

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Carol Glassman

Interviewer: Whitney Strub

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Location: New York, NY

Whit Strub (WS): Okay, so we are recording, this is Whitney Strub, I'm in New York City with Carol Glassman, on Dec 4th 2014. I'm gonna move the computer over to you, that should pick things up. And Carol, thanks for doing this, and I guess if you want to get the ball rolling by just talking about your youth and how you wound up in Newark.

Carol Glassman (CG): Okay. I was born in 1942 in Brooklyn, NY, I was a middle child of a first-generation Jewish immigrant family and lived in a pretty stable neighborhood of lots and lots of other Jewish first-generation immigrant families. I had a very large extended family, my father had ten brothers and sisters, my mother five, and a lot of them lived in the same neighborhood, so I grew up in a good time for public- we went to public schools, they were good schools. And had a, you know, pretty, you know, pretty happy childhood, and I did spend many years in therapy sort of working on some of the things that weren't so fine, but, you know, on that, well I had friends, I had cousins, I had aunts and uncles, I had you know a safe neighborhood to run around and play in and etcetera etcetera. I went off to college and went from a sort of lower-middle class Jewish world to a, to Smith College and an upper-class WASP world, and it was very difficult on that level for me, I did, the academics were great, I had great friends, it was very challenging, I had a better education there than - I've been to advanced degrees, and on the education at Smith was really the one that educated me. And then I went off, but I hated it there, and I went off in my third year to Europe in my Junior Year Abroad, which...was a sort of alternative to transferring because I didn't have any idea where to transfer to, and I had gotten in in high school a little bit involved in Civil Rights stuff, through the National Conference of Christians and Jews. It was the very beginning, the sit-in movement when I was in high school, and so we did some supportive stuff and in Europe I just sort of had that experience that hopefully you have when you leave the country for the first time, and also Switzerland was very diverse, so I had friends from all over the world. And I came back and um you know the Civil Rights movement had really taken up, and my friend at Smith who had gotten involved in the Northern Student Movement Project and Michael Harrington's book *The Other America* had come out, a couple of us were writing a seminar paper and somebody suggested we go to the SDS [Students for a Democratic Society] office to get information on poverty in America. So our spring break when we were here in New York, I lived in Brooklyn, we went into the SDS office and it was one of those experiences where the person who went in and the person who came out weren't the same. It was, you know, Lee Webb was the person that I- we talked to, and- where just some way that all the feelings and thoughts that had been sort of undefined for me came together and I signed on for ERAP, which was the Economic Research and Action Project at SDS.

In terms of my personal sexual history, up to that point I was heterosexual, I *was* heterosexual, and it wasn't, I know now, I know when I look back that it was not a cover for anything. I had, [honk noise outside] I fell in love when I was 13 um at my sister's Sweet 16 party with Saul Posner. And remained on and off in love with him for many years, we remained friends for many years, Unfortunately he just died this Spring but, and then when I was in Europe I had a relationship, a sexual relationship, with actually an Israeli who was living in Switzerland, and so I had- I had no sense of myself as gay, or any particular interest, I didn't like girl friends and, all that sort of stuff. (4:44)

But, so then I went, the first summer I was in ERAP (Economic Research and Action Project)- in Philadelphia, I wasn't in Newark, and at the end of that summer I was the first at ERAP summer, it was '64. At the end of that summer we were, people had gone back to school, you know, the- some projects were consolidating, and so we're in Philadelphia, Newark was really run well and in Philadelphia we had- we were sort of at a place where we could invest more or we could close down responsibly. So those of us that were left decided to close down responsibly and go to Newark. So I wound up in Newark early that winter of 64 into 65. So, how did all this...happen, then, so we were doing a lot of block organizing, and you know it was intense, challenging, etcetera. And there were a lot of kids in the neighborhood who hung around in our office or who were- and there was one young woman, she- really a kid, well, who...I don't know how to describe her, she was a little bit of a wild child, and she was what in those days would've been called butch, and she became very attached to me and me to her. And she got arrested, she would- she started to- we had a house where people- an apartment where people just stayed, I mean a lot of kids in the neighborhood would, and I don't remember exactly when Judy started to stay but she did, and when she stayed she would often sleep in bed with me. (6:44). But we weren't sexually involved, but there was clearly- but I had no language for it. So, I think she probably did but I didn't. And then at some point, she and another girl from the neighborhood were hanging out at our office and the police came around, we were actually across the street from the police precinct. I don't *remember* exactly what happened, but they wound up arresting the two of them, I wasn't there when they were arrested. And Willa Mae, the other girl, was, you know, sort of quiet and her mother got really upset, Georgia, and went to the police station and they wound up arresting the mother. In the meantime, Judy had been handcuffed to a radiator. And she...I don't remember exactly how this went, but she- put a hand through the window at the precinct so, her situation was getting worse and worse. And she- you know this was the dark ages, so she was essentially charged with juvenile delinquency. And it turned out she was...I think, on probation or something. And so it was serious, and I think I started to become a little bit more aware of how attached to her I was at that point, although, again, I don't think I had any language or any words for it exactly. (8:19) So we got her a lawyer, and her mother, she had- she was one of several children, several siblings, and two parents, and her mother was very upset with her involvement with us.

WS: with- with NCUP [Newark Community Union Project]

CG: With NCUP, yeah, yeah. And she was sentenced to the Clinton Reformatory for Women at 16, she *just* turned 16, I'm gonna cry. Really for nothing, for being black and poor and a little out of control. And so you have to apply, you have to be approved to this, and so I applied for approval to visit her, and I was essentially denied the right to visit her and what I was told was that she was a known lesbian and why would these women have tried to visit her. (police sirens in background, 9:26) And that her mother had threatened to charge me, I think me or maybe a couple of us, with contributing to the delinquency of a minor, and so I was pretty devastated by that, and I'll just say this, you know, at each

WS: Sure

CG: step I was so devastated. And everybody, you know, she was loved by the staff, by the people in the neighborhood, she was, and so there was a lot of concern for her but. And then I got- I think the first time I remember, and maybe it was because they said the thing about "she was a known lesbian," I can remember being with Corinna Fales and Barry Kalish, just the three of us sitting off someplace in Newark, and telling them about what had happened, and I was asking Corinna to apply for visiting to see what would happen if she applied for visiting. But I think in that conversation I said to them, "you know, what they're saying is true." Not that I was contributing to the delinquency of a minor, although technically that was probably true also, but, it was completely ridiculous. (10:39) But I think I- in that way I was sort of acknowledging to myself and to them that there was- that I was in love with Judy and that this was... And Corinna got turned down and maybe that's when the sentence of why are all these women- she's not in- why are all these women trying to get the right to see her, so I was completely cut off from her for two years. One of the community people on the project, Terry Jefferson's daughter was in Clinton as well, and I started to drive Terry to see Dotty, I don't know how often we did it, once a month, something like that. In the hope that I would sort of see Judy, cause it was a- you know, at that point it was all minimum security, so. And I also started to write her, I can't believe I did this. I would write her using her family's return address, and I would sign it the name of one of her sisters but I would always say something in it that she would know that it was coming from me, or, you know, would pretty much know that. During that time, in terms of the gay stuff there was one point where we were picketing a meat market that we eventually closed down for essentially cheating people and they had a whole welfare fraud going on. It was called, Jack's Meat Market: Your Plantation Store Up North.

WS: wow.

CG: And it was. And that's a whole other complicated story, but in any case, a whole bunch of us were arrested at this demonstration, and so the, you know, we were sort of high in, we were singing, and, you know, it was, Civil Rights time, passing out leaflets in the police stations about... But when we were actually in some big cell, one of the women said something about the matrons, I guess maybe that, I don't know what- I don't remember being frisked in any way, but we may have been, and probably were. But the *comment* was an anti-gay comment, you know,

"that bitch" or "that dyke" or that...something or other. And I remember sort of, this was somebody I knew and cared about, these were people who wouldn't have known Judy 'cause they were from slightly different neighborhood, but though we were all, 'cause it as a Welfare Rights group, essentially... But I can remember my own chill at that. And then, this is just my own sort of trajectory here, while Judy was in jail I did have a relationship with another woman in the neighborhood. You know I think a lot of people sort of knew it, and I do- from the neighborhood, but I know some people in the neighborhood knew it. And you know I don't remember exactly when or how people on the staff you know sort of knew it or said anything, so at least a couple of people

WS: Can I ask a question? So how and where do you have a relationship in a place like Newark and NCUP in the mid-60s, you know, where do you find, like, private space or what kind of- (14:06)

CG: Well, up to that point befo- when, with Judy, when she went to jail, we had not sexually initiated a relationship, except like sleeping in the same bed when twenty-five people were sleeping in the living room on the floor, and then in the second relationship, and I'm not going to share the name because, there are the kids around. [laughs] We had one of the things that we- that Steve Block was doing, he was one of our staff, was trying to create a local radio station, little neighborhood- there's a word for it, you know, one of those very short-range radio stations, so somehow he had raised some money for this and he had this little studio, and so that's where I had private space. Steve was a close friend and knew...and I think had prurient interest in my [laughs] ongoing sexual life, and he probably still does. We are also still very close friends. (15:06) But I had access to this radio station which never quite became a radio station, but the studio for it.

Then Judy came out of jail um this was just, and this is...probably May or June, 1967. By this point I was living in an apartment in the neighborhood with one other- two other...yeah, two other people. One was a neighborhood woman, Betty Moss, who also lived down the street, I mean her sister lived down the street, so- but she was staying there with Corinna and I. And just one day, Betty's sister called. Betty's sister was a neighbor on the street to Judy's family, so Betty's sister called to tell us that Judy was home. And, you know, at that point, so she was, you know, almost eighteen, two years, you know, we just sort of reconnected again. And, you know, the awareness, again, was sort of slow, like, Judy, you know, as I said she was sort of very masculine although I tried to hippie her up as time went on a little bit. But Terry at some point was really, was just the first couple of days she was home and she and I were over around Len Weinglass's office and, I don't know, Tom [Hayden] was teaching at Rutgers or something, I don't remember exactly, I have all these sort of images but I don't- but Terry Jefferson, the woman whose daughter was in jail and who was our office manager and in loco parenta, Terry said to me at some point that, she sort of was like, and she got it, I mean, Terry completely got it, and was fine with her but she sort of gave me a little warning that, you know, essentially people were gonna talk and I needed to be a little careful. And I just sort of remember that, I don't think

I did anything very differently, but, and then that led to, well then there was the rebellions. (17:38) You know, that changed a lot in the neighbor- the tenor of things got much more militant and-

WS: right

CG: and Betty, got uncomfortable with us, and so moved back to her sister's house, I mean, just down the street. And at that point, Judy sort of started living with me, not quite, she was still officially living at home down the street, but she would spend nights and stuff and I had a room, so that was good, we had our relationship, but my friend Corinna, who I was sharing the room with- I mean the apartment with, started to get uncomfortable, and that was very hard. That was like my first really painful encounter around what I was now coming to understand was being gay or at least being in these gay relationships. And at some point Corinna asked me to leave, and what I remember thinking is, if I'm not acceptable to Corinna of all people, you know, my comrade in arms, you know—and, I had lived through Corinna's relationship with a local man, you know it was [inaudible], and then you know it sort of was that feeling, well then how am I going to be acceptable to anybody. But I found an apartment, and Judy and I essentially lived there together at that point

WS: In Clinton Hill?

