Interview Date: 11/12/2018

Interview Location: Co.Galway

(TIMECODE): 00:00:11:11

Interviewer: All right so just for the purpose of the recording I just want to let you know that all of this will be transcribed and made available to you, if you wish to have a copy of it and everything else. And even after the fact when you, when we finish here you feel actually, I don’t want to be in it (ok) no problem everything is withdrawn and destroyed and so forth. (ok) It’s totally within your control as well. So, what I might do is, I might ask you to tell me a bit about you and your background and then how you started lecturing.

Participant: Yeah well, I’ve been working in the YV industry since college. I studied in DIT in Angel Street back in the late nineties and during that time I started working as a runner in Screen Scene, one of the big post-production houses in Dublin and got a bit of a love for editing at that stage but didn’t fall into it then for another couple of years after college. When I was working in a production company in Galway and they needed somebody to edit an Irish language series that I had been a production runner on. I kind of put myself forward and they said well can you do it? And I said well if you teach me how to use the Avid, I’ll cut the series so I sort of threw myself into the deep end but it worked and I’ve been editing ever since. So that was my first freelance gig and that was probably maybe 15 years ago or so. So, most of my editing career editing documentaries for TG4 and I’ve always had an interest in the craft of editing and in the philosophy behind it. I mean in the beginning you’d be like just pressing buttons for a director but a lot of my work I’ve done remotely so you know you’ll be sitting on your own with material and kind of going through it and through it and working it yourself, rather than me sitting with a director all the time. And because I live in the west, I’m not in a big post environment like Dublin where you can work in post houses a lot of the time. So that’s been my main editing career I suppose I also make documentaries. I’ve done a bit of directing and work in collaboration with Keith, my husband, on making feature documentaries. And I guess I started teaching really when the Galway Film Centre approached me to ask me to do a documentary course for adults. So I did that. I did a few of those over a number of years. Taking eight to ten adults and teaching them process and making a documentary from start to finish and then from that I guess the Houston School then approached me to come in and do some workshops in editing with their masters students and I started doing that about four years ago and I go in there maybe three or four days each semester to work with the masters students in there. Yeah, that’s about it. Sometimes you’ve one-on-ones in the Galway Film Centre as well, if they’re looking for someone to come in and teach somebody editing intensively for a day. I’d go in and do that.

(TIMECODE): 00:03:10:07

Interviewer: Just on that, how do you find that going into teaching (teaching yeah).

Participant: Well at the beginning I didn’t really know where to start because I was thinking about, well there was so much to teach you know. Teaching somebody editing is its kind of like saying somebody right showing them how to build a house, there’s so many things you need to know to do it. So what I did was I started off by teaching them the theory of editing and why editing works and I’m a big fan of Walter Murch and his book, ‘in the blink of an eye’. And that that would have been my bible when I started imparting knowledge to others. soI break some of his theories down to try and get them interested in why it actually works. And then I started asking them to pick a scene from a movie that made them feel something, some emotion be it fear or love or anything. And I’d play them to with the students and talked to them about how the editing makes them feel, rather than going at it technically. I find a lot of the time the technicalities of editing can interest a lot of people and the fandanglly things you can do like effects and colour grading but for me that’s not editing. I like to get their minds going I suppose in how it works as a language and how the grammar of it affects a viewer. So that was one part of the teaching and tne once I, I usually do that on the first day with them and then the rest of the time then is sitting in the edit suites with them and their projects. Usually, they start with a personal project so they have to shoot their own documentary and cut it. So they’re going from the beginning to end and I’d workshop with them in the edit suite and some of them might have started editing, some of them might have proficiency on the software already and some of don’t. So it’s very different tan with each student, what they need and what I give them.

(TIMECODE): 00:05:17:07

Interviewer: How do you manage that? When you have students who have a little bit of… and they are demanding…?

