis on gay men being comfortable being men and—cause everything has so far has gone into how do we accepted and deal with gay without really spending a lot of time focusing on what does it mean far us to be men in a society that defines men who are attracted to men as by definitions, not men. You know, we are men. And bears are about embracing our masculinity. And my personal definition is a bear is a gay man who is as comfortable being a man as he is being gay and has a warm heart. And a lot of people disagree with that vehemently. But, ultimately, I also believe that it is self-defining. If you tell me you’re gay then I will accept you’re gay, you know. If you tell me you ‘re a bear, then by the same token, I will accept that you are a bear, from your perspective, you know. And we have all of this—one of the things that I often suspect is, when people are out all of these definitions it’s either they mean people who look like themselves or they mean people who are look like their sexual ideal, you know. It’s interesting cause if you take a list of twelve characteristics and twenty-four people, they’re all going to disagree on each of the specifics as to who is a bear and who isn’t a bear. But I think that’s good, that’s not resolved and I</p>

	<p>hope it remains unresolved cause I think that's where a lot of the life and energy comes from.</p>
0:24:19	<p><i>Can you separate a bear from being gay? Can you be straight and be a Bear?</i></p> <p>Well, you know, I always thought that's interesting. My assumption had always been a bear means you're gay. And by the extension a lesbian could be a bear but heterosexuals never. However, I've had a couple of my colleagues and couple other straight—a handful smattering have said, “Oh my husband, my neighbor, I am a bear, after having read your book,” you know. But they're all heterosexual. And I just thought that was very interesting, because I'm sure I don't say that. I'm sure that I am arguing that it's a gay phenomenon, a gay male phenomenon, with possibly room for gay women. But again, if I'm going to be consistent with what I say I believe, then it's the self-defining process. If you say you're a bear, you're a bear, you know. If you're a seven-legged rabbit from the moon and you say you're a bear, you're a bear. But that for me gets into the whole idea of self-determination and people empowering themselves and beariness being about self-empowerment and self-esteem and accepting who you are and defining who you—taking the power to define who you are and so on and so forth. But obviously it can be taken to logical absurdities or extremes.</p>
0:26:32	<p><i>Can you separate bear from being a man?</i></p> <p>If you mean in the biological gender sense, you know, women, I think can be bears. If by men you mean the social dynamic, you know, the notion and values of masculinity defining a man, then no. Because bears are about masculinity. And again, positive aspects of masculinity. Looking at masculine women in a positive light could be included in that. Although the kinds of values that I associate with being a bear in a woman, would be considered womanly, I suppose.</p>
0:28:15	<p><i>Casey Scott who is a photographer for American Bear, I a telephone conversation with me, said he saw the bear community moving more toward a “mind and body image” as opposed to Mirth and Girth. Do you see the community moving in a different direction?</i></p> <p>I would say at the level of the press, of the media, there's been a real distinction between—and this goes back to one of the original bear wars here in San Francisco. The “Skinny bears” and “Fat Bears,” you know. And if you look at <u>American Bear</u> and <u>American Grizzly</u>, Tim Martin, directly on a marketing level separates them out into two categories, both of which still remain bears. And at the level of Community, one thing that I noticed at IBR this year, given that so much of the original bear community in San Francisco was a lateral shift from the local Girth and Mirth as well as</p>

	<p>a lateral shift of Black and White Men together, that it's much more white than ever before and I notice an almost complete absence of very hefty, girth and mirth-sized men. And as you mentioned, more than ever, where as in Boston, there—the Girth and Mirth has pretty much been dissolved and those people are in or on the periphery of the bears. And as a matter of fact, one of the founders of the Girth and Mirth in San Francisco and later in Boston, is a member of the local Monti Bear Club that I started because as he said of all of the Bear groups in the Northeast, it's the only place that he feels accepted as a bear and not shunned as being a fat “Girth and Mirther.” So, I think, yeah, there's more of a kind of slimming down and beefing going on over time. Yeah, but again the divide into people who look like the magazines and people who are just average, who don't necessarily work out or beef up but are, you know, how does the ad go? Height and weight proportionate for a bear. Whatever that means!</p>
0:30:50	<p><i>You see yourself as masculine?</i></p> <p>Yeah.</p> <p><i>(Discuss the theory that all attributes like power, confidence and money that are associated with heterosexual masculinity is centered on the ability to procreate and power over women.) Does being a bear surpasses the straight communities definition of masculinity?</i></p>
0:32:30	<p>I think a lot of general speaking Bearness or Beardom is about being masculine where the individual person understands that. The individual bear. And there certainly is, you know, you get this kind of, you know, He was such a hot looking bear until he opened his mouth and yards of chiffon came out, which, you know, on the one hand I thought, that's can't be a bear cause that's not masculine. And on the other hand, I was horrified at the kind of implicit rejection of femininity. The term for woman hating? Misogynistic. Self-attacking kind of misogyny, you know, as it applies to myself, it's a very difficult question. In on the one hand, I feel that I'm pretty masculine and pretty secure and a lot of it has to do with accepting who I am and some of that including accepting the fact that I am fairly eccentric by most standards. I prefer people—the more eccentric the better—normal people are like, not only boring, they scare the hell out of me. (laughs) But on the other hand, things like, I don't know the first thing about competition sports. You know, one of the things that are very embarrassing for me if I have my San Francisco Giants baseball cap on and some stranger tries to start up sports conversation. That's like baseball, is that where they hit or kick it? You know. I don't know. And I feel like, I certainly shattered your illusion of my being masculine, you know. So it comes down to it—it takes into so many things. Oh, the other one I wanted to touch up on was the idea of power. If you're talking about—well, okay, separate out a few different things. One, if you're talking about sexually</p>

	<p>dominating women, I'm a staunch feminist and I just object to that period. I don't think that's masculine behavior. I think that's reprehensible. In horror. I don't know what the answer is but I find it disgusting. Something that makes me heterophobic, that I really hate certain things about heterosexual male masculinity and that's one of them. If it means procreating, that's not an issue. Any gay man who wants to procreate can do so by one mean or another. That can be accomplished. It's not an issue. If by power, you mean all of—and this is something I deal with on a daily basis that also permeates my own academic work, the issue of entitlement well in that sense I guess I would say I'm definitely not masculine. I mean I grew up poor working class. I was raised up to feel disempowered, to disempower myself, to always to defer to others and always see myself in the wrong and on and on and on and on. And I've spent a lifetime overcoming that built in thing, but we're not talking—I experience it as a class dynamic rather than a gender, political dynamic. If I had been born and this is one of really big resentments, had I had been born with the opportunities that most of the people who “succeed” in this world were born with I would be somewhere else, way down another road, but I've always had to deal with yet, you know, showing up for life on a daily basis. It's something that I've not been able to take for granted for a great deal of my life. But then on the other hand, that kind of survival, I would define as masculine. It's a heroic dynamic, with no false modesty, you know, I kind of see myself as probably the most heroic person I personally know, because I don't know anyone whose been through half the horror I've been and survived, alive, sober, sane, functional and coherent. (laughs)</p>
0:38:39	<p><i>In straight society there is a masculine-feminine split along lines of sexual roles that is often projected on our community. Can a bottom be masculine?</i></p> <p>Absolutely. That's what Gay Liberation also was about. The sexual dynamic was that you could be both top or bottom. (laughs) I think of that—one of the things that was specifically mentioned in several of the GLF era manifestos. Was to stigmatize being the passive sexual partner. And all of a sudden getting fucked became very masculine, you know. How many straight men can handle being fucked? That is a tradition in other cultures of defining who is homosexual and who isn't. If you're the top or the penetrator, that you're a man unscathed. If you're the receptive bottom, that makes you the fairy, the pansy, the homosexual of the two people. But again that is kind of further projection of the underlying misogyny of this culture.</p>
0:41:04	<p><i>Would you say that you're politically active in the gay community?</i></p> <p>In general, yeah.</p>

<p>0:41:11</p> <p>0:42:10</p>	<p><i>Would you say that the average Bear is politically active or do they shy away from it?</i></p> <p>Yeah, No. I think that bears as a group are not politically active.</p> <p><i>Why would you say that? Do you think that bears are not concerned with the problems we are facing or is it so easy to hide?</i></p> <p>You know, this has come as a surprise to me because I certainly in the beginning expected more political. This is a discussion I've been having with Ron Suresha for a while. Between the two of us, I think we're scheming some bear political action movement or something, somewhere down the road. I think a lot of it has to do with the fact that American society, as a whole was never been more apolitical then now. And we're becoming such a consumer society as a whole, that bears by and large are reflections of the larger society. And the other thing and this is where, now I think about it, it makes sense. To me, the idea of bears being just like men, heterosexual men, to me a very political aggressive or politically provoking stance. And yet, I think most bears take the opposite reaction. They're happy; I can relax and just be me. I don't have to put out to the world that I'm gay or challenging people. And they just—It's very easy to be a bear because in many places people don't pick up that you're gay. The ability to pass becomes a luxury that people take again.</p>
<p>0:44:51</p>	<p><i>What issues do you think would be important to the gay community and why?</i></p> <p>Well, I think people want it to be fair and it's a part of their life that isn't a struggle. It's about not struggling anymore. It's about accepting in a sense. But again, cause you also hit on a raw nerve with me. Where, when the United States launched the "Gulf War," it was fake that was the point and I felt so fatigued. The system is so much bigger than me or all the people in the world that I could possible bring together. It's this out of control monster and why am I bothering to fight it. My approach is subterfuge and sabotage. And you know, getting my job and getting tenure, in my own little way, I'm being very political. But the only changes that can really happen I think are by, are by you know, that kind of infiltration, making changes from inside. Kind of going underground in different ways, And also by, there is the process of shifting general consciousness rather than going out and actively pushing against, resisting. I think that just polarizes people more and doesn't lead to productive change, but leads to entrenchment. As a whole, I think American society it totally fucked anyway. (laughs)</p> <p><i>(Conversation about last comment)</i></p>