CG: It was a- yes, it was- it was a slightly off to the side, but yeah, I mean, it was Johnson Avenue or, not Johnson- I forget, Johnson St, Johnson Avenue. Yeah, I mean, we were, it's a little on the edge of the neighborhood. And actually at that point, Tom and Connie moved into what had been, you know, my apartment. And we- you know, I mean, we watched the King funeral, I mean you know it was back and forth and we had one phone line at that point- some point, I don't know it's like... And you know and during that time, I had had, well I had that one relationship with another woman, which you know I don't completely understand when I think about it, but, y'know, I did. And I had had an affair with one of the men who was in a relationship with somebody else, and then Judy came home and that was where I was. And then just to finish that trajectory up, in in 1968, the NCUP project was falling apart, you know, people were leaving, Tom and Connie went off to Chicago to organize demonstrations, and Corinna and I decided that we would take a trip, go to California via Chicago and then come back to Chicago for the '68 Convention. And at that point I made plans with Steve Block and Derek Winans to move down to Ironbound and to try to do some community organizing to recruit other people. Sort of in the style that we had done in Clinton Hill, but in a white working class neighborhood. We were trying to be white people working for the good cause *with* white people.

So that summer I gave up my apartment and left Judy, as Corinna and I went out west, I think there was a...part of me that felt like I had to get out of the relationship—I can't exactly say why, I don't know, it wasn't that I didn't still love her but there was something about the relationship and that lifestyle which I needed to broaden out from. But you know as Corinna and I traveled

across the country, we rented a little car that kept breaking down, so this was a slow trip. Somehow we had, you know, well this was the days when we didn't think very much of the law, so we had a credit- somebody's credit card and so, we would call from the midwest back to the bar where Corinna's boyfriend worked and where Judy would often be hanging out and so you- and [siren in the background] we would just talk every morning, we'd call them at four in the m- [inaudible] on [inaudible]. (22:24) And then when I came back, you know, we were- we're in CA for a while, and then went to Chicago and did the demonstration with convention stuff, and then I came back to Ironbound. Steve had taken an apartment and by the time I got back, Derek and Steve were not talking with each other and not working with each other. And Judy was living with some friends in Newark, and she was not doing well, she was drinking a lot, but we continued to see each other, we actually- one night, the first time I saw her when I was back, we tried to go to a hotel or something, I just remember that being...so depressing and so miserable and so sad, you know?

And after that, I just, you know, I'm with Steve who's fine, I was living with Steve, and a third person, Johnny [M__] I think. I just decided I wasn't doing that, I had a place to live and Judy was going to stay there when we wanted her to stay there. So we did that, and she never lived with me there and we didn't see each other all the time, and I started dating men again and she just kept deteriorating. And then I wound up at- after a couple of years, Steve was married and bought a house a couple blocks away and I moved into the same place, he was living in a development, I moved into a one bedroom apartment in the development. Sometimes Judy would come, sometimes she would call me sort of in the middle of the night to come pick her up, and I would drive up to 15th Ave, this was the sort of thing that mothers would die if they knew their- (laughs). So I would drive up in my Volkswagon literally in the middle of the night, to this pretty poor black neighborhood, to go to the bar to pick Judy up, and you know people got to know me after a while. One night I got out of the car and some drunk lady threw a bottle at me and then it- she had hit me, but (laughs) and then she said, "Oh, Carol I'm sorry!" (laughs) and that was sort of like, so I was known, but you know, it was it was hard, I mean it was, and then sometimes she would, if I was gonna be away, she would stay in my apartment for a couple of days and she would sort of get a little sober and she, I don't think she went past one year in high school, but she was quite smart and she would just read all weekend. And then it just got worse and one night she was there and she, you know I can't remember- she tried to punch me, I don't know whether she did, actually I can't remember whether she did or not and I'm not sure that she did and if she did, it was not, uh, meant to hurt me exactly. But that just sort of for me was, and I called her brother, and he came and picked her up and you know, I don't think I ever saw her again, but she would call me and then hang up, but I would know that she was calling. And she at some point, when I was at the high school one of the other kids that I knew called me and told me that- what I know now, what she told me was that Judy had fallen down some stairs and broken her neck, but what I *heard* her say...was that she had broken her *leg* and I was thinking, "I don't really know, you know, this kind of detail." And then in the irony of what life is, maybe within a week or so, Terry, who I had talked about, was- another one of Terry's daughters died in

an overdose. And Steve and I went to Terry's apartment, to pay a condolence call, essentially, so here I was with Terry who of the people in the neighborhood was the clearest about my relationship with Judy, and with Steve who of my pals was also the clearest. And at some point, Terry's son Lawrence said, you know, "Did you hear that Judy Harris died?" And I- then I just, I just lost it. And then I realized that what I had been told wasn't that she broke her leg but that she broke her neck. You know, and in retrospect, that I didn't- that I rejected the news when I heard it the first time but that I really *got* it when I was with two people who really would understand. Then it was hard just to, you know, and I felt guilty in certain ways, like

WS: Sure

CG: why couldn't I have helped her to...blah blah blah. But I was, you know, and so I was in the Ironbound in the high school at that point. And then, so, when should I back up to?

WS: So when, when was this?

CG: Um, I don't remember exactly what year it is, but the high school was like '72, it was after-like '72 to '76, or s-

(They speak at once)

WS: So, Judy

CG So this-

WS: would have been in her early...twenties?

CG: Um, I think she was born in '48

WS: Okay

CG: '58, '68, so yeah, mid-20s. And...yeah, I know she was young, yeah.

WS: Wow, that's-

CG: I was older though, I was already in my early 30s.

WS: Well I- that's terrible, I'm so sorry. Could we stick with Judy for a second?

CG: Sure

WS: Could you tell me a little bit more about her background and what you understand of her experience being a sort of young butch woman in Newark?

CG: What I know of her background was that she had two parents, who lived together... There were, there were some older kids, who I think may have been her mother's children from a former marriage or maybe even her father's children from a former marriage, it was- and she was

very close to her sister Annie who was also, I don't- maybe she had an addiction problem, I don't really know. I knew her. But Annie's two children were being raised by Judy's parents so she had a niece and nephew who were...young. Who were also living with the family, and then there was like about six girls, several of them very beautiful, very well put together, and Judy was sort of in the middle of that run. Not beautiful, I think darker than most of them, and then sort of, obviously gay and butch, but she was very close to her sisters. Had a lot of trouble with her mother, adored her father, adored her older sister... And, you know, when I met her she was really- she was a kid still but she was already, you know, I said she was a wild child, which was just her way, I mean there was a point when, there's a book, it's about the women's movement, *Personal Politics*

(they speak at the same time)

WS: Is it by Sara Evans?

CG: Have you read that book? [responding to WS] Yeah, but one of the people interviewed in the book is Beth Reisen [or Reissman?], who was in Newark at the time

WS: hmm

CG: And there's a footnote in the book from Beth about Judy and I but I don't, I don't think I have the book here but, I don't- she doesn't identify us in terms of being gay, and I don't really know whether she was just being what she thought polite, or whether she never quite got that part of it, but it was a little bit about my being engaged with this sort of wild child and intervening at some point when Judy had knives or something crazy and... But that always seemed sort of, I hadn't seen Beth fifty years out or forty years out, I don't know, but it certainly, you know, that's the way when you don't know what people know about you or what they're saying, because nobody's saying it outwardly.

WS: Right

CG: So whether everybody on the project, you know, I've never asked anybody... And then this is a little bit of an aside, but there was an SDS reunion, it was one of the first ones so it was either 5 or, I don't think it would've been '69 but it may have been '74 reunion where Corinna and I and somebody else whose boyfriend I had an affair with sort of all in our feminist heads now, we all apologized to each other so I apologized to the woman for having an affair with her boyfriend and Corinna apologized to me for homophobia, you know (laughs) so it's this little queer/straight

WS: (laughs)

CG: apology although I saw I was both apologizing a straight relationship and getting an apology for my gay relationship, so... [32:35] So Judy, I don't know a lot more excepting that she obviously, I guess I would say I never thought about it this way but I guess she was a pretty

troubled kid and I don't know um what was- about being gay, she was obviously very clear about that and identified that way at a time when that was not welcomed

WS: I guess that was essentially what I was wondering, did she face social ostracism from her peers, or from

CG: No

WS: family?

CG: Not that I know of, I mean and she certainly, certainly when she came out of jail, she wound up with a little coterie of sort of butch women who, you know, were friends, but even like the day she was arrested, she was arrested with Willa Mae who was the opposite- I mean, she was a very soft, sweet, I assumed straight. Also a kid from the block and they were hanging out. And the, it's that funny way where you know people talk about the black community being homophobic, and the whole thing in California with Proposition 8, but there was really a level of acceptance that nobody, you know, *seemingly*, made a big deal. Later on when I was already in Ironbound I forgot this part, I was already in Ironbound, but I was the Vista supervisor for the city. [34:04] And at that point Vista had regular volunteers who came from all over the country but they also had community volunteers. So I had—God, I completely forgot about this—I had gotten a group of community people, including Judy, to be Vista volunteers. We had a community center, this was back in Clinton Hill, called the Bessie Smith Community Center, which was named after Bessie Smith who was a- not the singer,

WS: Right, right

CG: the person. And Judy worked there along with Louise Patterson, who was lovely. And I just sort of remember I was in my role as supervisor, I was there occasionally also everybody, you know, we had gotten the community center started so it was like, still home and stuff. Anyway, she worked at- when we were together more before '68, she was working at the toy factory in Kearney at the- I can't remember the name of the toy factory. And I was working for a while at the welfare board. I was doing the welfare again this is- it's not about Judy, but the welfare board, it encouraged welfare women to go to work in the toy factory on Christmas, and so I was doing all this stuff about, wasn't that- didn't that mean that the welfare- that the toy factory was on welfare? Because they were paying not enough wages for women to live on and they were still getting welfare so.. But that was when Bobby Kennedy was killed, so that was early in the summer of '68, and then later that summer was when I left

WS: Ok, and could you just say a word about what butch style looked like in Newark in the mid-60s, exactly?