Participant: It’s quite tricky yeah, so what I always like to do is have them have material already filmed and, in the system, already so on the first day I brief them as to how to actually get the footage into the system. If some of them don’t know already and I’d run through a quick, ‘this is how you get it onto the timeline. So usually the second day I’d meet them they’ll have something on a timeline or at least in a project. Some of them might have a timeline already cut so then I sit in with them almost as a director. Like I don’t operate when they are in the suite, I make them operate or I ask them to operate and I sort of direct them. And then I can see what their proficiency is like on the software as well because if you're asking somebody, shave a few frames off there or bring that shot down. Very quickly you can tell they know or they don’t. And then if they don’t know it’s a matter of going back to basics and trying to help them to physically engage with the software and understand how it works. Then for people who are more experienced it’s brilliant because you can teach them how to make a cut better or replace that shot and maybe that’s going to work better or even in terms of narrative how they’ve laid stuff down to help them to make their idea work. Like there was one guy I was with a couple of weeks ago and we simply got him to take the end and put it at the beginning of his documentary. For him, it was like ‘oh my god I never thought that was going to work’ and for me you can see that straight away. When you are so used to the process and used to seeing, identifying okay well that definitely needs to be at the beginning but for him it was like absolutely ‘Eureka!’ because he never thought… I guess it’s like one of those things you get into when you're start editing you kind of get very precious about what you’ve done, and you don’t want to touch it and its got so such meaning for you. But then for somebody coming in either a director or is in my case as a lecturer, you can move it for them and be much more free with them and that teaches them as well that editing isn’t a stiff… putting something together it doesn’t have to stay that way. You can have that idea and that might be in your script or that might be in your synopsis but when it’s there then it’s nice to be able to show them that you can still be free and move it and mould it and your idea, your film might be a lot better for it.

(TIMECODE): 00:07:35:13

Interviewer: Your own education, how did you learn to become an editor?

Participant: Well it did, I was in college for four years in Angel Street, and we had an amazing editing lecturer in there at the time. I think his name was Sean Foley maybe. He was an all arty kind of a guy at the time. And Avid… no Final Cut Pro was just starting, so he was the guidng light bringing Final Cut Pro into the students for the first time. And I really didn’t get it. I didn’t really enjoy it at that stage. So I never learnt any editing in school at all even though it was provided.

Interviewer: So you had started started on digital? Had you not done analogue?

Participant: We had a Steenbeck yeah, we had done that in college. So that was still I think it was very much in the transition when I was leaving college in that Steenbecks were very much being phased out and digital was really just starting. So, I had some experience of using the Steenbeck but I hadn’t actually ever really taken it on and sat in the Steenbeck and cut something myself. I kind of wanted to be a cameraperson when I was in college. And that was why I went into film because my interest was in like photography and the image. But that then I suppose morphed a little bit. And when I left college, I was a runner for a while, and I fell into it by chance really. But when I took that first job to edit a TG4 series, I sat in with an editor. Her name was Mary Cromley. She was an established editor at the time, but way more than me anyway. And she taught me how to use the Avid. And I sat with her for a couple of weeks, two or three weeks while she cut a project and Mary was great because she was very… Mary was kind of quite… she wasn’t nervous about the software, but she was very very particular about her steps in how things should be done because we were working in an environment where there was no technicians. So it was you know if something went wrong, technically it was your problem so she was quite, she was very particular about how to do things technically so I learned from that. That you have to know your tech stuff before you actually can sit and be creative. And so I was sitting with her for a good while and then I sat with another editor Justin McCarthy. Who again is a kind of an older school editor. He still edits I think. He’s based out in Spiddal, and I sat with him for a couple of weeks as well because he was one of the first people in the West to use Final Cut Pro. So I was sent to him by this production company. They were an amazing production company. They were really really good. They kind of tried to nurture me and it was great. So I spent a lot of the time with him and then the next thing was to cut a six-part series, in Irish and at the time I wasn’t fluent. I’m fluent now because I’m editing in Irish all the time now so my fluency came from hearing the same thing over and over again and trying to make sense of the rushes. So that’s is how I learn really, I started cutting there in grey media and was cutting there for two or three years. And then they sort of ran out of work, so I went freelancing then. So that’s how, I learnt as I did it. Just learned on the job. It was, it didn’t feel to me where there was a period where I was the kind of learning and then I “was” and editor. It’s kind of a funny thing like I was just thinking about last night as well, ‘when do you become an editor?”, I don’t remember one morning waking up and saying, ‘okay I’m an editor now. I can brand myself as that!’. It was just what I was doing and the work I was getting and I was really enjoying it and becoming better after each project.