0:47:34	<p>Well, you know, ignorance is bliss and we're very egocentric and ethnocentric, so whatever we're born into we tend to accept as the right, the true, the only way. And everything else is inferior, I think that is kind of the human psychology anyways and Americans for being such a "melting pot" it's so insulated from how the rest of the world actually operates. The only reason the world goes on the way it does is that the vast majority of Americans have no clue of what reality is like outside of this country, you know, that reality for most people is very, very different from anything they know. And again, this thing with leeching, one of the things I bring up, wherever appropriate germane to the dialogue. One of the courses I teach is comparative religion. I talk about the symbolism of, you know, I go to Christianity, you know, "How many here are Christian?" How many people have done Communion, you know, or Eucharist, or whatever you call it in your church. You know, you remember the words, "This is the body and blood of Christ?" Do you realize you are practicing cannibals? And it's like, "What? What?"</p> <p><i>(Conversation about cannibalism)</i></p>
0:49:21	<p>Other little ways too, just that people are blind to really obvious stuff.</p> <p><i>What is your PhD in?</i></p>
0:49:32	<p>Comparative Literature. (laughs)</p> <p><i>What was really funny for me was that your teaching list seemed to be all over the place.</i></p> <p>From the beginning it has been a mess. I started out comparative German and Russian double major within comparative literature. And that's pretty much what I studied all through my zillions of years in school and graduate school. One problem being that I have a lot of other interest. Another dynamic being that since about 1975, I guess I've been doing my gay studies, gay literature, and gay history, parallel to my academic stuff. That's a whole other story with the normalization, the introducing into academy, Queer theory and gay studies and the politics that went around it. Who was included, who was excluded. I have this whole queer training that I didn't get from any academy, parallel and boosted up by the academic stuff.</p> <p><i>(Conversation about Queer Studies)</i></p>
0:51:26	<p>And a third thing is life experience, I mean. A couple of my big areas over time have become, you know, death and dying, illness and disease and social and ethical dynamics as well as symbolic dynamics. Some of that, you know, the whole experience of being an addict, alcoholic and the</p>

	<p>change in self-definition that is involved in the recovery process. The trauma from incest, the trauma of addiction, living through the genesis and transformation of AIDS into a moral disease and living through an epidemic, watching everyone literally around me die. Like virtually all my friends in San Francisco have been dead for years now. I stopped counting at 500 and it's into the thousands. You know, of the people I know who've died, plus I've lived with HIV for almost twenty years myself. I spent fifteen years of my life waiting to die, you know, in my thirties and forties. That really fucks your head up too. But all of that got—and the bear stuff is a very similar, my way of dealing with personal stuff is to academicize it and formalize the study of it. I found that it doesn't protect me emotionally but it does certainly expand my understanding. It's taken me further down paths than I ever expected to go. I found two summers ago I did a certificate in Ceratology, through the National Center for Death Education with all the biggest names in the field. And it was like, and because of my experiences, I was, you know, I was step ahead of them with all their latest theories and their latest clinical findings. It's like, talk to me. I know all that stuff and they were all like amazed. Who's this Humanities PhD walking in here and knows this stuff, like this. That was empowering, too.</p>
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Les Wright
Tape 3
February 20, 2000

Time Code	Interview:
0:01:52	<p><i>Are there any aspects of gay life you'd like to see changed or improved?</i></p> <p>Well, I'll try and keep it simple. I think we can change two fundamental things. One, medicate all attitude queens so that they can conform to something approaching humanity and the other is the validation of immigrant community or diasporas communities of pooling. All the wealthy "A" gays should all be pooling into some kind of, you know, community resources so that we create economic structure for taking care of our own kind. In Holland, this is the, you know, old social pillar system that we based on church affiliation or aesthetic affiliation. So that all of the kind of things that we could provide for ourselves. The way other minority groups have and gays haven't in the same way.</p>
0:02:18	<p><i>Do you see yourself as a role model for young people coming out?</i></p> <p>Yes and no. I would say yes in the sense of I'm out. I am who I am. I don't pick to be anyone else. And I see that as serving as a role model for other younger kids, for kids both—I mean both gay and non-gay. That it's okay to be gay but just be yourself. Whatever.</p>
0:03:50	<p><i>The final video will be seen by some straight people. Is there anything you want to say to straight people?</i></p> <p>Let me get my book out. Well, you know, it's a funny thing, you know, one of the things they say in AA to break my anonymity, now that I realize that I'm doing that to whoever sees the film. You know, when they say, you know, what do you do—one of the key processes of recovery is to make amends to people because of past behavior of whatever sort because alcoholic behavior is typically very traumatizing to people, you know, not just the alcoholic but the people who have to deal with you or live with you. Part of the processes of recovery is to make amends, to mend fences as best as possible once you are confident that you are going to continue to recover and you are not going to be doing X, Y, or Z ever again probably. And one of the questions that come up is what do you do when you try to make amends and no matter what, the person will not accept it, you know. And one, part of the answer to what happens when other people—you know, not only are were powerless over the people, but we have to accept that most people are sick or ill in one way or another. You know, alcoholism is not the only illness. Anyway, this is a particular thing of AA recovery culture to think of other people as being sick and having compassion for them instead than passing moral judgment, just you do your best and then you</p>

	<p>move on. You accept people or love them or at least just let it go. There's something wrong obviously, but you can't do anything about it—why am I saying this? Oh, just because the world is pretty fucked up and people on the whole can be very fucked up, you know, and when I was younger, I did make the distinction between Homosexual—Good, Heterosexual—Evil. You know, which is probably true, you know. (Laughs) What am I trying to say? No, I mean a lot of people are just plain fucked up, you know and that the long and short of it. And the people who make homosexuality such a gigantic issue, moral issue or problem, I mean, those are the really sick people, you know. As a colleague of mine would put it, It sounds like you have—It's a personal problem, you know. There's no problem with being homosexuality or being gay. The problem lies with those that make it an issue. I mean, we wouldn't have homosexuality today in the form that we have it as a social identity if straight society had not decided that it was a problem in the first place two hundred years ago. Without not going into a kind of lecture on early sexuality issues. It's only a problem because some people decided it was a problem, you know. If tomorrow, George Bush decides to make redheaded people a problem, you know, we can go around discriminating against whoever for whatever reason. To me it is complete non-issue and get over it girlfriend!</p>
0:08:58	<p><i>(Bill Adams comments on the fear by labeling bears, that we are further splintering an already splinted community.)</i></p> <p>You know, number one, you know, a big cultural movement around multiculturalism has the same dynamic of, you know, the ideal is to appreciate everyone's diversity, but in the process of actually doing that, you know, creates more walls than it tears down. Again, I would say self-labeling as bears, I understand as a kind of self-powering act and it's other people who can take the label and turn it around and use it as something. And again, the oppressed are often the best at oppressing their own kind having learned how oppressive being labeled homosexuals is. I think the gay community at large, this is something again that horrified me when I first saw it and seems so logical now, to—</p>
0:12:12	<p><i>Any thing I might have missed?</i></p> <p>You know that it has been interesting perusing the Bear History Project in perusing that has lead me down some very interesting paths, like the whole sociology of group dynamics was something that I didn't realize was archetypical.</p> <p><i>There are so many archetypes of masculinity form society to society and there are many that stand true.</i></p>
0:12:44	<p>Well, actually that was the last thing I was going to mention, that where the</p>

	<p>Bear History research is taking me now is kind of shifting focus away from kind of Queer Studies to Gender Studies. Specifically Men's Studies and studying masculinity. And kind of wanting to get to the core of, you know, what's fucked up about our society, even though it taught us that we can figure out why but it never going to fix anything and that's the kind of dilemma I'm at. All the understanding in the world is not going to change things, so how can I apply the understanding for it to be of benefit.</p>
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APPENDIX D

Shot List

Bill Adams
Tape 1

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
3	IDB	5	0:27:52	So, I am identified by others as a bear but I secretly say that I am a wolf hiding in a bear's body.
3	IIN	10	0:54:09	I think that there's a lot of unhealthiness where people are justifying their weight by, "Oh, I am a bear."
4	SIF	6	0:23:43	I always had an awkwardness, particularly with guys my age. Got along with adults better than I did with people my age.
4	SIF	8	0:23:43	And, you know, excelled at the more feminine things, music, mathematics. I just wasn't in the band, I was in the orchestra, you know.
4	SIF	10	0:23:43	I never was in the athletic group. I always kind of stood out in the class. Second to last picked for teams, for sporting teams when we did stupid shit.
4	SIF	12	0:34:39	When I was eleven, along with the whole nature of realizing sexuality, my older brother died. And, so that like started the source of a very unusual part of my family life. You know, my parents acted the way they did and I acted the way I did. But at the same time, I started to deal with the questions about what is sexuality.
4	SIF	14	0:34:39	I didn't know I was supposed to be attracted to women. I didn't even have a clue. No one-I knew that people dated but it wasn't me dating, you know.
4	SIF	21	0:34:39	Anyway, with my brother's death and sexuality, through my teens I was a very sad person. I didn't have a lot of confidence and I wasn't fitting in with the boys in school. I even say to this day, my teens and twenties were very awkward for me and my life.
5	FCO	8	0:37:39	It was an initial euphoria. They were playing, "It's Raining Men" and...

