



Sam on Home Education

- Rob Now Sam, you've gone through a home education system. I understand that, you, actually have never been to school. Tell me, first of all, what happens in the day when you're being home educated. How does it work?
- Sam Well obviously it's different for everyone because it depends on the parents but, uh, for me, we did lessons in the morning round a table and in the afternoon I just got to play, do, do what I wanted to do. It's basically what life's all about really because, as an adult, one plays. Maybe one plays with different toys but one still plays. If one's enjoying oneself, one plays. The playing obviously started off when I was little with doing less although I do remember, I used to build walls when I was, uh, four or five just with little stones, which is something I've always kept doing and they just got...the stones got bigger obviously when I got bigger.
- Rob And now you've restored a house I understand.
- Sam I'm on my second and I'm living in the first so, uh, and I'm getting better because, the last house I built just, exactly how it was. It really was clay and earth and stones so, uh... I'm getting better, I'm looking forward to the next one.
- Rob So would you say that home education prepares you for the more practical side of life?
- Sam It can do if that's what one wants to do.
- Rob But there's gonna be some restraint because, at some point there's going to be some kind of State interference.
- Sam Well I never had it. When I was in England, before we moved to France, I think a man came round once but, in France, never, but I don't think that's the case now. It was just that, not many people were doing it, but I never had any check.
- Rob So, in terms of GCSEs or 'A' levels or anything like that, you don't have any of those?
- Sam No, 'cos I came to France when I was seven and I haven't really been back much since, so I've got no English qualifications and I don't have a Baccalaureat either so.....

- Rob How do you feel it's affected your life?
- Sam It's a good question. It's hard to tell isn't it really? I suppose one has to look at the results. If one has a successful life or not and maybe it's too early to tell.
- Rob But you live a life, at the moment, you feel you've been well prepared for?
- Sam Well that would be.. it's hard to say again i'n't it? It's a process of constant improvement for me. I don't know if I'll get to where I want to be for many years. 'Til more recently I've always understood the importance of what other people can give you in your life.
- Rob Is it a disadvantage then because a home education as many people would argue that it doesn't offer the opportunity to children to mix with other children. Do you think that's a handicap?
- Sam Well that's not true. If you're a sociable child you can socialise with other people, children, adults, uh, whoever you.... people younger than you. If you're not sociable even if you're at school you'll probably be in a corner somewhere, I don't know. Doesn't have that much of an effect I don't think.
- Rob So you would say that the argument that some people have, that children don't learn to socialise by.... when they're being home educated. You say that would be a false argument?
- Sam It depends what you want as a child, obviously. When I was younger I was more shy. Now I'm less shy, but I think, definitely for myself, I'm, uh, more involved with the local community than lots of other people of my age.
- Rob You said something earlier which I was.... find very interesting, that, as you were growing up you found that reading was pretty much irrelevant to you and you didn't really become interested in reading until you were twelve.
- Sam Yeah it was only really when I got a book I was interested in reading which happened not to be a story book that, uh, I started reading. I'm still not so interested in reading just for the sake of reading. I like to read if there's something interesting to read.
- Rob I think that probably applies to a lot of adults. You were able in your home education to opt out of reading to a certain extent which you wouldn't have been able to do had you been at school. In a normal State school you'd have been obliged to read English Literature in order to get your GCSE blah, blah blah and you just were able to please yourself in a way.

- Sam It was lucky, actually, I just, I just think every day was a slight protest. I don't really want to read this book and then, one day I wasn't made to read it any more so for me that was just benign luck really.
- Rob You said something earlier about not wanting to present a very marginal view. Now I imagine the listeners who're gonna listen to you are going to say 'Sam is a marvellous chap, he's different to everyone else'. Do you feel that your education's had something to do with that or is that just your personality?
- Sam It's hard to tell really because I've only known what I've known and I am who I am. I think, uh, it probably has, yes.
- Rob Thanks very much.