(TIMECODE): 00:11:03:09

Interviewer: Would you say, at that moment, at that early stage when you got that first shadowing job, was that the moment when you were kind of saying ‘I’m an editor’?

Participant: Yeah definitely, yeah, yeah, I started to really enjoy it then and see what it could do. It wasn’t just putting stuff together that you were, that there as an ownership there and it was a place to create within what you were doing and I got buzzed up by that.

(TIMECODE): 00:11:27:00

Interviewer: I’m going to move onto the subject of this interview, can you describe to me your interpretation of craft and craftsmanship.

Participant: Yeah, well I would see craft as something that you learn over time and something that you do. I mean traditionally it will be with your hands and I guess editing you're doing it with your hands, but craft, I see craft is something that comes also from inside. It’s Something that comes from your, from your soul. That you are bringing out into the world by adapting something. And that’s, yeah, that’s what I would see crafts as, in any shape or form. Like I often liken editing to sculpture in that, the way I edit would say our own documentaries, because we tend to shoot an awful lot, is that you have like a big mass of footage. And you chip away, and you chip away, and you chip away as a sculpture would, and eventually the mass reveals itself to you. Rather than imposing a narrative on it, that it tells you. Now that’s with our own work, that you know when you're doing job for somebody you can’t necessarily use that approach but that’s when I enjoy it the most, is when it’s being done that way. You're not going by necessarily a script or a very hard and fast way that it should be cut.

(TIMECODE): 00:12:53:17

Interviewer: So you might have already answered that one, you do think that editing could be described as a craft?

Participant: Certainly yeah, absolutely yeah.

Interviewer: Do you use craftsmanship or do you consider it an important part of your lecturing?

Participant: Yes, Yes I do, (pause) craftsmanship is a difficult thing to teach in a short period of time to a lot of people I find. But I do try and bring into the lecturing environment that this is something that you need to learn. It’s not something that you can do a couple of tutorials in and you’ve got it. Or for that matter you might have edited your first project and it’s been really good but that doesn’t mean that you're a fully-fledged editor. There are so many facets to it and so many skills that are involved in being a good editor, that it’s difficult to teach it in one, in one or two encounters. Which is I guess the way my editing lecturing life is, you know, its, I’m not teaching them… I’m not seeing them every week and so I constantly feel under pressure to actually be able to give them an insight. Number one into what it is and number two to actually teach them how to do it. Because it’s very individual as well when you’re dealing with, there’s four teams on this year actually, that you know it’s quite challenging to individually teach them. Because they need to be taught individually because they all have different skill sets with the software or with knowledge from the past. Or in small groups. You know, individually is the ideal. Three or four would probably work as well, of a similar ability but I do find that challenging to bring that element of, this is a craft. You know its like saying to somebody, ‘right you can nail nails into a plank of wood and next thing you are asked to go and build a house’. You are not necessarily going to know how to build a house but you might be able to do the simple stuff and yeah I find it challenging to be able to teach that craft in a short space of time.

(TIMECODE): 00:15:24:07

Interviewer: In your challenge then do you feel your students see editing through you, as a craft or why do they see it?

Participant: Yeah, I think that they do. I probably use the word craft I would say when I’m teaching them because I do really believe that it is a craft and I guess because my journey learning editing it was very much like an apprenticeship style environment where I was sitting in with somebody. I was kind of shadowing in a way an editor. That I,… I think they do yeah, I think they would kind of get from what I teach them and I’d also let them know like how I work. In what my process is and the type of material that I really enjoy cutting and what I bring to the project so I guess hopefully by inference they’ll pick up that. That it is a craft.