CG: Pointy shoes. Pointy men's shoes. Slickened- Judy didn't have this, she had a little bit more of an Afro, and again, my trying to move her more towards a more hippie look, I would get her

to let her hair grow longer. But kinda slickened hair, you know it was a kind of pseudo-man look. Sometimes it would drive me crazy, there was a point when- and I knew the small group of women, I think I had just moved into the apartment by myself, and there was a little refrigerator in our office that wasn't being used, so I was taking it to my apartment, and Judy got this group of friends to help with it and something happened where they were sort of like, you know, "oh miss," you know, [laughs] *we* can do this, you know *we*—the boys can do this. They wouldn't have referred to themselves as boys... And I just thought, "this is ridiculous," you know, "I'm not gonna play this game," so... But it was never- I mean, it's like Judy would go out with her friends, she would dress in that style, but I didn't- I mean I *knew* them, and some of them I had known separate from Judy but I didn't really socialize with them. But she would socialize with me and other staff people, at some point Corinna had, I don't remember whether she was married yet, but she was in a relationship with somebody who- she was actually married and they had a place upstate, and Judy and I went for a weekend, it was freezing, it was the dead of winter. [38:07] So I don't know the sort of- the intricate details of that. From the other person that I was involved in, who was not butch but had been in relationships with butch women, I knew that there was a kind of scene and that there was some kind of- she would refer to it as sort of a freak show, which, I think had to do with something with straight people, with straight men, or, I don't... But I never- I never asked enough questions to be able to actually describe what that was, but she would refer to that. And Judy just sort of, she attached herself after I left, to a woman and a family, and I don't know whether she was in a relationship with that woman, but she lived with them, and I think, to the extent I understood what happened, I think she was with them when she fell, but I think there's- again, I just assumed there was a lot of drinking and

WS: mmhmm. And could you say a little more about your other relationship? I mean, how it began and what it was like, how it ended, through the arc of that narrative?

CG: Um, it began, when did it begin? She was a woman in the neighborhood, had kids, was in a relationship when I first met her with a woman who again, was sort of butch type and so it sort of was obvious. And we had a play street one summer, through the Police Athletic League of all things, [40:01] and her kids were on the play street a lot, so we got it off, you know, with her kids in various ways, and one of her kids who, I don't know when I realized, of course the kid was gay as well, got particularly attached to me. And, and then her older daughter, I think my sort of encounter with her, so I knew the kids, I think my first encounter with her was her older daughter had gotten arrested and was in the juvenile detention, so she was looking for some help with her. And I don't exactly know how it started but it was sort of, I have- that memory of the conversation, and I think I was in a bit of a rescue mode with her, they were at the jai- at [laughs] the jail, I can't get the word out, poor, and she was not, she didn't manage very well either, and so I was always you know trying to shore things up, there was a Thanksgiving where- and Vernon was around, Vernon Grizzard was around. I can't, and I've talked to Corinna and Connie about- and they can't exactly place it but- and he was living with me and Corinna for a while on Hunterdon St, but I know Vernon was around when we bought, we got- somehow we got a

turkey and stuff for [name redacted 41:47] to have with the kids, and I think Vernon took one of her kids to- oh I didn't want to tell you her name now that I realize I just said it- to have her ears pierced. I think that's sort of...other memory of him being involved with her, but-and then one of the things I used to do with a lot of the kids, not just her kids, was I would take them ice skating. So I would get all these used ice skates and fix them up and Christmas we would all go ice-skating in South Mountain Arena we'd go to the suburbs to go ice-skating. And I think there was something else in, maybe in one of the parks in Newark itself, I can't remember... So it just sort of happened, you know, Judy was in jail and it's funny 'cause I had- I don't have a moment of ambivalence or confusion about my relationship with Judy even though, you know, from the outside it must've looked pretty strange. But I don't quite understand my relationship with the other woman. Other than, you know, the sort of rescue mission, but it really ended when Judy came home

WS: mmhmm, ok

CG: and it was just a no brainer for me. And she and I remained friends and I remained an ally 'til she died, and I'm still connected to her extended family, but... Yeah, so I don't know, I mean, I'm very connected to her extended family 'cause I wound up adopting her grandson.

WS: Oh, okay, w-

CG: So... But it was a long time ago

WS: Okay, that- you know, that tells me that [inaudible] the blurring boundaries, right... Now we can strike the next thing I'm gonna ask if you want but I believe it's public record from Hayden's memoirs that Hayden was the NCUP man you had an affair with. Um, he mentions-

CG: It's not in his memoir

WS: It's in *Rebel*, I don't remember if it's in *Reunion*, but I heard he wrote *Rebel*, which is like the mildly revised version of *Reunion*- he doesn't mention you by name, but I'm assuming this has got to be you

CG: [laughs]

WS: he says, "I slept with a woman in NCUP who later like revealed that she was a lesbian and I became cold toward her," I think that- that's like all he says in-

CG: oh well that's more honest than- [laughs] No, that is me.

[speaking at once]

CG: And- and it's not so

WS: And again, we can cut this-

CG: different from what he says in *Reunion*. Because

WS: Yeah

CG: in *Reunion*, he makes a reference to a woman that he was sleeping with who turned out to be a lesbian

WS: Okay, so yeah

CG: Yeah

WS: I mean, so yeah, 'cause *Rebel* is basically *Reunion* but with like a tiny, tiny bit of revision

CG: yeah, no I never saw *Rebel*

WS: So then- if that's in-

CG: That is. No, that's fine. [44:43]

WS: Okay, alright it's-

CG: And Connie was the girlfriend that was with him

WS: right, right

CG: and we're good friends, so that's- [laughs] it's not a problem.

WS: But well then, I mean, could we- could you flesh out the part where he said, I mean, my memory of this isn't- I wish I had a verbatim quote from it but he says I became cold toward her. I mean, could you talk a little bit about, not just Hayden himself, but, you know, reactions in NCUP, I mean we can be speci- get into Carl Whitman

CG: Yeah

WS: and Vernon as well, but what, you know, what was the sentiment there, you know, it seems-
?

CG: I had no experience of him being cold towards me when he found out that--my relationship with him spanned a fairly long period of time, although I can't remember, but we were in Czechoslovakia together and that was in '67 and that was after the rebellions, so Judy had just come home in June and in Czechoslovakia the question of- and I was with him in Czechoslovakia- I remember being in his room, I'm not sure we had sex, I can't remember. But that's ok. But the question of who was gonna go on to Hanoi, 'cause a group of people went from Czechoslovakia to Hanoi, and I remember that I mean it was other reasons but just that I didn't feel comf- that Judy was part of why I didn't go. Also you know we had left sort of after the rebellions and everything seemed in so much turmoil that I felt I needed to go home and see what

was happening, but Judy was certainly a part of that and you know that was also- But I don't remember it as him being cold to me or

WS: okay. And what about the rest of NCUP, I mean, I guess maybe you could flesh this out but it sorta sounds like, people understood your relationship but maybe this was not a verbalized thing in an explicit sense, so then what-

CG: Well with NCUP--

WS: what kind of feedback were you getting, or responses?

CG: Well that's sort of, I mean, because nobody acknowledged it and because I didn't acknowledge it, I wasn't- I didn't- I'm not even sure how I thought about it whether I did want to tell people I was gay, I don't think I- by the time I was in Ironbound that was a little more true, but, so I mean clearly I knew a lot of people knew I tol- I mean I had conversations with Barry and Corinna was sort of an early one when Judy was first in jail, obviously when Judy came home and Corinna asked me to leave, that was- and Corinna was very explicit that she was didn't want people to think that she was a lesbian, so... But she never knew how close the two of us were or that we lived together, so, you know, everybody- and Steve also, Steve and I had been friends since college, so we predated NCUP, and you know everybody else who knew or- and then Terry. Again, Terry knew because Terry just knew, and she had said that thing to me about being careful. And also you know I mean I had, now when did- I had a relationship with Len Weinglass that was after I think, that's when I was in Ironbound, yeah I was in Ironbound by then. Anyway, so I think because some people knew about my relationships with men, I- you know, I don't know, but there was no...it never felt like until that encounter with Corinna or that woman's comment in jail it never felt like anything particular

WS: Okay

CG: you know? But again the you know it's sort of like a slow consciousness development

WS: Sure, sure

CG: so the- I think I told you when we talked last time, at that reunion that Carl was at, you know, in retrospect that- I know that I thought about talking to him and I sort of made plans to talk to him over the- it was a couple of days, but I didn't, so that when I think about that, then that tells me that there was still some hesitancy about why, with Carl, with, you know. Both somebody that I had always been personally totally fine with and also somebody who was, you know, now the head of the San Francisco Gay Liberation Front [laughs] so

WS: [laughs] right, right

CG: but so obviously it's my own reticence to say out loud to be identified in that way. But other than that, I can't... When I was involved with the other woman, Corinna's boyfriend who was the

bartender in the bar across the street, his name was Johnny Murray, Johnny at some point sort of got it, maybe Corinna had said something, I'm not sure. But he- and- Johnny and I had this sort of flirtation, he used to say um, "Corinna is my love but Carol is my heart" and it was- so at some point he said something to me acknowledging that he knew but sort of saying "couldn't you find somebody better than-" [laughs] [50:21] So I don't- I don't know what else to say but that

WS: Well what about Carl Wittman? Can we talk about him a bit because I have yet to fully understand exactly how he read at the time, I mean my understanding is he wasn't- you know nobody at the time was thinking of sort of verbal declaration of being "out", and yet my sense is that he and Vernon had a sort of intimacy that- something similar to, you know, you and Judy in that people sort of perceived them as being intimately linked in a way that wasn't necessarily vocalized, but I don't know, I mean, I'll let you sort of

CG: Okay, so

WS: deal with that, if you will

CG: I want two- two separate things.