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
5	FCO	9	0:37:39	(V.O.) ... I just started living my life that way, right off.
5	FCO	11	0:41:12	And all of a sudden, all of the shame that I felt growing up, feeling different, not knowing. Kind of converted from shame to righteousness in a way. Not self-confidence. It wasn't confidence. It was righteousness...
5	FCO	13	0:38:22	I didn't feel guilty about it. My mom figured out pretty quickly that something had happened.
5	FCO	15	0:38:22	Questioned me on it. Said, "What are your friends, a bunch of fairies?" I got pissed off. I said, "I prefer to call them gay!" And she said, "Oh well, what are you?" I didn't want to tell her that way, but, "Yes!"
5	FCO	17	0:38:22	And we went through our thing, about a week between talking, a rarity between my mom and I.
7	COB	5	0:42:44	Really, my first experience of the bear community was Bear Rendezvous. It was my first year in San Francisco and I had a blast, needless to say. They had a blast with me. And that's where this whole part of my life began really.
7	COB	14	0:27:52	I know that it does give people an opportunity to come together in a way that maybe they weren't comfortable in the traditional gay community... but I also have a concern that it is a way we are segregating ourselves further. The last thing we need to do as a community is to segregate ourselves.
8	IBC	3	0:54:09	Cause if you look at the early issues of BEAR magazine, they're thin. They are hairy; they have beard; they are thin. They're bikers.
8	IBC	5	0:54:09	I think it has gone the other way to encompass more people.

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
8	IBC	9	0:32:33	(V.O.) Yes, editor approached me at Bear Rendezvous and then he asked me and I said "I rather date you." We dated for a long time then we broke up.
8	IBC	10	0:32:33	And then***** often that he asked me-he called and up and said, "I'd still like you in my magazine!" "Oh, well! What the hell! Why not!" And so, that's how that part of my life got started.
8	IBC	12	0:47:43	I've talked to Jack (Radcliff) and he also has said he just doesn't feel all that comfortable going to the Lone Star. Cause there's an image there and it's not him.
8	IBC	14	0:47:43	And that 's what pornography gives. People are in a fantasy. You know, my life and my reality and that fantasy.
8	IBC	15	0:47:43	(V.O.) That fantasy is a tiny chunk which is everything that a whole community knows about me basically
10	IBC	2	0:54:09	If you were just having Lazy Bear Weekends, we'd just be all out thee having a good time drinking beer and people could have their body image the way it is.
10	IBP	6	0:54:09	I just think that the action of having the pageants causes an ideal to be created. y.
10	IBP	7	0:52:40	(V.O.) I think that for as much as the idea of the Bear Community as a place where anyone would be accepted is an ideal, creating pageants is completely contradictor
10	IBP	9	0:52:40	Winning Mr. San Francisco Bear was a lark. It was on the pool table at the Lone Star. It put beer boxes up and there were five of us crowded on this pool table. We went out and sold raffle ticket and I had enough to drink in me that I came up with some witty answers to some questions that were asked.

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
10	IBP	10	0:52:40	(V.O.) But when you take it to the level of Bear Rendezvous, where you have, you know, thousand, you know, guys in this hall listening to something you're saying, like it means something, or looking at you because you're one of the ones-Might as well be Miss America, at that point.
12	IIN	10	0:19:45	Like I said, but their right to exist and to be who they are and express how they do, is their right. And they happen to be extreme and the news media picks up on that, that's the fault of the news media. You know, the bear community isn't exactly an extreme group. We're a bunch of big, hairy guys who happen to be pretty social and outgoing and like to have fun with one another.
12	IIN	13	0:54:09	I think that there's a lot of unhealthiness where people are justifying their weight by, "Oh, I am a bear."
14	SEX	1	0:46:45	(V.O.) I'm just a guy, you know. I'm out there having a good time. And I happen to have a great time with big hairy guys.
15	HIV	6	0:44:48	I have brown hair, green eyes and HIV. It's a part of my body and until there's some change in what's available for the treatment, that's what is so.
15	HIV	8	0:44:48	It took several months, till I didn't look at my skin and see HIV and didn't get in the shower and wash HIV, you know.
15	HIV	9	0:44:48	(V.O.) It no longer occurs to me, outside of that I take medication twice a day. I get blood drawn every eight weeks or so.
15	HIV	10	0:34:48	...the slap that came across my face with testing positive, that really altered-altered my perception of the value of my life. And I don't recommend it as the source, but it's definitely shifted where I look from, in a very positive way.

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
17	PMS	1	0:50:12	I was talking to an older guy in the city in San Francisco who described how in the 70's,
17	PMS	2	0:50:12	...people were afraid to go to the Twin Peaks bar, which is a big glass paneled bar. It's like the first gay bar in the country to have glass windows, because their bosses would see them there when they went by on the streetcar.
17	PMS	3	0:50:12	That doesn't exist today, you know. And I wouldn't want to work for a boss that had a problem with me being out. I couldn't. I just couldn't.

Bill Adams
Tape 2

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
2	HIS	15	0:22:12	It's all made up. The bear community did not exist and somebody invented it.
5	FCO	6	0:04:14	Coming out to me is a special -it was like an event.
7	COB	7	0:23:16	I think the path to coming out for a lot of bears was different as a result of-maybe they were more masculine identified. Maybe there were married and had kids. They're people who came out later. There are people who came from different backgrounds that were more repressive. And that, you know, I'm almost more unique in that. I know a lot of people who were married and have kids. And I think that more a uniqueness in the Bear Community.
7	COB	10	0:02:05	I didn't experience the same euphoria off of it. It certainly was a lot more fun to cruise men at the bear bars where guys were actually interested in somebody who has a belly and was hairy. Compared with, you know, what was there before that.
8	IBC	16	0:00:33	(V.O.) ...it's that one little piece of my life, but that's all that people know of me.
8	IBC	17	0:00:33	... that's really what the bear community is to me too. It's just one piece of what has contributed to me today.
12	IIN	10	0:19:45	Like I said, but their right to exist and to be who they are and express how they do, is their right. And they happen to be extreme and the news media picks up on that, that's the fault of the news media. You know, the bear community isn't exactly an extreme group. We're a bunch of big, hairy guys who happen to be pretty social and outgoing and like to have fun with one another.

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
14	SEX	6	0:05:23	That we all have the ability you know, in some we have physical differences. We all have differences in our body makeup.
14	SEX	7	0:05:23	(V.O.) And maybe it is uncomfortable to the point of not being pleasurable for some people to be a bottom.
14	SEX	8	0:05:23	But it doesn't identify me as being masculine or feminine or passive.
16	PMS	7	0:00:33	My identity as a man has been created by many different aspects of my life.
17	PMS	15	0:08:57	anything that forces public knowledge of public knowledge and more research for HIV prevention and that area.
18	PBP	1	0:09:16	I moved to San Francisco and the pride banners were up year round in ceratin neighborhoods.
18	PBP	2	0:09:16	It was just amazing to me. I took a lot of pride seeing the flag. I even take more pride out of seeing the gay pride flag than I have ever have out of seeing the U.S. Flag.
18	PBP	4	0:09:16	It is a sense of identity for me before I had knowledge of my sexuality. I was a very unhappy person and it took years of developing after that, but I really, truly have pride in who I am.
18	PBP	5	0:09:16	(V.O.) And the symbol of the flag happens to express something in that for me.
18	PBP	7	0:17:17	(V.O.) I think any community should be proud of who they are. Any aspect of-Every human being has a right to a sense of community and *** what ever the right group is to is for them.

Bill Hargreaves
Tape 1

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
2	HIS	4	0:27:28	The leather community is very sexual and very trusting, but I don't see it as being as sensual...
3	IDB	2	0:01:36	But for me the image of being a Bear is a bit more of a physical image.
3	IDB	3	0:22:08	A bear is big. A bear is cuddly. A bear is furry. A bear has facial hair. A bear is- someone that is easy to socialize with. Easy to talk to and someone who likes to cuddle. Some one who was big and cuddly and full-bearded and hairy.
3	IDB	19	0:01:36	(V.O.) I'm not blessed with a hairy chest, so therefore I didn't really look at myself as being a bear.
3	IDB	20	0:20:11	It's okay. I'm not big, I am-Actually-I consider myself quite thin, but that's okay.
3	IDB	25	0:04:46	(V.O.) With being a bear, it's just being comfortable and being yourself ... that's all that matters. If you're warm and cuddly.
4	SID	2	0:16:58	But if I really look in it, I've always been attracted to men, from quite and early age.
4	SID	9	0: 32:25	I think that in the beginning, it was, you know, I don't want to be what we used to call a "poofster." So I have to-I just have to be tough
5	FCO	3	0:16:58	I think the first person was really myself. Because it took a lot to accept it within myself, I think.
5	FCO	12	0:09:42	I think the most difficult person to come out to was my mother. I mean I know she wasn't stupid and she kind of knew.
5	FCO	14	0:09:42	I think it upset her a lot, because, well, she wanted grandchildren. And also she just wanted me to be happy and she was concerned that I couldn't be happy being gay.