(TIMECODE): 00:16:13:00

Interviewer: And does the college, in the prospectus, does it refer to it as a craft or is there anything like that?

Participant: No (Shakes head). No. there wouldn’t be much mentioning at all of editing in their prospectus.

Interviewer: Should there be?

Participant: Yes, I do yeah, yeah.

Interviewer: would it in part make you job easier then as well then?

Participant: It would I guess, yeah it would, and I think if they were to do that they would probably need to have me or somebody like me in there more often. Because editing is almost, its kind of like an afterthought, in the environment I’m in. I mean they’re being taught how to produce and direct and in that course, they need to know how to edit because they need to create projects like it’s very project based, their course. So, they really do need, I think, more emphasis put on the editing because a lot of them have really great material, you know, they can be quite proficient with camera. I guess because there’s a generation of people now who are used to having phones and cameras all the time. So their skills with camera are quite good but then when they get into the edit suite… I sometimes see it as a little bit of a waste that they don’t have enough experience or enough time for me to make the best of that material. And I think it’s over looked especially in the course I’m involved in.

(TIMECODE): 00:17:36:24

Interviewer: You have interestingly gone onto equipment now as I was going to take about tools and space…

Participant: Okay, very bad where I am I have to say, very bad.

Interviewer: I was just going to ask you that, what kind of tools do you lecture with the students currently?

Participant: Yeah so, when I go in first I usually bring in my own iMac with me and plug that into…

Interviewer: (intrupting) …so you bring in your own iMac into the college?

Participant: Yeah, I do. I bring my own iMac in because the setup in the Huston School is that there are three edit suites that are in kind of a prefab and they are quite small edit suites. If I want to teach everyone I need to be in a big room that has a projector but there is no computer in there so I bring my own with my software on it. The only computers that have the software on it are in those small cubicles. So I bring in either my laptop or my iMac and the first day I do like that in, you where they can see big the footage that we look at and the software. So I show them there briefly, ‘okay this how you set up the project, this is how you get stuff up on the timeline’. And they go off then, between that first encounter and the second time I meet them, they go off and they film the material and they get it into the suites. And then I’m faced with, this year anyway, fourteen people in trying to get them seen to individually in those suites. Now some of them also then use their own laptops, which brings its own challenges because you have people that whose laptops may not be quick enough, some might be working off a trial software and you might spend twenty minutes troubleshooting the gear before you even get to look at a timeline, so it’s quite bad. It’s quite unfair. I find that like it really is… I always feel hamstrung by that because I’m not able to go in and clean start and know that okay there aren’t any background hardware or software problems that I’m going to have to deal with before we get to actually looking at something.

(TIMECODE): 00:19:36:00

Interviewer: It takes up a lot of your time then?

Participant: It can do, it can do. Some years are worse than others, but it depends on… it’s kind of luck of the draw.

Interviewer: I take it from you that the larger number the more problems.

Participant: For sure yeah.

Interviewer: And obviously space is the issue with only three edit suites and no lab too…

Participant: Yeah it is tricky. There is talk of them getting a new lab facility with eleven computers, but I’ve only heard that on the grapevine. I don’t know if that’s actually happening.

Interviewer: And how do the students respond to the lack of tools and space?

(TIMECODE): 00:20:06:14

Participant: They are a bit frustrated by it this year because there’s so many of them this year. They’re quite frustrated and they had to book themselves in like with three hour slots to get their projects done. Which can be tricky for some of them who aren’t very proficient in the software. You know they might spend an hour or two doing tutorials or trying to get started and then not have, you know, only getting into it and they have to jump out of the suite to let somebody else in. I think when you are starting off like, three hours is fine but you really need to be sitting in there for the guts of a day with the material. I’m able to go for a break and get some fresh air and not come back and feel ‘okay I have to make this three hours count.’

Interviewer: So you have your three hours grouped together?