WS: Sure

CG: when I came to Newark, Carl was leaving.

WS: Okay

CG: That was already in process and I wound up actually in the apartment that- one apartment that we had at the time, I wound up having Carl's bed, and I drove- I think maybe I told you this story. First couple of days I was there, I drove Carl in I think his car to the airport and then, that took about 7 minutes, and then it took me about 2 hours to get back

WS: [laughs]

CG: over and figure out where I was. [laughs] And Carl- you know, then Carl was in Hoboken, Carl was around and I drove Carl's parents' car to some conference, and I remember it mostly because once I got back, I had a little accident in his parents' car. So, you know, that backing up from that, obviously Carl was around in some way and, you know, the relations were good, so I had- I don't remember what the conference was. Maybe it was an SDS meeting, I don't know, but I had a station wagon that belonged to his parents that I drove and had a little accident with. So I never was present for whatever became the story of Carl and Tom and Carl and... And you know, Carl at some point got married, I was at his wedding, you know, so whatever Carl was working out, how did he present, he wasn't swishing but, you know, he was sort of- he was a tall guy, which- big guy but a sweet looking guy, you know, so in retrospect. But at Swarthmore that was a very different experience. And I only know that second hand but actually had a fairly tense conversation about a year ago with two of the people that were at Swarthmore with him. And

were a little bit younger than him, like a year or so, so... [53:14] And then we were all involved in Chester. And you know I'm repeating their experience, it wasn't mine, but in that conversation, they were very angry at him. Because they felt that he had sort of demanded of Vernon a kind of connection, which I think you know Vernon is now dead so Vernon can't speak for himself. The implication was that, you know, Vernon was not gay and not interested in that kind of relationship with Carl but that Carl's demand on Vernon and on all of them, was very intense and very dominating. And I remember in that conversation with the two friends, you know, talking to them about they had no idea what it would be like to be Carl. I mean they're straight friends, and to be Carl during that time, and was in a sense saying, okay, I can hear your experience, although I think the next day they felt like I hadn't really heard their side but I obviously had- I don't know, I did after, [laughs] after we apologized to each other. I mean, it was fine, we were all staying together in the apartment when this conversation happened. But I certainly got, you know, and in my attempt to sort of say to them, you know, to be Carl, to know he was gay, and to- what to do with it in that environment, I wasn't making excuses for- but they were also saying, being on the receiving end of it was pretty hard,

WS: sure

CG: and I think those- people also appreciated Carl in lots of ways as well. And I don't know about him and Vernon, that was...when I met Vernon, he was involved with Connie actually

WS: mmm [55:10]

CG: trying to remember, is that right? Yeah. We were in Phil- that first summer I was in Philadelphia, the Swarthmore crowd was- besides, though Carl was in Philadelphia, and I'm pret- Vernon wasn't there. Where was Vernon? [laughs] But I'm pretty sure that Connie was involved with Vernon at that point.

WS: Are there- can you tell me a little about Vernon? I actually don't know much about him, I mean Wittman is such a more, kind of, visible figure in the history of the New Left

CG: Vernon was . . . I loved Vernon, you know, as a person. And he was smart, he was soft, he and Nicky Egleson were like a duo for a long time, they also worked, in May we were at some meeting and the two of them sort of came in from the front lines of Chester, Pennsylvania, this may have been the first time I met either of them... And then, and my chronology is off on this ex- I may not exactly remember, he and Nick Egleson worked in Boston doing draft resistance for a while. 'Cause I remember going up and visiting. You know, I don't think Vernon was a *leader*, whatever that means, and I re- when you asked me the question, I realized when we were in Philadelphia, where was Vernon- I don't know? I think he went back to school. When we were in Newark I know that he was there for a period of time, and I wen- I went to Florida with him, we went to Jacksonville where he was from to visit his family. [57:00] And then we went to Ozona, which was a little town on the west coast of Florida where my aunt lived. And then those memories I had with him being in Newark, but I don't- it's like I don't have a sense of him being

like one of the organizers and having a block and having a... I think he was very involved in Chester when the Swarth- when they were also at Swarthmore, and I have a sense that he was a year behind in school but I don't even know that that's accurate

WS: okay

CG: But he was connected a lot, you know.

WS: I mean, he later gets involved with Gay Liberation, he wrote an essay, "For Liberation," actually in the late 60s about Gay Liberation that I just dug up I hadn't been aware of it [note: Strub seems to be misremembering Grizzard's letter, "Sex and Leadership," from the June 1969 issue of *Liberation*, which espouses feminism but not gay liberation]

CG: hmm, I'd be lik- interested in seeing that if you have a-

WS: yeah, I actually have kinda- I think I have a PDF of it I can, I can even send to you, sort of make a note to myself here. But, okay, I mean- [inaudible] sorry, gonna make sure it's still- oh yeah, we're good. [58:08]

CG: I'm remembering that by the time of the first SDS reunion, we were all disappointed 'cause Vernon wasn't coming, and he wasn't coming because his kid was starting kindergarten and he decided that he needed to stay home, but we- at some point he was on the phone and a whole bunch of us were talking with him

WS: yeah.

CG: That's...probably the last time I talked to him.

WS: hmm, okay, okay. Yeah he doesn't seem to have left as extensive a paper trail, so I think you know interviews are the only way to really recover some of *his* history... I mean I guess there's multiple directions we can go from here, but what about into the Ironbound, to sort of, follow the order of--, but I want to come back to Hilda Hidalgo, Derek Winans, etcetera, but maybe we can just jump to the Ironbound and we'll just kind of ride that through

CG: okay

WS: for a bit [59:03]

CG: So I went to Ironbound in the fall of '68. Yeah, Chicago was in August and I did a lot of organizing in Chic- you know, during the demonstrations so I was there for a while afterwards. And then, Corinna moved to New York, Connie moved to New York, I moved down to Ironbound where in the summer in the early six, eight weeks I was away, the plan had been for Steve and Derek and I to go together and by the time I got back, Derek and Steve had had some rift which I think I never quite understood. And I think somewhere in the back of my mind I always wondered about whether there was some sexuality tension but I don't know that. And I

moved in with Steve and I keep wanting to say Johnny M, but I'm not sure what his last name- it's Johnny something- Magador- no, it wasn't Johnny Magador... Anyway, who also was an old SDS person who had come to be part of the Ironbound project. [1:00:08] And I was the Vista supervisor so I had all these Vista volunteers that we recruited at some point, and Derek had started to work, so we were working with teenagers essentially. Johnny was working in a factory, so looking at organizing sort of on eco- we were still in the JOIN/GROIN fight. [1:00:31] And Steve and I were working with kids, street kids, Derek started to work—my chronology might be a little off here—at some point we had two teen centers. And there was a lot of Vista volunteers, Morgan, ah what is Morgan's last name, I can't believe I can't remember his last- Elsbrook Morgan, Morgan was his last name, was the official Vista person and he was a black guy from Newark or the surrounding- He was wonderful and sort of gave us carte blanche until Washington started to pound on and the city started to complain about what we were doing, which was also during the time that Gibson was running, and some point I was in a women's group, we had a lot of the sort of progressive lawyer women and we had a Gibson office, which the neighborhood broke the windows of and would drive by calling us nigger lovers. And they had these two teen centers, so we started- and there was a point where we had a concert in the park, actually I have photographs of this, and couple- oh I know what had hap- some kids had been arrested for loitering in the park, and that led, you know, sort of why we got involved in some ways I don't quite remember that... And then had a concert in the park and then we were able to open these centers and the kids started to gather, and so we were doing a lot of work with the kids, Norman [Fruchter] came, and started to do sort of some work with kids around drugs and published some newsletter or something um.

WS: [inaudible] what that is

CG: yeah, you have- I'm vague on the details. I would, I'm pretty sure you could find out from Norman. And then Jeannie Friedman came who became Steve's wife, who was Steve's wife, and she's a graphic artist and so she opened a print shop so we had the teen centers, the print shop, Derek started to work with parents of little kids up in the daycare center, and then while we had the teen centers, the Newark teachers went on strike and so the high schools closed. And then Steve starts talking to kids about starting a school, somewhere along the way Steve [the brain-trusted by]? this building, which, [1:03:14] I don't remember how that worked exactly happened. So there's a lot going on, you know, in terms of all we were doing, and it was a very exciting experience. And challenging, you know we were

WS: sure

CG: we were in a pretty hostile neighborhood

WS: Where were you located, specifically?

CG: on Wilson Ave and Ferry St. you know, Steve and I and then a bunch of the Vista volunteers lived on Lexington in what was considered the Pru, it had been an early Prudential

housing project kind of thing, Steve lived on Somme St so we were in that, but the centers were on- one was on Wilson Ave and one was on Ferry St I think and the school was on Van Buren but was right off Ferry St, so it was right sort of in the heart

WS: yeah

CG: of the Ironbound. So during that time, since we're talking about my queer history, I was still connected to Judy. You know, peripherally, I was in relationships with two men, I specialized in lawyers, so—none of this is secret--Roger Lowenstein and Jeffrey Fogel, and I had- somewhere- and Len Weinglass was in there. My therapist at some point decided that there was some homosexual component, she was an analyst, because these three men were friends and they were all- [laughs] all, in relationships with me, so it really was about that they were in love with each other.