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
5	FCO	16	0:09:42	That I possibly will be lonely, as I get older. So, I think that was the most difficult to come out to.
5	FCO	18	0:12:41	But in some ways, I still feel that I am closeted. I want people to know, like in colleagues and stuff. But I find it difficult to just come out with it. I'm out at work but they had to sort of drag it out of me. I still get those little feelings of panic. Like I still do avoid subjects. When they ask me if I'm married, do I have children or do I have a girlfriend. It's like, "No!" Sometimes it goes on from there but sometimes I just won't say anything.
6	SCO	8	0:23:52	I think some just fall into it and are quite happy when they do.
12	IIN	9	0:27:28	I think to be accepted in normal gay community. You have to keep up with the fashions and go to the right places. And do the right things.
13	GAI	1	0:23:09	And, you know, I think in the normal gay world if you're-once you become older it's very lonely.
13	GAI	2	0:23:09	(V.O.) Very sad. Like no one wants an old queen. I think that's very frightening for a lot of people.
13	GAI	3	0:23:09	(V.O.) But I think in the Bear world, old is sexy, so-And you're always going to find someone. Well, I know as I get older I'll always going to find someone that I like and -yeah, and be cuddly with.
13	GAI	4	0:23:09	I don't have any-I'm not worried about getting older, but a lot of my friends, they think about that and it does scare them to be old and alone. And to be an old queen.
13	GAI	6	0:26:47	I think being a Bear is very sensual. Yeah, very sensual. Very warm and very fuzzy.

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
13	GAI	7	26:47	(V.O.) Where as the normal gay community, I think, I don't know, It think it's a little bit harder
14	SEX	9	0:44:02	I just think, well, yeah, a bottom can be a man. I think a lot of people want to be a top cause that is where being a man is and one really, you know, there are more comfortable about being a bottom. But I think, I've known many people that are very masculine and a bottom and actually I like that.
15	HIV	11	0:45:46	Just getting the message out. Making sure people don't forget. At the moment it appears as if it's going away but it's not. And I think it is easy for people to make mistakes. We're all human. I think the message has to be drummed continuously. And I think that's the only way it's going to be controlled, until there's a cure or prevention or something like that.
16	PMS	2	0:29:45	...there's always the gay side of me that people pick out with the way I behave and the way I act. There's also the masculine side.
16	PMS	8	0:41:48	(V.O.) we look like normal people. Normal men. We're not so disconnected from the rest of society. I think it's important to not separate yourself from the straight world.
16	PMS	9	0:41:48	Yeah, maybe some of us do imitate straight men or straight people, but that isn't so bad. I don't know. Imitating normality, I mean if you're trying to imitate a normal heterosexual man, I think maybe it just comes easy, cause you know all about it. Not from the heterosexual side, but you know how to be a man,

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
17	PMS	4	0:14:45	If you just look twenty, thirty years ago when it was all illegal back then. And then we managed to get it legal. And now we are managing to get equal rights. Until recently you can't get married. In Holland, they're trying really hard to push for gay adoption. Which is-I think it may well come through.
17	PMS	5	0:45:43	I think that total equality-I think that's the most important one. Cause I think once you have that-once you reach that goal-when that goal is reached, all the other issues will just-well, they won't be that important cause they'll be included in total equality.
17	PMS	16	0:14:45	It may take a while but it will come through. So, yeah, yeah. We are coming out more and being much more assertive and powerful in just getting our rights. I think that'll keep on going till we reach a certain point when there will be no difference.
18	PBP	8	0:01:36	Now I feel very accepted within the Bear Community. I don't think I'll-If somebody calls me a Bear, I'll be quite happy to say, "Yes, I am!"

Bill Leinenger
Tape 1

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
3	IDB	16	0:01:29	I just really think it's in here, you know. If you want to be a bear, you can be a bear, you know. We're not going to-at least in my opinion, I'm not going to ostracize somebody if they think they are a bear and I don't.
3	IDB	21	0:00:48	I'm just kind of carefree and, I don't know, my attitude is just-I love hugging everybody and that's kind of what I've known the bears to be.
3	IDB	24	0:02:10	(V.O.) I think, you know, there's nothing that says you have to have this and this or you know, there's no formula that makes someone a bear. There can be a whole bunch of different characteristics
4	SIF	4	0:06:55	I would go crawl into bed with my mother, before I got up and whatever, if I was going to school that morning. I think it might have been kindergarten. And I remember telling her one morning I had a dream that I married Robin from Batman and Robin.
4	SIF	13	0:09:18	I had a series of girlfriends. Not a whole lot. But, you know, I had a few. And I eventually became engaged and married. And, that's just how I chose to hide it.
4	SIF	16	0:09:18	I think I just did what I thought they wanted me to do-so-or what society wanted me to do.
4	SIF	18	0:09:18	And while I married, I was becoming really, really unhappy and at the time I was only twenty-six, twenty-seven and I just realized there is now way that I could go for the rest of my life, living this façade. So, I had to end it
4	SIF	20	0:19:37	And from that period of time, my family and friends all kind of shut me out. They didn't understand why I was getting a divorce. No one was really supportive of me.

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
4	SIF	22	0:19:37	And-I went to therapy in, I started that June, which, you know, was much delayed but I was severely depressed. I contemplated suicide many times.
5	FCO	2	0:06:55	I don't know that there was any one day that I woke up thinking, I was gay. Just from way back, as far as I could remember I-just when I understood what being gay meant, I knew I was gay.
5	FCO	4	0:06:55	I just knew it wasn't completely accepted in society. So I, of course, wasn't very comfortable with the realization that I was gay. So I just chose to hide it.
5	FCO	7	0:23:12	Closeted to me was more suffocating. Where as coming out was, though now I can exhale and you know, breath easier, the coming out process was very difficult.
5	FCO	19	0:50:02	I think so, because the whole society, in whole I mean,
5	FCO	20	0:50:02	(V.O.) their first assumption is you're straight or you're heterosexual. ...You are more or less coming out to new people almost everyday, whether it's the cashier at the grocery store or a taxi cab driver, you know, someone in a hotel
5	FCO	21	0:25:02	****I didn't know any friends, who I knew for a fact were gay. So, it was a learning process for me.
6	SCO	7	0:04:04	****It helped open my eyes and realize there are other groups of gay people. There's not just the stereotypical gay people out there.
7	COB	3	0:25:02	I didn't even know that the Bears exist. And when I found them, which was about a year after I came out, I was relieved. I was like, "Wow!
7	COB	4	0:25:02	(V.O.) There are men who like me and I love this." And I was completely enamored with the whole lifestyle.... there is this group called the bears and, you know, they love me.

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
7	COB	9	0:04:04	I wouldn't say that I chose to be a bear. I think that I just realized that the bear community is where I feel the most comfortable being gay. And I definitely felt like I fit in.
7	COB	11	0:25:02	I think more just coming out as a bear was just more to myself.
8	IBC	11	0:35:23	(V.O.) But, you know, like the Jack Radcliff, I think and the Busters, I think, a lot of people idealize those, or that image and that's what these magazines are showing. Unfortunately a lot of people do buy it up, you know.
8	IBC	13	0:35:23	I mean I appreciate what I can see in those magazines but I think it's also shaping the opinions of some bears and some of their viewpoints and I think that they're missing a whole segment-quite a few segments, really.
8	IBC	19	0:27:59	If you don't fit the image that is being published in the magazines, then you are not in the clique or you don't belong in this group of people. So, yeah, it's like you don't sit at this cafeteria table.
10	IBP	11	0:39:40	The ultimate way that the clubs are steering the image of who is a Bear is through their involvement in the contest. ...I don't put much credibility in those contest,
10	IBP	12	0:39:40	(V.O.) I think that they're fun to the extent that's exactly what everybody comes to see, you know, that's exactly what it is, they want to see something. Miss America for the Bears. Who's got the best furry chest! Who's got, you know, who fits the mold of what a bear is!

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
11	CCB	4	0:43:35	It's definitely giving them something, somewhere to tap into. Something that they can still do on the privacy of their own home. That they can research before they come out if they're not out already and just learn more about it, to feel safer about to rather than during head in, or head first into it all.
12	IIN	4	0:01:29	I guess, even a “twinkie” can be a bear. But I think we all know what a “twinkie” kind of is.
15	HIV	1	0:55:34	And you know, I am not the only person who can contract AIDS.
16	PMS	6	0:55:34	(V.O.) I guess I would just say just because I am a gay man, doesn't mean I fall into the same stereotypes of what they may think a gay person is.
16	PMS	10	0:05:50	I don't think that you have to be gay to be a bear, but I think on the other hand, if you're part of the bears, the assumption would be that you're gay.
17	PMS	10	0:53:05	I want to be able to walk down the street, you know, holding hands with another man and that old-I don't know if that's what they're truly advocating, you know, but that's what I hope for. I have that same desire.
17	PMS	12	0:53:05	I want to feel comfortable wherever I'm at to throw my arm around another guy or put my hand on his leg or you know,
17	PMS	14	0:53:05	I want the same courtesies that men are given toward women. I want the same courtesies, you know, as a gay man.
18	PBP	3	0:56:51	I think my pride is internal and I'm proud to be who I am. So, I don't need to march down the street.

