

Interviewer: John Kearns

Interviewee: Randy Wicker

Interview Date: 2003-02-01

Description: Randy Wicker talks about Marsha Johnson's involvement with GAA and Heritage of Pride. He also discusses Marsha's mental health, institutionalization, prostitution, and their living together, as well as their relationship with Sylvia Rivera.

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Disclaimer: This transcription omits vocal fillers (e.g., "um" and "like") for clarity and flow. Sensitive and/or personal information has been redacted.

[00:00:07]	Worker	Hey, if you have any questions let me know.
[00:00:15]	Wicker	Well if you [Unclear] I'll give you thirty dollars but if you don't you'll end up with a pair of Manhattan glass candle sticks in June the 30th. They'll come up, it's not a big deal. Actually, do you want me to, I don't mind, I'll give you the twenty dollars. Do you want me to reimburse you the twenty dollars and when they sell I'll give you ten more dollars? If I get thirty because I don't want you to be strapped for cash.
[00:00:40]	Worker	Yeah, well these are the nice ones [Unclear].
[00:00:42]	Wicker	Well you have nice stuff you could buy, you know, I try to be fair with you when you shop. But you wait for your profits on that but the thing is I'm going out of business and I got cases full of stuff. You know the last thing I had? What was it? No, that other pair of candlesticks I got rid of them, what were they, I remember I knocked them down half price or something. There were a pair over here that was marked like 49.50 and I sold them for 25 or 30 dollars 'cause no one had even looked at them. They weren't Manhattan, were they Manhattan?
[00:01:19]	Worker	No, no, generally Manhattan goes for really really well. I'll see you later.
[00:01:24]	Wicker	Okay is Jimmy here?
[00:01:25]	Worker	Yeah, he can't talk.
[00:01:32]	Kearns	I think you mentioned one time that you had, what was it, audio or video recordings of Marsha talking about Stonewall.
[00:01:39]	Wicker	Yeah.
[00:01:40]	Kearns	You have that?
[00:01:40]	Wicker	Yeah, it was broadcast on D.A.I.
[00:01:43]	Kearns	It was broadcast on D.A.I?
[00:01:43]	Wicker	Yeah.
[00:01:44]	Kearns	When was that? Was that the 1980's sometime?
[00:01:45]	Wicker	No we were all on for, gosh, it must have been, must have been maybe 1989, I think I have it over there somewhere in my drawers.
[00:01:58]	Kearns	Okay, I'd like to listen to that sometime if I can get a chance 'cause I don't really have too much about Marsha talking about Stonewall or that, but let

		me just ask you, during 1980's because obviously that's when—
[00:02:10]	Wicker	That'd probably be the key thing.
[00:02:12]	Kearns	Yeah I would like to—
[00:02:13]	Wicker	Occasionally we'd broadcast out on D.A.I as well.
[00:02:15]	Kearns	Okay. During the 1980's was Marsha involved in any kind of protests or political stuff or community stuff?
[00:02:27]	Customer	Do you have lava lamps?
[00:02:28]	Wicker	No, we don't have lava lamps Jimmy.
[00:02:34]	Kearns	But I saw, I don't know whether it was a videotape that you gave me or just some of you with her and Ilgo when they were protesting the St. Patrick's Day Parade.
[00:02:42]	Wicker	Oh right. Yes, Marsha was one of these people that would always go to them and she was active in GAA.
[00:02:52]	Kearns	Right.
[00:02:53]	Wicker	And that was during the 70s. And she was always going to become involved, I mean she was, I don't even remember the testimony about she became involved with the transvestites for marching in the gay parade, she and some others took over for head of the gay parade and then they voted to let them in, what's the name of the group that runs the gay parade?
[00:03:19]	Kearns	Heritage of Pride.
[00:03:20]	Wicker	Right. The girl who ran that gave a marvelous line where she said that when Marsha P. Johnson joined Heritage of Pride; she knew that they had finally really arrived, somehow Marsha P. Johnson went on board as a personality and figure. So I'm sure Marsha would work at things like helping Heritage of Pride at their tables. Trying to remember what else she would do. Gosh, you know, it's funny because I never... She would join any political action that came up. I mean she was an activist in that sense, but she wasn't someone that would come home and say you know organizing a demo at the courthouse next week. At least, I don't recall. I just dragged her to the OGO thing. Then we got picked, then we got, Al Sharpton was supposed to show up. I say, "Wouldn't you just love to give Al Sharpton a big kiss if he shows up? Marsha, you can't miss this opportunity." [Laughs] And then he didn't show up but we were also there in support of the Irish and we were pictured in The Hoboken Reporter and