Participant: They do that, they do that themselves actually yeah, and when I go in I do up a timetable, ‘right I’m going to spend half an hour with you starting at half nine’, right up to five. (right). Half an hour with each person but before that, that’s when they have used their three hour stints in the edit suites, actually getting their material into some shape.

(TIMECODE): 00:20:59:11

Interviewer: Is there any type of content in particular that you bring in for them to edit with, as in broadcast or old broadcast programmes, films or anything like that?

Participant: Oh no, not… unfortunately with the way the course is constructed, I don’t have the time to do that because I’m hitting the ground running with them really. By the time I meet them first they have already started. This year was different in that I met them before they started filming their projects but you know they’ve got their own material by the time I meet them the second day so we need to work on that. Rather than me being able to give them… I’d love to be able to do that to, give them some materials and say, ‘okay lets edit that in three different ways’. or lets try and convey, I don’t know, sadness in this using these three ingredients.

Interviewer: So it comes back to time and getting time to do that. I’m sure if you had the ability to give them that it would give them a better idea of their editing?

Participant: And also it would help them learn without this pressure of this is my project that I have to have handed in. They could be sort of honing their style or even just getting use to the software by doing a very simple short project that’s not necessarily going to be marked but it was just it would just be something I would do with them to get them going and then by the time they are sitting with their projects they have already learned from that experience. And that would be great. And to be able to do that, I’d love to be able to do that a few times with them before they actually go and make their own things.

(TIMECODE): 00:22:22:02

Interviewer: Have you use any elements say, you know you have been editing a while yourself, have you used any of those skills to help you in your lecturing? Is there anything in editing that has helped you lecture?

Participant: Like similarities when you're sitting looking at the screen and sitting with the guys? Um, it’s a tricky one really, I mean I suppose what editing has taught me or maybe I just have it anyway, is patience to be able to sit and you know, stay with something until the bitter end. Until you’ve exhausted all avenues or until you’ve made something work. And I would bring that into the suites with the students really like I would never say to them, ‘that’s not going to work’, you know, ‘lets forget about it’. I will always try try and keep working with it until we figure out something and so I guess that would be one thing. It’s perseverance and patience because I mean using that every day and not to get like disheartened by something, if you’ve made a mistake like if, I don’t know, underexposed something or you’ve shot something the wrong way around in a drama project, like okay we can fix this. You know there’s a way we’d be able to fix it. We just need to open out minds and look at it in a different way.

(TIMECODE): 00:23:29:04

Interviewer: Almost a troubleshooting approach to your lecturing I suppose?

Participant: Yeah well I guess there’ll be trouble shooting it up but also looking at stuff outside the box which editing has taught me really as well in that its there isn’t one right way to cut something… there’s millions of ways and that all footage is, there’s something important in all your footage. That’s another thing actually that I use myself all the time, is that never, ever, ever, ever get rid of anything even if it’s a shot that the cameraman left the camera on and was rolling on… out the window. I actually wont get rid of that. I will keep it there and I will label it as something because at the end of the day I might be looking for a shot of grass I can blur out or make look weird and put in the background or something and it might work. So I try to teach them that don’t start editing too quickly. Like everything, give everything a chance. Every piece of footage that you have, give it the respect it deserves because if you filmed it, its on film so treat it nicely. Put it in a bin marked miscellaneous or marked no good. You know its there and you might need it sometime later. So that would be something I would use myself and I would try and bring that in. Bring it to them to let them know, you know, try this because its, it might just help you out if you get in trouble.

(TIMECODE): 00:24:49:24

Interviewer: I’m going to move onto something called ‘presentation of self’. How you present yourself to your students and so forth. So, with that question, how do you present yourself? Do you describe yourself as an editor or???

Participant: Yeah, very much yeah, very much as an editor. And like I would go in there and say, first thing I would usually say is ‘I’m an editor, I’m not a teacher’.

Interviewer: Why would you do that then?