Michael Tomaszek
Tape 1

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
3	IDB	4	0:01:55;24	I guess more along the lines of it's not that plastic surgery looking, heroin chic, skinny, I starved myself, go to the gym six hours a day just average human being.
4	SIF	7	0:09:54;07	I buried myself in my work. That was real easy to do. From high school-Well in high school, I was going to conservatory as opposed to teaching music, I was going to be the, you know orchestral player. So, that was easy to fill up my time and distract myself from everything else.
4	SIF	11	0:08:38;21	I had a much stronger attraction for my phys. ed. teacher I think at that point than I did for any girl I knew.
4	SIF	15	0:08:08;04	You know, you start-I guess that's the age when people start talking about dating and kind of. "Okay," if that's what I'm supposed to be doing. Not my thing. You know, you do it because people want you to.
4	SIF	17	0:09:19;24	I was a public school teacher scared to death of losing my job. It was, in the state I taught in. It was a very weird time. I was amongst the first where they started fingerprinting for people employed in any kind of school district in any way, shape or form. Bus drivers, cafeteria workers, teachers. And I guess that helped to put it down a little bit more.
4	SIF	19	0:14:55;29	Still at the time I was teaching school. Scared to death that some reason the school board was following me.
5	FCO	10	0:11:25;01	I had bought a house with a house with a good friend of mine. A female.She just all of a sudden one day, you know, came home, she like made a glass of wine. She sat down. And I think this had been eating at her for months. And she was like, "I don't want you to be mad, blah, blah, blah!" She asked me, "are you gay?" I was just-I was kind of blown away. I was finally really relieved to say to somebody, "Yes!"

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
6	SCO	4	0:04:17;03	And when I finally came out, I still wanted to be that, I guess that skinny, thin. Couldn't get that out of my head.
7	COB	2	0:04:30;19	I never heard that word Bear until somebody had called me that. I had no clue what they were talking about, at first.
7	COB	6	0:05:15;06	The first time somebody looked at me and went "WOOF," I went what the hell is that. Just happened to be Provincetown. And just been going there since I was a kid. Penny candy shop. And some gentleman called me a Bear, a very attractive Bear and I had to stop and think what the heck he was talking about.
7	COB	8	0:16:11;23	*****He did one of those things like, "You have any idea what I was talking about, did you?" He said, "okay, larger than average, facial hair, the attitude, the non-swish?"
9	BCD	5	0:01:14;21	It might be just from personal experience there's that part that just sees it as way of- Oops, there somebody else-who it has been described as a disadvantage being a little bit heavier than the norm, and it so-here's somebody else who will have sex with me. I've declined joining an awful lot of bear clubs because that's what they were. You know, opportunity to have sex-and I don't need to pay dues to anything to do that.
12	IIN	1	0:18:59;11	The term Bear is just so, a big umbrella thing.
12	IIN	4	0:19:24;04	And you know, but there's a lid for every pot. I'm convinced.
12	IIN	12	0:19:07;27	Maybe like the groups in Phoenix, thought it was a little more polite than Girth and Mirth. It's a little bit more inclusive and a lot kinder than some of those.
12	IIN	14	0:03:52;15	I was never thin. That dreaded word in high school or even earlier elementary school, The Husky Pants.
12	IIN	15	0:04:07;00	I hated that. I was never thin, I was never going to be thin. It's not in the genetics. It's not in my family anywhere.

Michael Tomaszek
Tape 1

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
3	IDB	8	0:01:22;00	(V.O.) Heck they just broke Metropolitan Phoenix area into three area codes.
2	IDB	9	0:01:22;00	And I am supposed to remember that, let alone a bear code with all of its different pluses and minuses, uppercase, lowercase ...Forget it! I can't remember which side of town is which area code
17	PMS	9	0:08:02;21	I just want to be able to park my car and not have somebody throw something at it. Just like and be defended by the police if somebody does, just like everybody else.
17	PMS	11	0:08:16;20	I want to be able to, able to participate in my husband's flight benefits just like their married counterparts, their male-female marriage counterparts.
17	PMS	13	0:08:43;05	Why can't my love for my husband be recognized as legal as my sister's is for her husband?

Les Wright
Tape 1

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
1	OPS	5	0:29:52;00	...About gay men embracing their masculinities yet embracing those aspects of themselves that are traditionally devalued as feminine. Being nurturing, being tender, like being protective of your brood, or you know, and on and on like that. There's a kind of masculinization or appropriation of values as masculine that have tended to be split off, you know, that is what women are like.
2	HIS	3	0:06:22 I've always been, more on the fringe of the leather sex community than feeling a part of it.
2	HIS	6	0:03:08 This is kind of a look at the animals in the zoo and it's describing gay types in terms of animal types and one of the types is a bear which matches up pretty closely to the general self-definition of bears now.
2	HIS	9	0:14:58	And then AIDS hit. And within eighteen months it went from this party to Castro Street was literally deserted.
2	HIS	10	0:14:58	(V.O.) Everybody went into hiding.
2	HIS	11	0:14:58	(V.O.) There was this big sexual shut down, that people, most people stopped having sex or were doing it with a lot of guilt and furtiveness.
2	HIS	12	0:14:58	when people started to come out again, people were a few years older. They were no longer twenty to thirty-five. Some of them were over forty; some of them were hitting fifty and they had more body hair. In the early days of AIDS, lots of guys put on weight because if you were heavier that was interpreted as meaning that you were healthier. Because skinnier became equivalent to having AIDS.

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
2	HIS	14	0:03:08	When BEAR magazine was founded, when a private social-sex group was started, also called themselves bears, the Bear Hugs group, and the first BBS's were going up and online communication was just starting
2	HIS	16	0:03:08	...There were a lot of guys who rapidly identified-Self-identified as bears... People living in other different parts of the country or even abroad picked up on it rather quickly.
4	SIF	3	0:09:41	When I can remember my earliest memory of being like four years old and seeing my ten year old cousins, three of them walking across the backyard, and I just-I now recognize what I felt for them was pure lust.
6	SCO	3	0:09:41	But in ten years as I came to understanding more and began to see, "homosexuals," I didn't fit the stereotype.
6	SCO	5	0:09:41	I think that is also common thing that many bears have, that you go through that process of trying to assimilate into whatever mainstream collective identity is and still is-It's not me for a lot of gay men. And for a lot of gay men it is not them, you know.
6	SCO	6	0:09:41	(V.O.) And I think that's part of the trial by fire that sets up the second coming out.
7	COB	13	0:08:26	(V.O.) I think a lot of people experience a kind of-I don't know, kindred spirit. There's something about when you walk into a room and there's another bear there, there's some kind of non-verbal, some kind of immediate connection that happens.with bears it seems to be, whoever the people are and whatever they do, there is that bonding. How can I put it? Not because you're a bear, but that shared thing is what is labeled, a part of what is called a bear

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
8	IBC	4	0:52:19	It was kind of a-it was a local deal, where you walked-if you wanted to have your picture in the magazine and run and ad to met people-it was kind of an elaborate personal column-so, you went in, you got your picture taken, and you were in the magazine and you met people that way and a community started to grow out of fuck buddies and ex-tricks and so forth.
8	IBC	6	0:52:19	But long before BEAR magazine discovered Jack, the models in BEAR magazine looked like the way bears actually looked
8	IBC	22	0:52:19	(V.O.) I think the problem is, where what becomes internalized, re-internalization of I'm not as good as those people. It does damage, it undoes the good of what bears at least were originally about, you know. And for some people it helps them tremendously. And for other people it's a very negative influence.
9	BCD	4	0:50:43	It's also a mistake of all of the bear community as clubs, you know, if you don't belong to a bear club you can't be a bear, seems like an extremely unbearlike attitude if bear's about inclusivity.
9	BCD	6	0:50:43	(V.O.) in the beginning, there was a lot of sense of camaraderie and inclusiveness and over time it's become more rhetoric and the practice had become more exclusionary by joining clubs and some clubs, you even have to like be initiated. And can't just pay dues
9	BCD	7	0:48:10	...A lot of the club activities get caught up in club politics, you know, the beauty contest, the fundraising, the political infighting who's going to be on top of the heap, the political heap, you know, that kind of stuff. Which happens in any kind of, I think, social group function. But that's not bear, that's human.