WS: [laughs] Yeah, classic *Between Men* dynamic

CG: Yeah, right yeah, so I don't think that was true

WS: [laughs]

CG: but in any case, that so in terms of my sexual life during that time, you know, those were pretty real relationships. I'm trying to remember the chronology here. Yeah I know it must've been before Lois, so in that time before the high school but when we had the centers, there was a young Portuguese girl who also got very attached to me and I had sort of a crush on. [1:05:26] But by then I was sort of a little bit older and more mature and [laughs] I think my analyst sort of warned me

WS: [laughs]

CG: to, you know, respect boundaries and that she was young, she wasn't- she may have been 18, I don't know. But I remember, and it was sort of, you know, I looked forward to seeing her, I was excited that she was around, and she was very attached to me as well, but nothing happened. And I had another relati- I remember we were up in, we were actually up in Putney at John Douglas's place. With a bunch of kids from the centers before the high school, I mean it was leading up to the high school. And I was staying with another guy who I knew from the city, Harvey, who I was having an affair with. So I was having affairs. Or relationsh- I mean, it wasn't just, Harvey was a sort of on and off kind of thing, but certainly with Roger and Jeffrey. Len was...short, but with Roger and Jeffrey that- you know, they didn't last that long, but they were a year, a year and a half, that sort of. And then in terms of my queer life, somewhere during that time, I met Lois. So Corinna was now with us in the city and they took a place up in the Catskills with twenty friends, you know, for the summer. And I went up one weekend with them, and part of the group was a group of people who worked in a place in Brooklyn called The Loft, which included Ellen Maslow and Eric Worthman, and Lois. Lois Bass, who [laughs] Lois's daughters and her wife is

going to spend the weekend at my apartment this weekend. So that's a long time ago. So I just happened to- it was, you know, I happened to be up on a weekend and Lois was up, I think- I don't think she actually had a share in the place, but I think she was up visiting 'cause her friends from- she worked at The Loft in Brooklyn and The Loft was like a teen drug treatment program

WS: okay

CG: and we really, you know, [sings] da da! And just sort of played that weekend and um and then started to see each other. She lived in Brooklyn and I lived in Newark and so there was a fair amount of commuting, mostly- I had a car, and so mostly it was me going to Brooklyn. And then at this time, we were starting the high school, so this was the era of encounter groups and sex, drugs, and rock & roll, and Lois worked with teenage kids and was involved in a kind of therapy that came out of the sort of, this guy named Casreal who was a sort of scream therapy but it was a very intense expressive kind of therapy, and she worked, she had been in a group with a guy named Peter Madden, and some time during that time I went into Peter's group.

[1:08:45] And I meant to [inaudible] this- Oh, Lois came, so it- we were starting the high school, so the kids wanted some kind of a group thing, so we were sex, drugs, and rock & roll, but it was also the encounter era, so I asked Lois if she would come and run the group with me at the high school. So I didn't know anything about the group stuff exactly, though I'd been in therapy now for a while. But I knew the kids and was trusted by the kids and so we did that together for a while, and then Lois decided that she- she had dropped out of college - that she needed to go back to school and wound up getting some scholarship or something to go to school in Putney or Windham. And so Lois left, which had two effects on me. One was that I was pretty heartbroken, although I was, you know, in my mind I was always supporting her to get a good education [laughs] and stuff. I never thought to say, why don't you just go to school in New York, you know?

WS: right

CG: and that- it also was, it- you know, a part where neither of us had fully landed on a gay identity. And you know it- let me see, what year the- I know in 1970 we had the centers, and the high school I'd say started in '72, so this would've been '73 or '74. So it's early in terms of gay consciousness, and so there was always this- it wasn't that- we would never half in or half out with each other, that was not an issue, but there was this sort of other world where you know Lois's close friends who were my friends would encourage her to go out with some guy or something. So I think that sense of, you know, don't, why do you have to go to Vermont to go to school, you know, it sort of didn't- it wasn't part of my- and I guess I was also sort of, still somewhere in the back of my mind not sure whether this was- it had meant I was totally in love with her, and that that was clear. So she goes off to Vermont, and I'm in Newark, and so the two effects is, one is I was heartbroken and now I had a long distance relationship, the other was that I was left with the group. Which I then continued to run, and that was really the beginning of my life as a therapist

WS: Okay

CG: because I then started to really, I think I've told you this story. When I- when Judy- there was a point when- I'll go back to Judy, where Judy was- and this was after the rebellions, there was a railroad track that went through the neighborhood, and it got stuck. And it just sort of sat there and somebody opened one of the cars, it's full of light bulbs, so there was a little light bulb party in the neighborhood, right.. So Judy and a bunch of kids um got arrested for stealing light bulbs, and it was nothing for the kids but Judy was on parole, so it was serious. And so Len Weinglass became her lawyer in municipal court in Newark... And this- yeah, this would've been, so it was after the rebellions but it was before Chicago

WS: okay

CG: so the day that Judy was in court, Len was her lawyer, and Corinna and I went just to keep them company and obviously I was worried. And I watched Len that day, and I watched how what, in my mind, was completely forward his energy was. He spent...it took the whole day almost, he kept changing courts, he would talk to policemen, he would figure out which judge was the right judge, you know. And I could feel that his energy was completely going forward and it made me aware that as committed as I was to the organizing, I was always sort of half going down the block and half trying to not go, and so it registered in my mind someplace very clearly, and so after Lois left and I was running the group at the high school at one point sort of the light bulb went off and I thought, I'm feeling like Len. I'm *totally* here. And that for me became that impetus to take more seriously this as a- although I had- you know, went teaching for years so... But I, from that point on I always ran groups, did some therapy, usually part time, when I left Newark I continued to do it, a lot of people from Newark came, would come into the city. So anyway, that was... So Lois left, we continued a long distance relationship for a while, in the summer a whole bunch of us had bought a place up in Kingston, and we spent a good part of that first summer there with me. And they went back to school, and then I got involved with Will Brumbach, who . . . I had a pretty contentious relationship, my friend Chip Elwell was the first person to die of AIDS, who worked at the high school. I'm pointing at that poster because when he died his friend Roberto, I hung out with him for a day or two, he gave me that poster so it sort of, it has nothing to do with Chip's death, but I associate it with Chip's death. Chip at some point described Will as the sort of angriest guy on the block [laughs] but I was involved with Will for...two years or so, and there was a lot that was very good and very intense in the relationship, but he was a mad man. And...I don't know whether- I don't think I was ambivalent in terms of sexuality, but he was challenging. We were bicycle riding in Nova Scotia, and I said to him at some point, we were heading for a particular inn or something, and I said to him, I don't know if I'm gonna be able to make it. And then in one of those bizarre things a car starts honking at us, and it turns out to be some people he knows,

WS: [laughs]

CG: and they are going towards the same place, so he suggests to me that I take a ride, and I said, no, no, no, and then, but I'm still tired, and then he'd get mad and he called me, he said, that I was arrogant, arrogant, and then of course I was so mad I just

WS: [laughs]

CG: bicycled to the inn very quickly. And I was in a group with Chip at the time, we were both in Peter Madden's group, and I must've been telling him this story, or just I was telling him 'cause we were friends and he said to me, well Carol we know you *are* arrogant, but that's why I love you. [laughs] So it was a little twist on it. So my relationship at some point with Will ended, I had brief affairs with another woman, which was sort of her doing and wasn't really right for me, and then I went off to social work school. And I met Susan in social work school.

WS: In New York?

CG: at Stony Brook

WS: mm, okay

CG: Yeah, we all lived in New York at this point. And I lived with Susan for thirty years, so.

WS: So- you left Newark in seventy s-

CG: Well I continued to, I had lived in Clinton Hill and then I lived in Ironbound, I moved to Manhattan while I was still working at the high school. One of the people in an extended network had a little- it's \$56 dollars for a little apartment on

WS: wow

CG: Houston Street with a tub in the kitchen and a toilet in the hall. And at that point I think I was needing to sort of have a little bit more of a different life and to live in a neighborhood where, and I moved into this little Italian enclave. You know in the way that in New York you can have three blocks, and it's-

WS: right, right

CG: and it was all around the- it wasn't St. Anthony's but it was really a little Italian enclave. And so of course the people who helped me move from Newark were all my black friends, and again people screaming out the building about "niggers," it was

WS: wow

CG: terrible actually

WS: yeah

CG: it was really terrible, one of the kids was *really* upset by it

WS: I'm sure

CG: I call these people kids although they are- by this time they're not children, they're- but they're still young. But I contin- I was still at the high school at that point. And then when I left the high school, it just sort of, I don't kno- I was in Provincetown for a summer or two summers actually, I had a cousin who lived there and wound up spending a couple summers there, and it was the fall and I was visiting him and it just sort of- it was an idea that entered my mind, and it was- so the first time I thought it, it was complete, which meant I was processing it unbeknownst to myself, 'cause the idea of- cause I had now spent from 1964 and this was '75 or '76, essentially working with some version of the same group of people, I mean, it changed and we were doing different things, but that had been my world, and so to leave was like to go into no man's land, but I did. And I did some part time adjunct kind of things for a while, and then I applied for social work school and went to Stony Brook, which was the most progressive school at the time.

WS: Okay, well so I want to come back to that moment that sort of, you know, after Newark

CG: okay

WS: thing, but first, moving back, so in Clinton Hill or in the Ironbound in the 70s, I mean, is there such a thing as lesbian space? I mean are there bars for lesbians, are there- you know what kind of social infrastructure exists?

CG: Well, I was, none that I knew of, okay. And in both of my incarnations in Newark, I was in very ethnically based world, if I was, I mean, I had connections at the university and certainly at the law school, so there may have been like around the university, but nothing that I would know about or be interested in

WS: okay

CG: And so it certainly- you know, the bars that we hung out with, and everybody hung out in Newark with the local bars, and in Ironbound we had hung out a little bit less in bars but you know when I was in Ironbound the Portuguese were all so- Portuguese influx was happening,

WS: right

CG: the bars and restaurants were Portuguese and we went there to eat and drink but it was less of a social hang out the way it had been in Clinton Hill, when that was definitely a social hang out, as well as a drinking-

WS; sure, sure,

CG: hang out. But so I wouldn't have known, and the you know there was this, as far as I knew there were no organizations and if there were, there may have been a little group who most likely in- I'm guessing would be around campus

WS: right, yeah, and in the 70s there's a campus group called RAGE, Rutgers Activists for Gay Education, I think? It's a great acronym

CG: yeah

WS: But okay, and then I mean I just wanted float

CG: Yes

WS: [inaudible] too because, you know, Stonewall was so definitive in the historiography of gay activist history, you know, in Newark, how does it register, if at all, I mean is it a pivotal moment in Newark or not?

CG: Was '69, so like

WS: Yes, summer of '69

CG: So in that summer I was down in Ironbound and that was the summer I went to the Middle East.