Participant: Well I guess because I’m not a teacher. See I’m not a lecturer, you know. Maybe at some stage when I’m really enjoying it but I’m not technically technically a lecturer. The college bring me in as an industry professional to workshop with students. You know, technically. So, I also want them, I also give them the opportunity like their mastery students are being taught how to produce and direct. So, I’ll go in there and I’ll say to them, ‘I’m an editor. You’ve got me for the day. You get out of me what you want or try not to let today pass until you’ve gotten what you think you need from me.’ Now of course I have a plan as well. I don’t just go in there and let them do whatever they want. But that’s very much my style with the students. And also, I try to tailor what I teach them to their needs. So you might have somebody that’s come out of a media course and is really, really good and doesn’t need me to teach them how to use the software or any of that kind of stuff. They might just need me to sit and talk narrative with them or talk pace or tone or structure and I’ll do that with them. I’m not going to make them sit there for for the boring bits they already know. So I do try to tailor it to them because I figured the master students, theyre at a stage now where they need to take control of their own learning and I try and give them that opportunity to get it from me rather than me imposing too much on them. And as well as that, editing is very individual so you can’t really say to somebody, ‘this is how its done, this is right , this is wrong, like I will tell them somethings are wrong like right you’ve got everything messy in your bins or you’re bringing in footage in the wrong way. There’s right and wrong with that but in terms of creating and putting stuff together there, there isn’t a right or a wrong. I suppose about teaching them that what’s possible with editing. What you can do to give them those skills rather than teaching them this is the way to do it.

(TIMECODE): 00:27:23:02

Interviewer: So its certainly you the editor talking rather than the lectuerer?

Participant: Definitely (okay) although actually, the first time, when I do meet them for the first time and I try to teach them or lecture them about editing, there would be an element of lecturing there I suppose in that I’m talking to them about what editing is and how it works and you know how it works on the eye and how we join things up as a viewer because of the way our brain works and all that. But I don’t have too much time to do that. I’d love to do more of that because I find it really interesting but because I’m there to get them to edit their projects, I have to put more emphasis on the actual editing part of it, than the theory of editing.

(TIMECODE): 00:28:03:09

PAUSE: *(Participant grabs some water.)*

(TIMECODE): 00:28:48:12

Interviewer: Are you encouraging, and there are two parts to this question, are you encouraging professional identity within them, and does the college encourage that as well, to take on an identity or a professional identity?

Participant: Yeah, well I guess the students I’m teaching are learning how to produce and direct so I’m not necessarily dealing with people who want to be editors. Now, a good few people who have gone through the course, have gone onto look like they want to be editors and there’s a couple of people this year who have said, ‘I want to be an editor, I love this!’. So that’s great but I guess they’re not in a course that is able to foster that so I can only do what I can to help them along that journey. But What I try and do with some of them as well is to let them know that you’re learning how to be a director or producer. So you need to know what an editor is faced with when they’re sitting in a suite. What an editor needs in terms of time and budget when they’re actually working on a project. And what possible. So, I do think that knowledge from other crew members higher up than an editor i.e. the producer, director, need to know what an editor has to do when they’re sitting in a suite. And so I try, I’m quite conscious of that when I’m with them because I know that they’re not in a media course where they’re editing is like a module or they have to learn a certain amount of editing. Editing is almost something that they have to, they have to do to get to where they need to be at the end of the course. Although some of them have also said that they really want to be editors. One girl asked me the other day, she was like, ‘I wanna, I really love this!’. She has spent a day previous looking through the rushes. It was the first time she had done it and she was like, ‘I Love this so much, I loved my day yesterday. How do I become an editor?’ (laughs). I didn’t know how to answer because how do you become an editor? I said, ‘you need a lot of hard work’. He cant just do a course and become an editor. Like we talked about at the beginning it’s a process that you need to go through as an apprenticeship. So professional identity, I, yeah, I suppose I’m speaking on, I’m speaking… in a way that the people I’m teaching are not learning how to be editors but they’re learning how to produce and direct. What was the second part of the question then? Oh the college…

(TIMECODE): 00:31:12:13

Interviewer: Do they push, or do they encourage them to find their own professional identity, that you have seen?

Participant: I haven’t identified that no. No, I don’t think that is very strong in the college that I’m in.