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
10	IBP	1	0:50:43	(V.O.) the ultimate expression of that are these contest, of having people compete to be who is more bear, in physical terms and other ones as well, of course.
10	IBC	3	0:50:43	The contest are an extension of the club dynamic.
10	IBP	5	0:52:19	Because in the competition some people are better than others, is the nature of that very beast.
10	IBP	8	0:52:19	In the beginning, during Bear Expo, under Lurch's tutorage, the first bear contest were bear drag. They were parodies of beauty contest and they were consciously and deliberately done that way. And over time they have gotten more serious.
11	CCB	3	0:19:37	I thing the Bear Community is most likely the first bona fide cyber community to come into being, because so much of the social connecting that's taking place has been directly over the net. And it's literally spread around the world, so both the word of the idea of bear, of bear community is spread that way plus all the personal social connections have happened.
11	CCB	6	0:19:37	And how much of it is social and how much of it is sexual and how much of it is virtual, as a virtual pen pal kind of thing, as opposed to people who really establishing longer lasting friendships is of course very hard to say.
11	CCB	8	0:19:37	But also because whatever causes it-this inordinate concentration of gay men who are bear identifying in the computer industry to begin with. It's kind of like that's the stereotypical field of employment for a bear. We're there in such large numbers that it's almost inescapable.

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
12	IIN	8	0:09:41	If you like, your sexual taste or the way you look yourself doesn't conform to this kind of mass media consumer image of what a proper, you know, socially upwardly mobile homosexual man is supposed to look like and desire. And I think there comes that kind of then a lot of people feel rejected or themselves turn away.
14	SEX	10	0:33:43	It just goes to show you, that I think everyone's sexuality changes and evolves over time. And there are not like two or three sexualities, I think there are as many sexualities as there are people on the planet.
17	PMS	6	0:42:03	(V.O.) It went from gay liberation to gay equal rights. Assimilation, being absorbed as middle-class consumers.
17	PMS	7	0:42:03	And we're becoming such a consumer society as a whole, that bears by and large are reflections of the larger society.

Les Wright
Tape 2

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
3	IDB	10	0:21:09	Historically there have been two camps.
3	IDB	11	0:21:09	(V.O.) One that says Bear is a state of mind, which is to say, an attitude, i.e. lack of attitude. The other camp says that bear is a physical type, specific male secondary sexual characteristics, you know.
3	IDB	12	0:21:09	So one is mental, the other is physical. So, mind or appearance.
3	IDB	17	0:24:19	If you say you're a bear, you're a bear, you know. If you're a seven-legged rabbit from the moon and you say you're a bear, you're a bear.
3	IDB	18	0:24:19	(V.O.) But that for me gets into the whole idea of self-determination and people empowering themselves and beariness being about self-empowerment and self-esteem and accepting who you are and defining who you are taking the power to define who you are and so on and so forth.
3	IDB	22	0:21:09	And my personal definition is a bear is a gay man
3	IDB	23	0:21:09	(V.O.)who is as comfortable being a man as he is being gay and has a warm heart.
3	IDB	26	0:21:09	(V.O.) And a lot of people disagree with that vehemently.
3	IDB	27	0:21:09	But I think that's good, that's not resolved and I hope it remains unresolved cause I think that's where a lot of the life and energy comes from.
7	COB	12	0:11:30	To me, Beardom is more than sex or sexual desire or sexual attitude.

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
8	IBC	1	0:15:17	When I started out bears were just guys and now there's this regimented Bear clone look. You know, I've got my jeans, I've got my flannel shirt, I had my red-I forgot, red or black BEAR magazine baseball cap and you know, and it was like everybody was dressed more or less the same. And very rapidly this bear clone look came into being.
8	IBC	21	0:28:15	Yeah, but again the divide into people who look like the magazines and people who are just average, who don't necessarily work out or beef up but are, you know, how does the ad go? Height and weight proportionate for a bear.
12	IIN	3	0:21:09	one of the things that I often suspect is, when people are out all of these definitions it's either they mean people who look like themselves or they mean people who are look like their sexual ideal, you know.
14	SEX	2	0:21:09	How do we accepted and deal with gay without really spending a lot of time focusing on what does it mean far us to be men in a society that defines men who are attracted to men as by definitions, not men.
14	SEX	4	0:21:09	You know, we are men.
15	HIV	3	0:51:26	living through the genesis and transformation of AIDS into a moral disease
15	HIV	4	0:51:26	(V.O.) and living through an epidemic, watching everyone literally around me die. Like virtually all my friends in San Francisco have been dead for years now. I stopped counting at 500 and it's into the thousands. You know, of the people I know who've died.
15	HIV	5	0:51:26	plus I've lived with HIV for almost twenty years myself.
15	HIV	7	0:51:26	I spent fifteen years of my life waiting to die, you know, in my thirties and forties.

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
16	PMS	1	0:21:09	...bears are about embracing our masculinity.
16	PMS	4	0:42:10	To me, the idea of bears being just like men,
16	PMS	5	0:42:10	(V.O.) ... heterosexual men, to me a very political aggressive or politically provoking stance.
16	PMS	11	0:42:10	And yet, I think most bears take the opposite reaction. They're happy; I can relax and just be me. I don't have to put out to the world that I'm gay or challenging people. And they just-It's very easy to be a bear because in many places people don't pick up that you're gay. The ability to pass becomes a luxury that people take again.

Les Wright
Tape 3

N o.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
18	PBP	6	0:08:58	(V.O.) I would say self-labeling as bears, I understand as a kind of self-powering act

Narrator
Tape 1

No.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
1	OPS	1		<p>William Gronbech wrote: The universe is crossed by millions and millions of threads, each one spun by an isolated individual.</p> <p>According to primitive experience, the facts arrange themselves into a different pattern. "HE" is of the same soul and every new appearance of a HIM...</p> <p>whether it be no other than that we saw yesterday or the most distant of all among the kin, as we reckon-...</p> <p>(EMPHASIS)</p> <p>is a new creation from the soul.</p>
1	OPS	2		<p>His very existence is explained in myths and legends. To some Native Americans tribes he was akin to a god and the father of all men. To the Ainu he is the bringer of fire. To the Norse, wearing his skin into battle would evoke his power, believing to make them invincible, victorious. To many primitive people, he was revered for his ability to be reborn each spring. The young men in some Native American tribes wore his skin during initiations rites into manhood, and were symbolically slain, thus having a rebirth as adults.</p>
1	OPS	3		<p>He was food. He was magic. He was medicine.</p>
1	OPS	4		<p>At the end of the twentieth century, gay men again, evoked his tenacity, blended his many attributes of nurturing and tenderness with masculinity.</p> <p>(Turns head back to where Les would be.)</p>
1	OPS	6		<p>He is the bear. And this is the story of those gay men who have forged a community in his honor.</p>

No.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
2	HIS	1		The belief is that there have always been masculine gay men. As early as the 1950's, motorcycle groups and leather clubs were formed. They were born out of a post World War II code of military discipline. Yet, in the 1960's, before Stonewall, groups of gay men exploring their masculinity, tried to forge an alternative to leather community.
2	HIS	2		For many men, leather lacks something.
2	HIS	5		Then, on July 26, 1979, The Advocate published a humorous article by George Mazzei, entitled, "Who's Who in the Zoo: A Glossary of Gay Animals." Mazzei claimed he wrote the article after discussing the different types of men with a friend in a leather bar.
2	HIS	7		Scattered mentions of "Bears" in the gay community showed up before and after this article. But by 1980, gay men across the country started putting little teddy bears in their back pockets, mocking the hanky codes. Meaning, "I want to cuddle" rather than be reduced to a single sex act.
2	HIS	8		Right around 1982, just as the bear community was forming, the tragedy started.
2	HIS	13		Then, in 1987, all of the pieces were in place in San Francisco. The bear community would finally be formed. Three separate phenomena would begin to define this community.
3	IDB	1		So, what is a Bear, anyway?
3	IDB	6		Still confused? There's always the bear code? A series of letters and number, pluses and minuses all denoting your Bearness. If it all looks like another language, it is!
3	IDB	7		It was Put together by a couple of Astronomers as a joke. Yet, many Bears use it to classify how they look and what they enjoy sexually.

No.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
3	IDB	13		Sounds like everyone has a different definition.
3	IDB	14		Even George Mazzei, in his article in the advocate, had a hard time with this issue. (Reading) Bears as Hunky, chunky types.... Their tangled beards often present no discernible place to insert a comb... And like some large dogs, tend to shed on the furniture. (Looking to the camera) Physical! Then he sums it all up. (Reading) It's attitude that makes a Bear.
3	IDB	15		So, who can be a bear?
4	SIF	1		Coming out is the process by which gay people begin to develop a social identity. Though there are similarities, each persons coming out process is unique.
4	SIF	5		This process can be traumatic for some men and usually begins with denial.
5	FCO	1		As they begin to formulate a positive gay identity, gay men have to overcome many personal struggles.
5	FCO	5		From internalization, the next step is disclosure.
6	SCO	1		From disclosure to integration into a larger community.
6	SCO	2		How does one integrate into a community here the type of man he is, is not welcomed?
7	COB	1		Eventually, these men each found a collective sense of community within the Bear subculture.
7	COB	15		In the beginning, as the bear community began to form, there were three phenomena that were credited