WS: mm, right

CG: So it- you know, again, I mean, I assume I knew about it, but and also for me, you know, gay consciousness was not- and, you know, but feminist consciousness was starting to develop. And I- was while I was in Ironbound that I was in a women's group, you know, a consciousness-raising group, we did some, but the want ads in the newspapers were still segregated, and it's important- our little group did the- picketed the Star Ledger around the discrimination in the want ads, so we did some activist stuff but it was feminist stuff. There was a- and this again was just about me but I went to some big women's meeting in the city, I can't remember whether I was still living in Ironbound, whether I moved here, I don't think I was in social work school yet so I was still in Newark whether I was actually living in- I lived in Manhattan maybe for- I don't know, two years while I was still working in Ironbound. But I went to some big feminist conference, and it was when the Lavender Menace showed up, and I was really disturbed by it. I think it was a- you know, I'm thinking about it now, I know it made me kind of withdraw from the women's movement, but it didn't get me to join the gay movement, but there was something about there being a conflict between these two parts of myself so to speak, that I just didn't know what to do with, and so I kind of- I mean I wasn't that active in the larger women's movement in that sense, but I do remember it very clearly and really I remember being upset by it

WS: upset by the action, the zap, or the response to it?

CG: Just that it was happening

WS: mmm, ok

CG: you know, I don't remember the s- I'm not the queen of zapping, so [laughs]

WS: [laughs]

CG: you know I wouldn't have been- the tactic wouldn't have offended me, but, I had never thought, you know, I was just becoming clearer and clearer a feminist and I, you know, my gay self was still there, but obviously you know since I'm sort of moving you know, maybe I really *am* the B in LGBT, I don't know [laughs] but nobody seems to think that everything's just so [laughs]

WS: [laughs]

CG: But it- you know, if you look at my life, and those relationships were genuine, you know, even if... Then you know, so maybe I was still like in that place I was describing with Lois where I was completely not ambivalent about my relationship with her but still somewhere there was an ambivalence about where I was gonna settle. [1:24:24] And it wasn't maybe until Susan that I- you know, 30 years later you have to say, I guess [laughs]

WS: [laughs]

CG: I guess I settled. So it to some extent, maybe, that it was just too much for me, I couldn't deal with that level of conflict between the feminist, you know, the straight feminists and the lesbian feminists. I'm not exactly sure, I just remember being there, I remember it happening, and I remember being upset by it. And having some feeling of, this is too much for me, give me my local politics, I'll go back to my Ken Gibson for mayor [laughs]

WS: [laughs] Okay. Well maybe this is a good moment to ask you about some of these other figures

CG: yes

WS: I mean I think, chronologically,

CG: Derek

WS: well

CG: well

WS: actually I thought, I mean, Hilda Hidalgo, NCUP partners with in 1965 as part of the reunited- United Freedom Democratic Party ticket in Newark

CG: yeah

WS: so could you tell me a little about her, I mean what-

CG: well, let's do two things, 'cause the three people that I had talked to you before

WS: yeah

CG: about

WS: [inaudible] there may be more that I'm not even thinking-

CG: No, no it's just that probably chronologically I meant Ray Proctor first

WS: oh okay, yeah

CG: because, as I said, I'm flying by the seat of my memory at this, but I think Ray was connected to CORE at that time

WS: yeah, that's right

CG: and in one of our early NCUP offices, I remember him coming to a community meeting. And we were planning early on a benefit thing with CORE with the jazz musician, Horace Silver, was going to be a benefit, really for CORE, and I don't remember how we wound up being part of it, and then I think when he found out that we were part of it he dropped out of it. But I think I'm not sure what Ray was talking about that night but that was sort of the time period, and when I said Ray, I have a clear memory of him coming to the NCUP office and talking at a meeting about something, so I'm guessing that that's what it was. So I think in that sense he was- that was probably my earliest

WS: okay

CG: I don't know if I was aware at that point that he was gay, I don't know. Later on, he ran the Urban Studies Department [Urban Institute] at Essex County College. And Steve Block wound up working there. They did a lot of work, wonderful organizing with students at Essex County College. And I was- some of those students became Vista volunteers and there was a lot of cross-

WS: okay

CG: pollination, and again, somewhere along the way I knew that Ray was gay but I don't know why I knew that or how I knew that or what significance that had- I would say none, of any significance to me. I think I was thinking about- this morning about Derek, I'm trying to remember when I met Derek, it may be that it was around the Freedom Ticket was the same time that we really started connecting with Derek 'cause Derek was connected with George Richardson and the there was a whole group of white progressives who lived in upper Clinton Hill and in Belleville and places like that, who were involved with George and they were

organizing with the Freedom Ticket. And I think that's when also Derek sort of- but Derek entered our lives in a- in a much more complete way, so he really you know certainly during the period of the Freedom Ticket but I think he lived with Terry for a while, so he really became a real figure in our lives in [inaudible]

WS: Alright so with Ray Proctor, you were not particularly close.

CG: I wasn't particularly close, Steve again worked closely with him when at Essex County College

WS: okay

CG: But, so Derek I think, and maybe Derek showed up before then, I don't really- but I definitely know that he wound up as part of the United Freedom "Vote Line D and Be Free"

WS: Wow

CG: "From Hughes to Matthews, You Cannot Lose"

WS: Wow, that's impressive

CG: Yeah, right, and with that and a senior citizen Metrocard I can get [laughs] on the bus, right. [1:28:44] And Derek, you know Derek was a very unique person and again, Derek sexuality went, I don't know, how did I know Derek was gay? I don't know, I don't believe I ever had a conversation with Derek, I mean we were reasonably close, but I don't think I ever had a conversation with him about my being gay, his being gay, but we were working in connected ways for a period of time, and those conversations after the rebellions about going to Ironbound were pretty loose, you know, we didn't set, sit down the three of us and have a planning document, but the idea of moving to Ironbound, um, trying to start various organizing things, you know was, pretty clear. And then once we were- you know, once I got there and they weren't connecting with each other anymore, you know, I pretty much was doing the stuff with Steve, but Derek and I, you know, I used to go to the daycare center and the Vista volunteers were there, again, there was never- certainly not between Derek and I- anything but good feelings. And then I remember Derek being sick. There was a couple, Abby and Henry, who had probably had a last name but I can't think of it, who I'm assuming were part of that old progressive community and Derek was very close to them, and they had a farm upstate, or- it was in New Jersey I think, and we used to go, sometimes we'd go to their house in where they lived in Weequahic or further out. To have all-day meetings, you know, and Abby would feed us, and then they had this farm and sometimes we'd go to the farm, and... And I think when Derek, my memory of it- this could just be all made-up memory, but I think when Derek started to get sick, he stayed with them, and that they took care of him. And over the years, obviously I wondered, and don't know whether Derek had AIDS, because it was pre-AIDS, but he had this strange blood thing and he kept being sick, but he lived, you know, he died almost the same time as Len

Weinglass [correction: Dave Dellinger]. 'Cause I remember actually there was, literally on the same day there was a memorial for each of them and I had to- I wound up going to [Dave's], but that wasn't so long ago. [Actually earlier][1:31:24]. I think this was after my brother died, so that was 2010 so was that 2011 maybe, 2012? Around there? So that's a- you know, I think so he didn't have AIDS, or at least that's not what he had initially.

WS: Right, I mean he did start the group the People With AIDS Coalition in Newark in the late 80s, um, that his partner did have AIDS and then [inaudible] the 90s [1:31:51]

CG: Yeah, and when, you know, by- sort of by that time I was not in touch with him but

WS: sure

CG: but I do remember thinking back, you know, once, but then the timing was like

WS: right

CG: whatever it was, it wasn't AIDS as we knew it.

WS: Can you give a sense of Derek as a person? I mean I just don't have a great sense of his sort of persona, character

CG: He had a nervous twitch, he did with the hand, his hands would sort of erupt together. He was definitely sort of smart and was a little stiff in a certain way, I always see him sort of well-dressed, like as if he was- well we were- we all, a lot, were well-dressed when we would have student volunteers come and help us

WS: sure

CG: with something we'd make them wear ties if they were boys and skirts if they were girls. But I had that feeling that Derek, you know, he was still at Harvard in some

WS: Right, right

CG: way, and I just, you know, he had a little bit of an aristocratic feel to him, I always liked him, you know, but, uh, formality or maybe it was sort of like, I don't have any memories of sort of- I could be funny with him but not really joking around with him, if that makes any sense. And then after the- you know the- I think he stayed very connected to Jessie Allen when Jessie was on the City Council. I don't think was a bright period in Jessie's life but I think I always felt- I trusted Derek a lot, and so I think it always made me feel good that Jessie had Derek but at least you know it-

WS: yeah

CG: We hadn't just sort of set him up and abandoned, which we kinda did, uh... But you know and the thing that Derek started in Ironbound is now the Ironbound Community Corporation. It's one of the most impressive, you know, that it had all those like incarnations was not obviously

WS: yeah, yeah

CG: just Derek doing but it still was

WS: yeah [inaudible]

CG: like it started-

WS: right, actually my Women and Gender Studies program is partnering with them and with Women-in-Media Newark to show *Janie's Janie* in the Spring

CG: oh there you go [1:34:20] yeah, right

WS: um, okay, well then-

CG: And Hilda was also- I met Hilda through the Freedom Ticket campaign. I don't remember knowing her particularly well, but then I would start to run into her in gay things in the city

WS: In New York

CG: In New York, yeah. And [laughs] I remember her once being very, maybe it was the first time I had seen her, and we were at The Dutchess or something or at some tea party and she was clearly surprised to see me, and said, I thought you were in a relationship with Tom [laughs] and I said well I sort of was, although that it was supposed to be a secret, but you know, here I am. And then I would run into her periodically and then when I went to teach at Rutgers, I taught in the department of community development, and the person who was the head of the social work program, which was what I was in, in the department of community development, was a lesbian who was Japanese, a Hawaiian-American of Japanese descent. And her partner who had already died was Hispanic and she knew Hilda you know so I had- there were some [inaudible] at that point and I had some connection, I saw Hilda at this event or that

WS: Alright. And so at one point I want to talk about[?] where she left her papers in Newark Public Library, and they're pretty remarkable. It's a large collection, I've been digging through it a little. And I have this impression and I wonder if you can tell me if this is accurate, and that impression is that in the 70s she was pretty active as a sort of lesbian feminist at a national level, you know, to a women's studies conferences and things, but that locally in Newark, she's kind of prominent as a Puerto Rican activist and doesn't seem like she's quite as- you know she's not closeted but she didn't seem quite visible and public as a lesbian activist in Newark, and it sort of seems like she's kind of navigating, you know, the local versus the national in the way she presents herself, I mean is that- does that gel with your recollection?