Interviewer: To follow that up then, how do you see your students. Do you see your students as students, or do you see them as future professionals? How do you see them in your eyes?

Participant: I see them very much as future professionals. Because they are master’s students as well, they’re not undergrads so they’ve been through a certain amount of education already and I feel at this stage they should be ready to, they’re ready to work. So, I do see them as that yeah. It’s so much so that a student of mine maybe three years ago, two years ago, he’s worked with us on our recent feature documentaries. He’s a really brilliant guy and I could see a lot of potential, so he’s worked with us a lot and we’ve put him in touch with a lot of people. And he’s working now quite successfully. So that’s, yeah, how I would very much see them as. I see them like, I see them as equals as well. I think maybe that’s sometimes a downfall of mine. That I go in there and I’m like right we’re in this together you know, lets, lets roll up the sleeves and get this, get this project working.

(TIMECODE): 00:32:39:13

Interviewer: Why would that be a downfall?

Participant: Ah, I don’t know, I don’t know. Maybe I’m just kind of yeah, I don’t maybe I should go in there with the big stick and be beating it into them (laughs). Yeah, well I guess it works and I do think the feedback from what I heard has been quite positive and so I guess I’m doing something that’s that’s instilling a response in them.

(TIMECODE): 00:33:02:19

Interviewer: We have talked about a lot already now, what you lecture in and so forth. Are there any types of hidden curriculum that you give them? And What I mean by that is, stuff that isn’t in Murch’s book and tricks of the trade, is what I’m looking for. Can you give us an example of some of that type of stuff on these things you’ve learned?

Participant: Yeah, oh god loads of them. I would probably, I would probably overdoing that kind of stuff but that’s what I think is really good because you're actually giving them lived experience of what it’s like to be an editor. There’s one thing that I say to them all the time and this is at the beginning when I’m teaching them about project management and how to kind of keep your stuff rock solid so you know where everything is. And I’d often say to them that its always something I have in the back of my mind when I’m editing, and I know Keith, my husband who’s an editor as well is the same, that we always think like if we died, if in the middle of this project if I died and I had to pass it onto somebody else what do I want it wo be like because I’ve taken projects from other entities before and I’ve been like, ‘I’m discussed at how that’s laid out, I can’t make head nor tail of it’. So I would be quite particular about how I manage my material before I ever cut and I always tell them that and usually just makes them laugh because I’m like you know, you shouldn’t think about dying when you're cutting something but that’s what I have in the bac of my head and it’s also to emphasise the importance of being very attentive to that process at the beginning when you're organising your footage. A lot of people don’t think that that’s important, but it’s really important because you can’t move onto the creative stuff until that’s all in a bag and I love that process myself. I’ve quite a refined workflow now where I spend the first few days, working through the footage and looking at it and I even subtitle, that’s another one actually I pass onto them. So, whatever language I’m working in be it English or Irish I subtitle all my interviews because I work mainly in documentary, so that I have a visual reference to what they are saying. That might be quite, quite short hand and the spelling might be all over the place because I’m like ???? really quickly, but then I have a visual reference in the hour-long interview, and I might have a twenty-hour long interview, so I know that they’re all there. There, I have it logged rather than on a piece of paper. It’s all on screen, it’s all at the touch of a button for me to see. Okay so it might be the end of my project, I’m like I know that woman talked about something that happened in her childhood, rather than to to paper or go out into a word document and I can go to her interview, click, click, click, click through the timeline and see that’s what she talked about in her childhood, there’s my little bit. And that’s worked for me every time. And that’s a difficult one. I suppose I do try and get them to do that. Now it’s quite labour intensive in the time that they have so it can be tricky for them actually to do that but I sometimes bring in my timelines as well and show them what a timeline looks like. You know you might have twenty audio tracks and seven video tracks and they go, ‘oh my god!’ (laughs) but I find that that is really good because it shows them like this is what it can look like in a professional environment. There’s probably other things Simon, that I like anecdotally would tell them about my journey. I can’t think of them now. But I do try and bring the professional into it and they, I always try and tell them what it’s like working with the director as well because I think they really need to know that. Whatever they become. Whether they become editors or directors, it’s really important for them to know what it’s like to be in a suite and be faced with putting your footage together. I also think its really, really important for camera people as well. Anyone who has aspirations to be a camera person, you need to sit in an edit suite. You need to film your stuff and sit in an edit suite and look at how it’s coming together because I’ve been working for a long number of years and there’s camera people that have also been working for a long number of years and they’re very up in their career and I’m sitting with the footage and going, ‘where’s the closeups, have you shot any closeups here?’ And I know that that particular professional because they’ve never actually been in an editing environment. They’re churning out the footage and they’re doing amazing jobs but they’ve never had to face their work material in an environment where you have to construct a scene out of it and I think that’s really, really important for anyone. You know producer, director, camera person to actually sit in a suite and see what you need to bring this to an audience. And its overlooked a lot of the time. Its not good, it just makes the editing job harder because then you’ve got camera who are potentially amazing but they don’t have that experience of having been in the suite and knowing, ‘okay, of course we need a close up of that!’