No.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
7	COB	16		The first phenomenon was the creation of BEAR magazine. The little photocopy zine with a first run of 40 issues, became a major media enterprise, complete with major merchandizing, in-house produced porno videos and a slick magazine. Yet through the 1990's, it faced stiff competition from a number of new publications and mainstream produced porno's targeted to the bear community, all with their own images. BEAR magazine ceased publication in 2001, yet till the end was a strong indicator of the image of the bear.
7	COB	17		This community was born out of exclusion. It rejected the norm of the gay community as too narrow. But, would it be as narrow when it was time to create a 'bear' image.
8	IBC	2		In the very beginning there wasn't a right or wrong way be a Bear. I wasn't about wearing the right clothes or being in the right group. It was just being a man.
8	IBC	7		"Jack." "Jack Radcliff" (holding up the book) A computer consultant who was initially introduced to the Bear Community in Chris Nelson's book of photographs, The Bear Cult. Yet, it wasn't till Jack modeled for Bear Magazine in Issue #8 and starred in a number of porno's for the publishing company, Brush Creek Media, would he be discovered by the community. The first Bear ICON was created.
8	IBC	8		From him, all future Bear models would be judged.
8	IBC	18		The problems occur when that image is interpreted.
9	BCD	1		The second phenomena was the Bear Hugs. From those casual, friendly, sex parties, built on a foundation of camaraderie and inclusiveness have grown the organized bear community

No.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
9	BCD	2		There are hundreds of local clubs. In almost every big city in the U.S.A. and many cities in the world, there is at least one club. From San Francisco to Istanbul, New York to Belin, Dallas to Tokyo, South Florida to South Africa, New Orleans to Sydney. And everywhere inbetween.
9	BCD	3		And in many cases it's the club dynamic that distinguishes the image of who is or who is not a bear?
9	BCD	8		The Bear Contest, the ultimate competitions. Sometimes they are produced in conjunction with the club's annual Bear Run. There are at least one Bear Run a month, somewhere in the world, some months every weekend. Most bear runs now serve as fund-raisers for a variety of gay charities. Attendance range from a couple hundred guys to several thousand. And arguably, the most popular activities at bear runs are the contests, where the ideal bear is chosen as "Mr. Bear."
9	BCD	9		The ultimate way that the clubs are steering the image of who is a Bear is through their involvement in the contest.
10	IBP	4		If the magazines are steering the day to day image, some think the bear contest are either steering the magazines or in some cases, reinforcing the image.
11	CCB	1		The third phenomenon was the creation of the presence of Bears on the BBS's, the cyber-bulletin boards in the mid-1980's. These early computer networks have grown of course into the Internet, the communication infrastructure. Everything from coming out resources to individual home pages. Clubs news to Internet only Clubs. Magazines, Listservs, Web Cams, and the list goes on.
11	CCB	2		The presence of the bear community has definitely evolved.

No.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
11	CCB	5		The internet, from the beginning, was beneficial to the spread of ideas and concepts behind the bear community. But as the presence of the Bear community on the Internet has grown, the internet has not just been available for information and social contacts.
11	CCB	7		And how much of the internet Bear presence is commercial. In fact, the extent of the bear community's involvement in commercial computer applications is quite obvious.
12	IIN	2		How big is that umbrella? How inclusive has this community become?
12	IIN	6		The "twinkie." The name bears give to men who are the subject of the predominant image in the gay mass media.
12	IIN	7		The perpetual boy who is more often than not, very skinny almost to the point of too skinny, sometimes gym-toned. Usually he is beardless and hairless. Images of male beauty that include smooth, sleek, 6 pack abs and buns of steel in the gay media, are empowering images of the impossible dream. Thanks to Abercrombie and Fitch, Herb Ritts, Tom Bianchi, among others, that objectified image has carried over into straight oriented mass media.
12	IIN	11		The bear movement has definitely given men a community who don't fit that mold. Especially larger, robust men.
12	INN	16		Is the very root of being gay based on fear? The fear of rejection? The Fear of commitment? The Fear of nonconformity? IS the Bear subculture a solution for those fears? Or is it the fear...
12	INN	17		...of being alone?
13	GAI	5		The very ideal of sexual desire and community formation along those lines, though personal is politically provoking

No.	Scene	Clip	Time Code	Dialogue
14	SEX	3		The very issue about being gay. How does a Bear define himself as a man, when society doesn't?
14	SEX	5		The issue gets trickier when you add the dynamic of a passive sexual partner.
15	HIV	2		The majority of Bears have grown up in the shadow of AIDS. A community that was born out from this disease. Every bear faces the disease and it's consequences everyday as gay men.
16	PMS	3		The Bear Community has been accused of being non-political. Not active or committed to any cause or issue. Yet, is their masculinity a political position.
17	PMS	8		Still many bears do have strong beliefs about what they want in their lives.

APPENDIX E

Interview Protocol

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR BEAR BUST

1. Identify yourself for the purpose of the video.
2. Are you a "Bear"? Why do you say you are a "Bear"?
3. How do you identify yourself in the bear community?
4. How active are you in the bear community?
5. Did you choose to become a bear? Why?
6. For you, how does being a bear differ from being gay?
7. When did you first come to the realization that you were different?
8. How did you feel during this period in your life?
9. What was your emotional state during this time? Were you prone to depression? Suicide? Anger? Shame? Fear?
10. How did your peers treat you?
11. What was your reaction to them? How did you protect yourself?
12. When did you come to the realization that you might be gay?
13. After you came to this realization, how long did it take for you to come out?
14. How would you describe your closeted stage in your life?
15. How did it feel to finally come out?
16. Who did you come out to first? When did you come out to your parents and family? What was that like for you? Peers? Friends? School? Job?
17. Was there ever a point when you felt that coming out was as difficult as being closeted?
18. Did you come out as a bear the same time that you came out as a gay man?
19. If not, when did you come out as a bear?
20. Why did you not come out as a bear before coming out as gay?
21. What was your reaction when you finally began to identify with the bear community?
22. Since your involvement, has the bear community changed? In what ways?
23. What is your definition of a bear? How do you identify a bear to those people who may be unfamiliar with the term?
24. Can you separate your being a bear from your being gay or from being a man?
25. (For Image Makers) As a Bear, you also create the image of a bear, through the past work you have done in bear literature? How does this differ from your identity in the bear community?
26. Is being a bear also separate to being an ordinary gay man or is it different or more privileged?
27. Les Wright and others talked about the gay clone created by the mainstream gay community: is there being created by the publications and the porno industry a central image that is becoming synonymous with the bear community?
28. Casey said that there is a "new Bear" image appearing rather slowly in the publications? Do you see this image of the bear changing? Do you see a change in the bear community?
29. How do you see yourself as a role model? Do you feel that your life experiences and your opinions could serve as a catalyst or as a model for young men who are contemplating entering this community?
30. Do you see yourself as masculine? How?
31. Do you see your masculinity as put forth by the definition of masculinity put forth by the heterosexual community?
32. Is being gay and being a man synonymous with you? Why?
33. Has being a member of the bear community helped you with your identity as a man?
34. Les Wright talks about the double coming out process that members of the bear community go through. Do you agree with this analogy? Is this true by your own experiences?
35. Has your coming out process stopped or do you agree that we come out daily in our lives?

36. I want to talk about the relationship between being passive sexually and masculinity. Can a bottom be masculine? Why do you say that?
37. Are you politically active in the gay community? Why do you say that?
38. Are there any issue that the active members of the gay community have tried to obtain that are important to you?
39. Is your involvement or lack of involvement in gay politics directly related to your being a member of the bear community?
40. In your experience, do you see the bear community as being politically involved?
41. Is there any aspect of the gay political scene that offends you personally? What aspects and why do they offend you?
42. What aspects of gay life would you like to see changed or improved?
43. Straight people may see this video. Are there any comments or feeling that you want to get across to that segment of the population about yourself as a gay man or about yourself as a bear?
44. What does gay pride mean to you? How do you show your pride in your personal life?
45. How does pride correlate to your self-concept of being a bear?

APPENDIX F

Release Forms

UNO Video Department of Drama and Communications

Performance Release

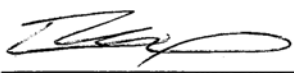
In consideration of my appearing in the video Asking to See the Soul
 (title or subject)

and for no subsequent remuneration, I do hereby on behalf of myself, my heirs, executors,
 and administrators authorize Barth Cox to use
 (producer or production company)

live or recorded on tape, film, or otherwise my name, voice, likeness, and performance for
 television or film distribution throughout the world and for audiovisual and general
 education purposes in perpetuity.

I further agree on behalf of myself and others as above stated that my name,
 likeness, and biography may be used for promotion purposes and other uses. Further, I
 agree to indemnify, defend, and hold the producer harmless for any and all claims, suits, or
 liabilities arising from my appearance and the use of any of my materials, name, likeness,
 or biography.

I have read and understand the terms of this release.

Signature 
 Printed Name William Adams
 Title Asking to See the Soul
 Street Address 959 Oak St.
 City, State, and Zip Code San Francisco CA 94117
 Phone Number 415-621-4790
 Date 9/7/99

**UNO Video Department of Drama and Communications
Performance Release**

in consideration of my appearing, in the video, *Asking to See the Soul*, and for no subsequent remuneration, I do hereby on behalf of myself, my heirs, executors, and administrators authorize Barth Cox, (producer) to use live or recorded on tape, film, or otherwise my name, voice, likeness, and performance for television or film distribution throughout the world and for audiovisual and general education purposes in perpetuity.

I further agree on behalf of myself and others as above stated that my name, likeness, and biography may be used for promotion purposes and other uses. Further, I agree to indemnify, defend, and hold the producer harmless for any and all claims, suits, or liabilities arising from my appearance and the use of any of my materials, name, likeness, or biography.

