

KEVIN BOOTH ALLOWS A PERSONAL GLIMPSE INTO BILL HICKS

Bill Hicks, the Texas born comedian who some think of as a revolutionary messiah, died in 1994 of pancreatic cancer. His works include, a haunting visit to Waco, "Rant in E-Minor," and an HBO special, "Sane Man."

Kevin Booth, Bill's friend and producer, remastered and released an unedited version of "Sane Man" in early 2000. He sells media related to Bill and Austin Public Access on his web site, www.sacredcowproductions.com

*This is a **confusion** email interview. This email interview was treated with a conversational approach, each question asked separately, each response influencing the next question. But you know how emailing can go, sometimes it may be a few days or weeks until there is a response. This had a curious effect toward the end of the interview. The last response is a bit out of place, yet all the questions were answered with sincerity and an anything-but-formal-air-about-them. Finally, the responses from Kevin Booth stopped and the interview, though interesting, was cut short, kind of like Bill Hick's life.*

First question emailed.

James Brown: I read in an interview with you on your web site that you think most interviewers you talk to ask questions that you're not interested in.

What kinds of questions do they ask (in other words, what questions are you tired of answering), and what do you think they should be asking?

A few weeks pass.

Kevin Booth: I guess the number one question I'm tired of is "What were Bill's influences?" especially when they are talking about him like he is a modern prophet. It would be like saying Jesus was totally into Buddha.

Second question emailed.

Brown: Some people might say that he spoke in the voice of a prophet while on stage. You know, telling people this whole social order needs to be radically changed, that sort of thing. Why do you think this characterization is off-base?

A few weeks pass

Kevin Booth: I don't think that it is off base, but many people act so disappointed to find Bill was a sensitive soft spoken guy, a loving uncle and such off stage. People seem to think that means he was putting on an act. As if they imagine him cursing at the dinner table or being this rude out of control person.

Third question emailed.

Brown: I noticed on the Waco tape that Bill's demeanor was soft spoken and almost shyly uncomfortable with the camera. When you edited that tape, did you leave the lulls in Bill's commentary in order to show that reserved side of his character? *What* about Bill did you want people to notice?

And was there anything you wanted people to notice about your relationship with Bill?

A few weeks pass.

Kevin Booth: Yes I did not want to cut the lulls--to kind of reflect the feeling. I guess a feeling of waiting to watch people die. Bill was sarcastic and made some comments that could leave some to believe he thought the Davidians deserved this. So I thought those blank moments kind of showed a sad feeling that Bill really had about the fact that our government would treat anyone this way, and although making jokes about David Koresh seemed justified, nothing can justify what the ATF and FBI did.

Of course people need to remember that this was the 7th day and no one knew how it would end, and it was not until months later the tank flame thrower footage emerged that caused Bill to start rallying, not so much for the Davidians, but against what OUR government had done. I guess I wanted people to notice the subtle, simple, and relaxed nature of our relationship.

Fourth question emailed.

Brown: You're working on several other projects for Sacred Cow and Austin public access at present. Could you describe some of your other projects? Would you say that working with Bill's comedy is more satisfying than these other projects? What motivates you to keep returning to Bill's comedy?

A few weeks pass.

Kevin Booth: Sorry, these last couple weeks have been a huge drag, the guy I fired left me with a ton of angry customers. I was going to get a "Halloween 2000" out with some new Bill stuff, but this recent bum-out has put me in a time crunch and now Halloween is too soon. I'm doing a Country Video for an artist Penny Jo Pullus all shot on film. Most of my energy is going into a Feature film about Public Access TV--we have shot a little bit but have changed the script for the third time. I guess working on Bill's stuff has a certain satisfying feel. For one I know there are thousands of people who hunger for every word and I promised Bill I would get it all out.