(TIMECODE): 00:37:51:23

Interviewer: We are just going to move back to craftsmanship again, do you think in your own opinion if somebody is lecturing in editing that they should either have or come from, have the skills or come from industry rather than being academically taught?

Participant: Absolutely, yeah absolutely.

Interviewer: Why is that?

Participant: Because I think you can teach editing theoretically but without doing it, you’re not going to have that insight to understand what that theory means. I think it’s really important for people to be industry professionals because you can’t teach editing as a craft if you're just talking about why it works or how it works or looking at movies and going this is why this works. I think you need to do it, particularly if the course is practical. If it’s a film theory course then you know it’s probably ok to teach editing as a something that you just need to know that this is how a film works as a piece of material but if you’re teaching a course where the students are expected to go and make stuff, then I really firmly believe that there needs to be an industry professional or somebody that has experience of actually editing, teaching the editing. Because you have real-life experience of it and you can teach to some degree, if you’ve got enough time you can impart some of that skill on and also bring the real-life professional experience into the classroom. To make it real you know its not just this thing that happens behind a closed door and you some editor does it for you in the darkness. It’s actually something that I do, I work at. It’s, I make a living from it and yeah.

(TIMECODE): 00:39:49:13

Interviewer: Do you then as a lecturer and I’m not just taking about yourself, but any lecturer in editing, its something that they should maintain?

Participant: Maintain, something you should maintain? The college?

Interviewer: No the lecturer in editing should keep editing?

Participant: Oh, should keep editing. Yeah, I think so yeah I think so because also the way editing changes as well. You could be an editor say for the first ten years of your life, for twenty years of your life and then go into academia and never edit again, but you're not going to be up to speed I guess with the changes in software, number one, or the changes in style like styles change and the way what audiences expect over time changes. So I think to keep abreast of that, ideally yeah people would still b editing. Like for example for me now I would see, like I would love to do more lecturing in editing, but I would tend to keep editing as well obviously I wouldn’t be putting as much time into it as I am now but having the two things going at the same time would be ideal. Because you’re living it then.

(TIMECODE): 00:40:57:02

Interviewer: So, we are on the last question now, so do you think teaching the craft, teaching craft is possible in higher education?

Participant: Yes I do, yes

Interviewer: What would it need?

Participant: With the right facilities, the right amount of time given to it. Respect given to the discipline whatever the craft and planning at the start to plan what a student needs to go through on their journey of this course be it for your course or masters of whatever it is. Careful planning into how to start at the beginning really and hone that craft or learn that craft rather than throwing people in at the deep end. If it’s designed where they’re brought through it gently or step-by-step. I think that’s the way to do it.

Interviewer: Finally, is there anything you want to talk about that we haven’t discussed?

Participant: I don’t think so no. Probably give out more (laughs) I won’t do that.

Interviewer: Thanks very much

Participant: You're welcome.

END.