CG: Yes, but tell me about the time frames, because-

WS: I guess the 70s into the 80s is really what I've been looking at in terms of kind of speeches she's giving at like women's studies conferences, academic conferences, where you know she has a very clear lesbian feminist politics but I don't see her using that language in Newark in the 70s or the 80s in her papers [1:36:55]

CG: I would just, you know, without really knowing I would say that's a probably accurate

WS: okay

CG: now I was in that sense, I was in Newark until the mid-70s, yeah. Late 70s, 'cause I actually was, even after I left the high school and I went to social work school I did it- my internship at the high school. I guess I was having trouble leaving. So I don't know, you know, past that, but in my experience, and of course my experience is limited, that was not yet in the conversation in Newark, where it was in the conversation nationally and certainly in New York

WS: right, right

CG: in the Stonewall years, but not so much in Newark

WS: Okay

CG: So, but that would make it, that would seem, you know just listening to that really makes sense to me

WS: Okay, that helps, because I don't want to be reductive in creating a narrative but it does seem like that's the pattern there. So then after you leave Newark, I mean, how connected to the city do you stay?

CG: well, I stayed connected, as I said, even when I was in social work school I was still at the high school, but through all of the time I was at Ironbound I stayed very connected to a group of people in Clinton Hill, so some of my friends, and then over the years their children. And you know as I said, I adopted the grandson of one of those people and he was my godson. And then he came to live with me at 15, but sort of from when he was 11 on I was really sort of trying to parent him across the river, so I was there a lot. In terms of Ironbound, I still stayed connected to some of the kids. You know, there were the kids that were in the high school and then there was the kids from the teen center, some of them were already past high school age, so they also stayed in the surroundings of the high school

WS: right

CG: and I ran a group for a long time, I started the group in the high school that I was talking about with Lois, but then I started a group for the older kids just in my apartment along with one of the lawyers who decided he wanted to be a therapist and was in family therapy, so we did that

for a bunch of years. And then I kind of moved those people who were still here, still in it, to New York.

WS: okay.

CG: And you know and then- it's just the way that Newark is home in a certain sense and that I know the cast of characters in certain ways. I just read Junius Williams's book, and I had this, you know, maybe I said this to you last time, I don't remember, I had this feeling of like I was reading a friend's diary

WS: yeah

CG: So that felt a little like, you're not supposed to do that. But I also kept thinking well I'm enjoying reading this 'cause I know a lot of these people you're talking about and of course he's talking about a period when I was still in Newark

WS: right

CG: mostly, but you know it sort of reminded me how many people I knew, how much of what was going on I knew, how involved I was in things directly or indirectly.

WS: I haven't read that book yet but I just read Robert Curvin's new book

CG: uh-huh

WS: *Inside Newark*. I don't know if you've seen that it's-

CG: no, I mean, the two of them did a talk at the Schomburg Center

WS: oh- oh right, right, I knew of that

CG: In the fall, September maybe, that I went to- to hear, but I didn't buy Robert's book, but at some point I bought Junius's

WS: Ok yeah that's [inaudible] Curvin just spoke in Newark last night so I just met him for the first time. Now, in New York, in doing social work, you wrote an academic article about lesbians with AIDS at one point and I'm wondering to what extent you witnessed first-hand AIDS in Newark at all

CG: I didn't

WS: [inaudible]

CG: witness it in Newark at all, in the same way, you know. From the time from Clinton Hill to Ironbound, drugs were brought to Newark, so in Clinton Hill, there was a couple of drug addicts,

there was two brothers, I don't remember if they were twins or not, but they'd be nodding, we'd joke about their nodding. And there was a bunch of people who drank too much and ripple[?]

WS: sure

CG: and that kind of poison. By the time I got to Ironbound, maybe, there was a whole list of kids I could tell you that died of overdoses. So drugs had just, there was no break between Clinton Hill, and there was a two month break between Clinton Hill and Ironbound and yet the introduction of drugs and the epidemic of drugs and kids dying of overdoses, you know, it was just a different world already

WS: sure [1:42:11]

CG: So, but AIDS, well I became aware of AIDS in 1980, I was already out of Newark, there was a couple of kids, there was a kid at the high school who we sort of all knew was gay and also I really loved. And I remember and I actually don't know what happened to him, but I remember when AIDS first started to come, I became worried about him. And then there was another kid from Newark who I ran into in one of the sex shops in the Village, and somehow Derek had some connection to him that I can't remember...what that was. And so when AIDS came I worried about him, but at the beginning of the AIDS crisis I volunteered for GMHC, and so I was running support groups and involved with supervision groups, but I was out of Newark and the place that I knew of AIDS in Newark, was the partner of one of those kids who was a drug addict, and she got sick and was taken care of, and this was all the extended family that my son was a part of, so.. But you know part of what's obvious in this talk is that there was no gay community I was connected to in Newark so when it hit New York, I was part of a gay community. And also I became more part of the gay community as part of doing the AIDS work, so that article came... I had done, I don't remember who asked me to do the article, it was part of a journal, right?

WS: mmhmm

CG: But I was already volunteering for GMHC and I had done a training with what was then the Community Health Project, which became Callen-Lorde. And it was, you know, with somebody else that was doing the training. I was the sort of second, so I met a lot of some young lesbians and stuff and so when I was asked to do the article I talked to them and then I had been around ACT UP and around GMHC so, you know, I was part of a loose lesbian community. [1:45:08] There was a group called The Gathering, and friends of mine organized it and it was a month to month social gathering for lesbians, but we were already thinking that the people at The Dutchess were really children and we were in our 30s, but you know two of my friends were sort of the first people I knew and I think in some ways unfortunately historically they became the first lesbian couple to have a child, they were the first people I knew, and when we were at the gathering party, when they sort of whispered that one of them was pregnant, which was like, wow, you know?

WS: [laughs]

CG: And unfortunately they then became the first child visitation custody case

WS: wow

CG: between lesbians, so they became infamous for that, you know. But in terms of Newark, there was no community that I was a part of

WS: Okay, sure. Yeah so I think it's a different story then. So then, I mean, would you want to narrate your life since then, so I mean

CG: Since Newark?

WS: Sure, sure, just to- I mean,

CG: ok

WS: you know

CG: yeah

WS: to follow things through

CG: just to catch up for the next 40 years.

WS: [laughs]

CG: So I left essentially within a year I went to social work school at Stony Brook. So I had ended my relationship with Lois and had my relationship with Will, and then I was- not involved with anybody, or had one small involvement with a woman that didn't make any sense. And then in social work school I met Susan, well actually in Provincetown- I forget, how quickly I forget, because I spent these two summers in Provincetown with a cousin of mine who lived there and I became friends with people in Provincetown. And it was, you know, obviously, big gay community in Provincetown. And a lot of the people including my cousin worked at a thing called the Drop-In Center, which was a kind of 70s drug health, lesbian health, health, drug use, it was pre-AIDS. So during that time I met somebody who I got involved with who lived there and worked at the Drop-In Center and this is just when I was starting social work school, and so we had a relationship for a while long distance and then she was gonna move to New York, and then I met Susan, and Susan was married when we met, her husband was sick, and we were in a like supervision group together, and then she had a birthday party. And there was a whole group of friends at school, mostly gay, not exclusively, but mostly lesbians, and so Susan had this birthday party and I was in the period where I think I was pollinating, you know. [laughs] So in any case, I go to this party, I've already been out drinking with friends and I think I arrived ready to fall in love with somebody [laughs] and I- hopefully it was a little deeper than that, but

anyway, Susan and I sort of, I mean I hadn't liked her, I mean I knew her from school. So her birthday is next week, so her birthday is in December, you know, so we had met in September at school and I thought she was like a goodie two-shoes, she later told me she thought I was a hustler

WS: [laughs]

CG: and of course we were both right, I was much more of a hustler than she was, and she was a pseudo-goody two-shoes. Anyway, so we started this affair, she was married and she was married to a man who's sick, and we had this whole circle, so my friend Sherry who I had met in Provincetown and had moved to New York and we had become best friends and so at some point, I brought Sherry to some tea party or something and she met Catherine, who she's still with, so there was this circle of sort of people in one way or another from Stony Brook social work school but, various tangents of that, and then by June by the summer, Susan and I had spent a weekend out in Montauk and then we came back and she and her husband went off to Puerto Rico or some place on a vacation and somewhere, and I just had sort of assumed that she wasn't going anyplace, and actually it was good because I made no demands on her, I was just- and theoretically I was having this other person coming to live with me in New York although I think I was beginning to see more and more that that was really not real. [1:50:19] Unfortunately I probably should have told her

WS: [laughs]

CG: earlier than I did. And then Susan came back from Puerto Rico and just announced that she was gonna leave and that she would fig- I think, it was a sad story, he came home with a good medi- he had some rare blood cancer, he came home with some good medical report and she realized that she was disappointed, and that was a terrible place to be for her and for him

WS: sure

CG: And so she left and so that was hard, and I mean needless to say her friends all rejected her because you know, you don't leave a dying man. And she and he worked out various accommodations but then she took an apartment that turned out not to be far from where I lived, which was a coincidence but her friend had a studio apartment in [inaudible]. We started our relationship and at some point we moved in together and with some ups and downs we're pretty good for 30 years, well for 22 years. My son came to live with us at that point, well he wasn't my son he was my godson, he was fifteen. We went to adopt him- I wanted to have a kid, she didn't want to, we went to couple's therapy, we worked it out enough that I tried to get pregnant and didn't and then she decided she would get pregnant and didn't, during that time he came to live with us and at some point he was in the living room with some friends and we were in the bedroom and Susan said to me, so if we had a baby, he was in boarding school, she said to me when he was home, she said, if we had a baby, where would it be right now? And I got hysterical laughing 'cause I realized I had had this image of his room, 'cause I had a two-bedroom

apartment being like a Murphy nursery, you know, it would be a nursery and then the teenager would come home from school and it would be a teenage room and I don't know what we'd do with it. So that sort of got us to see that we weren't two thinking about being three, we were three and James was very difficult for all good reasons, he was often pretty out of control, and unfortunately he's still 44 and homeless and drug addict but... And I did that in the relationship and Susan didn't, which was unusual for- everybody sort of assumed that- but Susan was always fair, supportive of me, fair with him, and so it was possible, you know, to do. And at some point my mother died and left me with a little bit of money and we- I had cancer, I had breast cancer, came through that, and 27 years later, still through that. So you don't know if you're a 27-year survivor until- so at the beginning it was, you know, I was pretty frightened

