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IN THEIR WORDS

1. CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING SEGMENTS OF INTERVIEWS WITH THREE YOUNG PROFESSIONALS: A SCIENTIST, A JOURNALIST, AND AN ACTOR.

THE YOUNG SCIENTIST:



Q. What does interesting mean to you?

A. Interesting? I don't know. I think it's hard to say. Because clearly there are many people who get interested [in] different things. In other words, people study yeast genetics, and think yeast genetics is the best thing in the world. I have no idea why they think that's true, because for me yeast genetics is really boring. There are people who study worms. Worms, coolest thing in the world. I don't really know. So what I do, I think it's really interesting, but I don't really know what it is. Part of it is, I think, that for me, it's a nice intersection between medicine and basic science... It's sort of like when you find your wife. You might decide somebody's pretty. That doesn't mean everybody else thinks that she's pretty. But for you, she's like the prettiest woman in the world. For me, science is sort of like that. You sort off find what you want to be doing, and then that's what you do. And it's not always necessarily a rational process. There are, of course, some things that you have to do. Like if you find a new protein, there are some things that you have to do. Among the new proteins, you have to do it. When you meet somebody, you have to ask certain questions. Where did you grow up? What school did you go to? What do you want to do when you grow up?... But ultimately the bigger questions... I think [are] the ones that are more fun to think about... I guess interesting would be [with] potentially important implications, and I guess also—

Q. What does “important implications” mean?

A. Are you going to cure a billion people? Or something. That's tongue-in-cheek, but important in terms of providing insights into an area that could potentially, down the road, have significant impacts on—I mean, that's really why we do basic science, is to enhance the lives of people.

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Except the people who do veterinary medicine, who want to cure dogs and stuff like that. That's why—and I think nobody should forget that. Why you're in science is not to necessarily study how bacteria replicate or study how fat gets in the cells. But what you're there to do is study how fat gets in the cells, hoping that someday it will provide some insight that some other person might use to develop a new treatment for heart disease. Or in yeast that you get some insight that might prove—to provide a crucial piece of data for colon cancer, which actually happened. I think that's one of the things that you have to think [about]. If you can't think about how what you're doing might ultimately impact something or how it might fit into an overall scheme of things, then you're just doing science for the hell of it. You're like whatever, no potential application. Nobody's likely to do anything with this work ever again.

THE YOUNG JOURNALIST:

Q. In your work so far, is there one overarching purpose or goal that you find gives meaning to the work you do?

A. I guess my biggest goal right now is to become a better writer... [T]hat doesn't necessarily add meaning to the work, though. I guess I get meaning from the work when I know that I'm, maybe, telling a story that no one else would tell, or if I'm writing something that will, in some way, positively effect change in something else. But my personal goals don't seem to add, for me, meaning to the job. **Q.** So you have two different sets of [goals]? **A.** I guess. I know that not every story that I am going to write is going to be a very meaningful piece or a life-altering story, so I'm on the lookout for those that do come across my desk or whatever that, okay, well, here's an opportunity to tell a great story or here's an opportunity to effect change. And sometimes it's very small things. I did a story with another reporter on the swimming pools. There was a lack of money in the budget for the state for these swimming pools to open. And we did the story. And oh, lo and behold, look, maybe we have a little extra money after all and we can open the pool, which isn't a big



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deal to me, but for some kid who wanted to go swimming that weekend or the next, maybe it was. I don't know. You just sort of have to assume those things...

Q. Do you have some other professional or personal goals?

A. I guess my professional and personal goals mostly are to be happy in what I do. Let's see. And, that could be whatever—whenever I'm working, [whatever] I'm doing, I guess I just want to be pleased doing what I do because it's really a pain to go to a job everyday that you can't stand. And I think I had an internship like that once, and every morning I was just like, 'oh god, I hate this place.' But, when you're doing something that you love, then it sort of makes it a lot easier.

THE YOUNG ACTOR:

Q. What are you trying to accomplish in your work at this time?

A. Well, as I said before, I'm Indian, of Indian descent, my parents are Indian. And what I would like to do is, I don't see too many faces like my own on the screen or on TV or on the stage. And I would love to be able to be the Sidney Poitier of Indian or Asian actors. Put the face out there, and make the world in America realize that we're not just 7-11 owners, or we're not just taxi cab drivers; there's a whole culture of young Indian-American people who do a variety of different things and [have] a lot of stories to tell.



Q. Right. So in choosing your work right now ... what are the most important factors... [for you]?

A. I look for directors that I would love to work with. I look for roles that are challenging and I know give me stature, or theaters that give me stature in the eyes of not only the casting community, but people who would look at my résumé and say, 'oh, okay, he's worked for xyz theater