I have read and understand the terms of this release.

Signature W. Hargreaves

Printed Name BILL HARGREAVES

Title or Occupation: OPERATIONS ANALYST

Street Address: LOUIS ARMSTRONG STREET 12

City: ZAND, JK

State _____ Zip Code 1544 KL

Phone Number (31) 653106739 (w) +31102755587

Date: 22/2/2002

e-mail: ccebph@lyondell.com or big hairy bill@hotmail.com

**UNO Video Department of Drama and Communications
Performance Release**

In consideration of my appearing, in the video, *Asking to See the Soul*, and for no subsequent remuneration, I do hereby on behalf of myself, my heirs, executors, and administrators authorize Barth Cox, (producer) to use live or recorded on tape, film, or otherwise my name, voice, likeness, and performance for television or film distribution throughout the world and for audiovisual and general education purposes in perpetuity.

I further agree on behalf of myself and others as above stated that my name, likeness, and biography may be used for promotion purposes and other uses. Further, I agree to indemnify, defend, and hold the producer harmless for any and all claims, suits, or liabilities arising from my appearance and the use of any of my materials, name, likeness, or biography.

I have read and understand the terms of this release.

Signature H. William Leinenger

Printed Name H. WILLIAM LEINENGER

Title or Occupation: OWNER of BERYLPOSE

Street Address: 33743 8 MILE RD.

City: LINDONIA

State MI Zip Code 48152

Phone Number (248) 442-2436

Date: 4/1/00

UNO Video Department of Drama and Communications

Performance Release

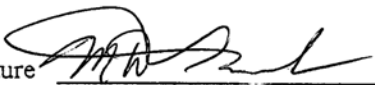
In consideration of my appearing in the video Asking to See the Soul
(title or subject)

and for no subsequent remuneration, I do hereby on behalf of myself, my heirs, executors,
and administrators authorize Barth Cox to use
(producer or production company)

live or recorded on tape, film, or otherwise my name, voice, likeness, and performance for
television or film distribution throughout the world and for audiovisual and general
education purposes in perpetuity.

I further agree on behalf of myself and others as above stated that my name,
likeness, and biography may be used for promotion purposes and other uses. Further, I
agree to indemnify, defend, and hold the producer harmless for any and all claims, suits, or
liabilities arising from my appearance and the use of any of my materials, name, likeness,
or biography.

I have read and understand the terms of this release.

Signature 
Printed Name MICHAEL D TOMASZEK
Title Asking to See the Soul
Street Address 4802 N 12th St #1024
City, State, and Zip Code Phx AZ 85012
Phone Number 602 265-7501
Date 9/7/99

**UNO Video Department of Drama and Communications
Performance Release**

In consideration of my appearing, in the video, *Asking to See the Soul*, and for no subsequent remuneration, I do hereby on behalf of myself, my heirs, executors, and administrators authorize Barth Cox, (producer) to use live or recorded on tape, film, or otherwise my name, voice, likeness, and performance for television or film distribution throughout the world and for audiovisual and general education purposes in perpetuity.

I further agree on behalf of myself and others as above stated that my name, likeness, and biography may be used for promotion purposes and other uses. Further, I agree to indemnify, defend, and hold the producer harmless for any and all claims, suits, or liabilities arising from my appearance and the use of any of my materials, name, likeness, or biography.

I have read and understand the terms of this release

Signature

Y. H. Wright

Printed Name

LES WRIGHT

Title or Occupation:

ASSOC PROFESSOR OF HUMANITIES

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PO BOX 926

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FITCHBURG

State

MA

Zip Code

01420

Phone Number

(978) 345-2802

Date:

02.20.2000

cedy bear@bearhistory.com

APPENDIX G

Copy of Credits

FEATURED INTERVIEWS

(ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

BILL ADAMS

BILL HARGREAVES

BILL LEINENGER

MICHAEL TOMASZEK

LES WRIGHT

EVENTS DOCUMENTED

SOUTHERN DECADENCE 1999

New Orleans, LA

BEAR BUST 1999

Hosted by: BEARS OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Orlando, FL

HIBEARNATION 1999

Hosted by: SHOW ME BEARS

St. Louis, MO

INTERNATIONAL BEAR RENDEZVOUS 2000

Hosted by: BEARS OF SAN FRANCISCO

San Francisco, CA

MARDI GRAS 2000

New Orleans, LA

TEXAS BEAR ROUND-UP 2000

Hosted by: DALLAS BEARS

Dallas, TX

**THIS DOCUMENTARY WAS PRODUCED, DIRECTED,
PHOTOGRAPHED, DIRECTED, EDITED BY:**

BARTH COX

PRODUCTION ASSISTANCE BY:

ROBERT DIMM JR.

MUSIC

"AIRE"

BY DENNIS MILONE

ALBUM: DIGITAL REALM

© 2000 BY SOMETHING FISHY MUSIC AND PUBLISHING

"BEARS"

BY MARK WEIGLE

ALBUM: OUT OF THE LOOP

© 2002 MARK WEIGLE

"EVERYTHING'S GONE MUSCOVIET"

BY: :EMBRYOFILE

©2003 KUMA-CHAN RECORDS

"TOPANGA"

BY VAN DYKE EXPLOSION

© 2003 KUMA-CHAN RECORDS

"NARCISSUS"

BY MARTIN STÄHL

©2003 MARTIN STÄHL

"TROIS"

BY CONJOINED FETAL TWINS

©2003 KUMA-CHAN RECORDS

"TEDDY BEAR LULLABY"

BY MARTIN SWINGER

ALBUM: BARENAKED

© 2000 MARTIN F. SWINGER

"TWO COWBOY WALTZ"

BY MARK WEIGLE

ALBUM: THE TRUTH IS

© 1999 MARK WEIGLE

"I AM HERE"

BY MARTIN STÄHL
 © 1997 BY MARTIN STÄHL

"WAITING FOR AN ECHO"
BY FREDDY FREEMAN
ALBUM: BREAK THE SILENCE
 © 2003 FREDDY FREEMAN

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

ROBERT DIMM, JR.
BARBARA B. COLEMAN
DR. KEVIN L. GRAVES
J. STEPHEN HANK
DR. WENDY HAJJAR
DR. LES WRIGHT
MICHAEL TOMASZEK
BILL ADAMS
BILL HARGREAVES
BILL LEINENGER
SCOTT KLAFKE
DAVID BOCKUS, JR.
CORRINE CLEMENTS
RENEE LEBLANC
ED BOLAND
MARK WEIGLE
FREDDY FREEMAN
DENNIS MILONE
MARTIN SWINGER
MARTIN STÄHL
BEARS OF SAN FRANCISCO
SHOW ME BEARS
BEARS OF CENTRAL FLORIDA
DALLAS BEARS
NEW ORLEANS BEAR AND BEAR TRAPPERS SOCIAL CLUB
AUDOBON ZOO
SAN FRANCISCO ZOO
THE AIDS MEMORIAL QUILT PROJECT
To the many friends whose encouragement resulted in this project.

**Asking to See the Soul
is submitted in partial fulfillment of
a Masters of Fine Arts degree
in the
Department of Drama and Communications,
University of New Orleans,
August 2003.**

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APPENDIX H

MPEG Copy of Film

VITA

Barth Louis Cox was born in Napoleonville, Louisiana. He received his Bachelor's degree from Mansfield University in 1996 with a major in Broadcasting. He began his graduate studies in the Spring of 1997 at the University of New Orleans, and he will be graduating in August 2003 with an MFA in Communications from the Department of Drama and Communications. He served as a graduate assistant during his tenure at University of New Orleans and taught a variety of undergraduate classes including *Introduction to Mass Communication* and *Television Production* classes. He is searching for opportunities that would allow him to expand his teaching experiences.

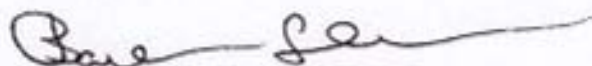
EXAMINATION AND THESIS REPORT

Candidate: Barth Louis Cox

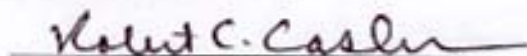
Major Field: Drama and Communications

Title of Thesis: ASKING TO SEE THE SOUL: A VIDEO DOCUMENTARY
EXPLORING THE 'COMING OUT' EXPERIENCES OF MEN
IDENTIFYING WITH A GAY SUBCULTURE

Approved:

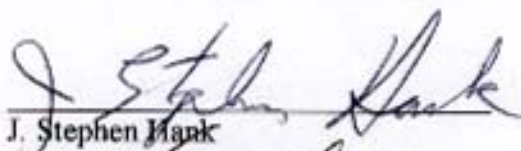
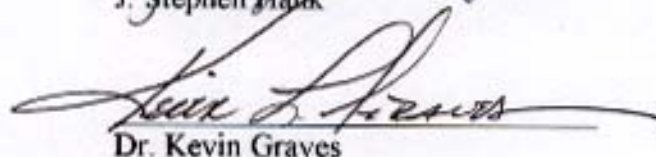


Major Professor & Chair
Barbara Coleman



Dean of Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:


J. Stephen Hank
Dr. Kevin Graves

Date of Examination:

July 9, 2003