WS: sure

CG: but anyway we decided we would, we had been on Fire Island for some summers and on the Cape for some summers, you know where we'd rent a house for a month, so we decided we would buy a house and somebody suggested the east end of Long Island if we liked the Cape, and I had this little bit of money from my mother for a down payment so we bought the house and I had ridden horses when I was a kid in Prospect Park and sort of longed to do it again, and Susan had some friends who had a farm and she had done it when she was a kid and so when I was doing my dissertation I said when I'm done, let's see what- 'cause there's a lot of riding out there. And we did and we got very involved in riding and we wound up buying horses, and then we had a terrible accident. Simply, we were in the woods, the horses got out of control, both of us were on runaway horses, Susan was in front of me, the third person who was with us was able to stop her horse. And Susan fell off and I think- and then I fell off, and I had a bruise on my thigh and Susan had a traumatic brain injury, and so was...essentially kept alive through the wonders of Western medicine, which I don't usually admit [laughs] to the wonders thereof. But she was in intensive care for 6 weeks on every machine, you know, breathing machines, eating machines, she had like a thermometer in her head which measured the pressure, she had had surgery... [1:55:04] She has, she's still alive, she has made a miraculous recovery. But she's different. So the accident, we had been together for 22 years, we stayed living together for another 8 years. A lot of it was time where she was recovering and it sort of like filling up again, you know, it's like she was completely reduced to being a fetus essentially, no walking, no talking, little thinking, being kept alive through tubes connected to you only they weren't, you know, an umbilical cord, they were machines. So a lot of those early years it was her becoming more and more a person again, but she became in some very fundamental ways a different person [1:56:00] and after eight years um she needed to go. And so she moved out and she had tried to work a little bit after the accident and

WS: yeah

CG: it was too much for her, so she rented a house not far from our house on Long Island, we at that point had gotten a dog because she was going to be on Long Island full-time and she would

up getting involved with a man, and all through the years of our relationship Susan would always say "I don't know if I'm a lesbian, I just love Carol." And so even my own whatever level of hesitation I had had, I certainly embraced the identity and Susan did too although she would never quite... So I wasn't completely surprised, I was devastated [laughs]

WS: Sure

CG: But not surprised when she got involved with a man. And at the time, we were in couple's therapy for a while, and at the time when she was trying to articulate why she needed to leave, you know she was saying a lot, which was the thing- the only thing that made sense to me, was that she felt like she was 22, like she was just out of college, like she had a life to begin, and she had no idea what to do with a 30 year relationship. And it was true, and I knew that that was true and so like... But when we were separating and in therapy and I was devastated, she kept saying to me, you know, we're family, we'll stay connected, you know, and I would think, "fuck you, I'm not your sister." And unfortunately her sister had just died, probably just a year or- the two years around the accident, I remember her mother and sister both died.

WS: Jeez

CG: It was a fun period. [laughs] Let me tell you. But over the years, so it's about five years now [1:58:06] since we've separated, I've come through most of my sense of loss and we have a relationship in which- sometimes I think sister is the right- it's a kind of intimacy that isn't just explained by friendship. It's too long, too historic, too intimate. And sometimes she feels like my adult daughter, you know, that she still needs some- while she's- if you met her, you would just think she's lovely and-

WS: yeah

CG: But there are things that she still can't do well and that she can't manage, and so I have a- it's the way you look out for an adult child even though they're adults

WS: Sure, sure

CG: Keep your eye on them? [laughs] You know, so I keep my eye on her that way. But fortunately, and I cherish this, she has remained for me, or has become again, 'cause I think there was a period of time where the hurt was too big for me to be able to do this, sort of my touchstone on the planet. You know, my brother died unexpectedly, it's actually gonna be four years in a month, and my sister called me or- in the morning, my sister in law had called her and then she called me. And I was just beside myself, and my sister got off the phone and said she would call my niece, who lives in town, my sister lived in New Jersey and so did my brother. And I called Susan, you know I mean that's- and then my niece came, took me over and [inaudible] Um, so that feels like you know, still very important to me. [2:00:02] And I've tried to find other partners or lovers, I've not been particularly successful, I did try to, you know, I'm

doing online stuff- at the beginning people were fixing me up with women, you know? And I thought, alright, if people are fixing me up with women, to meet women, and you know, [inaudible]. [2:00:23] So I went online on the straight males- you know, straight site for a while, met a couple of nice men but nothing- and then I went on Match for women and there's a lot of nice people out there, but [laughs] nothing has clicked, so to speak, so here I am single, essentially fine with it, but lonely sometimes. Wouldn't mind having a- a relationship, or at least a good affair. [laughs]

WS: mm [laughs] Yeah, online dating, it's tricky but-

CG: Yeah, no you keep doing it because you know you meet somebody who's nice, or a client recently I had seen years ago when she was first coming out and her mother was giving her a terrible time, and that was about 6 years ago, 7 years ago, she came back for a little short tune-up recently, in a relationship and having some upset about the lack of sexual intimacy in the relationship, they met online, you know, she was sort of telling me the meeting online story, and I know lots of- both straight and gay people who have met people online, so. We keep doing it sort of thinking

WS: It's convenient, it's low stakes, right?

CG: When I was younger, and when Soho was still becoming Soho, it was fairly common for people to have big loft parties, you know, and someone would know somebody who knew somebody who was having a loft party and so everybody would go. And you know it was just sort of, you'd be attracted to whoever looked- or who you end up talking to. So when the people first started to talk about online dating, I thought, oh it's just a version of a big loft party. [laughs]

WS: [laughs] Yeah, but a certain filter is the [inaudible]

CG: Filter, yeah, right. For better or worse, cause that-

WS: exactly

CG: I mean the thing that I find, you know, you're sort of being attracted to a picture. I mean a picture and a person are very different things

WS: right, right. Well that and a way that one can position oneself in terms of cultural interests and-

CG: Yeah, no, [inaudible] I hate that stuff, that's all like, you know, "if I find my clone,

WS: [laughs]

CG: then I'll be happy," well

WS: [laughs] that's true

CG: Yeah, no I'm actually not looking for my clone

WS: The OK Cupid match percentage

CG: Yeah, right. Now Susan is 6 years younger than me, and from the first family of Virginia, WASP family

WS: yeah

CG: She does have curly hair, but she's, her coloring is very different from mine. But you know sort of like, people with dogs, even they start looking like each other, so we both, we didn't share an office but we had an office, she was also a therapist, and we had an office in the same building at some point. But we wouldn't go to work at the same time, so she would usually leave earlier than me. And we were both drinking tea at that point 'cause we were into homeopathy and I would stop at the deli around the corner on the way to the office and order tea in the morning and they would always say one or two, and I always thought that was such a weird question, you know, and say one, and then one morning after a year of this, Susan and I by chance are going to the office together so we stopped together at the deli and Susan orders two teas. Oh! [laughs]

WS: [laughs] [2:03:49]

CG: [Inaudible]. That's why they're asking me! So, anyway. So that's my story. Is there anything else that would...?

WS: Well I mean I think we covered everything that I was hoping to touch on, anything that I should have thought to ask about or didn't, or just, you know random stuff you'd sort of add as an addendum here?

CG: Well just thinking about the gay stuff, you know and also the level of comfort at the high school, and the high school was, I don't know, 90%, at least, white, working-class kids, Catholic, everybody was Catholic, and there were points where you know something would be said. And I never felt like I could confront it. I felt too vulnerable. But I remember saying to other people on the faculty who were friends, you know, you've gotta say something 'cause it's too hard for me to, but that's not okay what so-and-so is saying, you know

WS: right.

CG: So sort of still that distance from my own sense of declaring without hesitation [inaudible]. There was a film, maybe I was teaching at Rutgers already - and even at Rutgers, I'm trying to remember whether, certainly at the beginning I didn't come out to students, I did at NYU but by the time I got to NYU, and that turned out to be a disaster, but there was a film on gay families that I showed.

WS: which film? [2:05:37]

CG: It's an old film, I- it's three vignettes, two men who take in a foster kid, a couple, one of whom is deaf and quite deaf, one is Asian, two lesbians, and the deaf one works in a school for the deaf, and she brings home a black kid who nobody's gonna pick up for some vacation and winds up adopting him. And then the other is a New York City gay father, you know, with two young girls who, you know, he's divorced from his wife and the kids are joint custody kind of stuff, think it's called *Gay Families*.

WS: huh, [inaudible] it doesn't ring a bell

CG: yeah, but in the first vignette, I mean it may be that I never showed it to- I started teaching at Rutgers in like, I always forget, I was in social work school I think from '76 to '78, and then Rutgers was my first job out of social work school. I think I started at Rutgers being- [inaudible] [2:06:51]. But anyway, the first vignette of these two men who—it's like in New Hampshire or something—take in a foster child, a teenager kind of a foster child, and then their encounter with him when they're talking to him about coming to live with them, I forget the language they used, but the one who's talking to him says you know I'm a gay man [inaudible]. And I just remember being so struck by the ease of that, the, you know, I want you to know that we're Jewish and so we're gonna need to know that if you're gonna come live with us. And it was just, I want you to know that you know we're gay men and dada-dada, and for me, the film was interesting and pretty progressive at the time. At that point somebody, I think they were either in New Hampshire, or Rhode Island, [2:07:45] some woman in the legislature was trying to stop gays from being foster parents or something

WS: oh of course.

CG: but in any case, it says to me that my being so struck by the ease with which this man announced this, it was very telling that I hadn't gotten there yet in that sense

WS: And this is at Rutgers-Newark?

CG: No, no, I was in New Brunswick

WS: oh ok

CG: I was at Livingston College

WS: okay

CG: the department of community development had an undergraduate social work program

WS: okay, gotcha, 'cause they had a social work program [inaudible]

CG: Yeah, no they're connected, but this was in-

WS: Okay.

CG: yeah

WS: Gotcha. I mean I think that may cover it, I guess maybe as a logistical question, anybody else you'd suggest that we pursue for interviews for the Queer Newark Oral History Project?

CG: Well, this would take you into a group of people who I suspect you have not connected to. The daughter of somebody I knew, I don't know why I'm- I do know why

WS: I can cut the tape.

CG: Yeah, no, that would be fine, yeah, no it doesn't have to be on tape.