		everybody is Irish for a day.
[00:04:44]	Kearns	Right, I think that maybe that was the article that I saw.
[00:04:47]	Wicker	Right. Right.
[00:04:48]	Kearns	And during the 80s when Marsha was living with you, how much—
[00:04:53]	Wicker	Really when she would spend time with Willie in Baltimore, Willie started a gay coffeehouse for people with AIDs and everything and met at the community center every Friday night that he ran for a number of months in the late 80s or early 90s, maybe in the late 90s after he worked it must have been a month before his death. Slowly the disease caught up with him and he became less and less able to focus, started to lose his balance.
[00:05:30]	Kearns	Because Marsha was HIV positive too but did she have health problems from that?
[00:05:32]	Wicker	She was just beginning to get them. She had gotten shingles but that was the only, she had broken out with shingles, I understand that's one of the first signs.
[00:05:43]	Kearns	I think it's one of the autoimmune problems, shingles. Aside from the general... Yeah it makes sense. During this period of time what was, how much contact with Sylvia—
[00:05:53]	Wicker	Jimmy? Jimmy? Is he here?
[00:06:00]	Kearns	The other guy said he was here.
[00:06:01]	Wicker	Christ did he change and run out? Jimmy?
[00:06:05]	Kearns	I did hear the door open.
[00:06:07]	Wicker	Maybe he's around next door.
[00:06:10]	Kearns	How much contact did Sylvia and Marsha have during the 1980s?
[00:06:20]	Wicker	Well I remember, see, Sylvia was my arch enemy. Sylvia after I wrote those nasty articles would fly off the handle at the mention of my name. And then I had the Gay Conservative Alliance, I remember the guy who was head of prostitutes of New York who was in the gay atheist group. When he finally met me and liked me, so I can't believe that I used to talk about those typical gay conservatives like "that awful Randy Wicker," you know what I mean? And he said, "Now I met you." And he discovered I really, was also a john and everything else, you know, had

		been a prostitute in my youth. I mean, I'm one of a few people that had been a prostitute, a john, an adam which gives me a very rounded view of it all. I know it from every angle. But, what was I saying about what was in the end of that?
[00:07:11]	Kearns	The Sylvia—
[00:07:13]	Wicker	Oh right, when I, in 1989 they had a forum at the Gay Community Center and Sylvia was on stage and maybe I think that Sylvia insisted even after we became friends that I had objected to her speaking before me. Tell me when you're leaving Jimmy so I know. Start putting some, put some numbers up for pricing.
[00:07:41]	Worker	I started that.
[00:07:43]	Wicker	Okay, okay well, continue it so when I get through here I'll give you the prices. But anyway, when we ended up on the stage with Sylvia, Sylvia claims that I objected to her speaking before me but Sylvia was drinking at the time probably on drugs as well but she just flew off the handle and began screaming, screaming at me. And I remember standing there on the stage very self confidently just saying over and over again, "You're not," I don't remember if it was, "You're not a normal homosexual," or "You're not a typical homosexual." Sylvia literally left the stage, circled around behind the back of the crowd and went out the community center front door. What I found out later was Marsha P. Johnson followed Sylvia and said "You know Sylvia, Randy has given me a place to live for the last nine years. He really isn't that bad of a person if you just give him a chance and talk to him a bit." And Sylvia said "Talk to that pig? Not in a million years," you know what I mean? She wouldn't hear it. But Marsha tried to be, so I assume that Sylvia also in that period or maybe it was after that, no, there was a period, I think it was during those years, maybe, a certain point in Sylvia's life she went up to—
[00:09:03]	Kearns	Tarrytown?
[00:09:03]	Wicker	Tarrytown.
[00:09:05]	Kearns	That was in the 1980s.
[00:09:07]	Wicker	Right. So, she knew Marsha and they were dear friends but you know because Sylvia was involved with the S.T.A.R. house and it's funny, this is another way Marsha is very clever, they wanted Marsha to be treasurer and she refused. <i>[Laughs]</i> 'Cause she didn't know how. <i>[Unclear]</i> Because you know how treasurers are for an organization that doesn't have any real funding. <i>[Laughs]</i> Some money just disappearing and that was just a tenant building that the guy who ran the porno store paid a

		couple months rent on and they did take in some people and they generally tried to get the kids to go back home if they were from out of town. And that was how Chelsea first met Sylvia and Marsha.
[00:09:49]	Kearns	So Chelsea should be a good source for that period of time.
[00:09:51]	Wicker	Oh yeah Chelsea is excellent for that period of time. Yeah.
[00:09:54]	Kearns	But during the 80s I guess Marsha was living with you and then Sylvia was up in Westchester—
[00:10:00]	Wicker	Right, right, I don't think so, because Sylvia, I know Sylvia talked about going to hit, score crack because when you drive back from flea market she said she used to go off this exit to buy crack and whatever. So I know she was using drugs at a certain period when she was in Tarrytown, when she attempted suicide and Marsha saved her life so they must have been very close connection because she talks about how she was, she took an overdose, did she slice her wrist or take an overdose of pills and Marsha came in and found her and saved her life.
[00:10:33]	Kearns	Yeah, I think I remember, yeah, I can't remember. I also interviewed Frank, in Tarrytown. So he told me about what was going on with Sylvia at that time but he didn't have a lot of contact with Marsha, I thought he might have known Marsha but he really didn't—
[00:10:51]	Wicker	Have you done any searches on the internet for Marsha P. Johnson?
[00:10:54]	Kearns	Oh yeah of course, sure.
[00:10:56]	Wicker	Are there many listings?
[00:10:57]	Kearns	No, not too many.
[00:10:58]	Wicker	How many?
[00:10:58]	Kearns	Well a lot of them are duplicates.
[00:11:02]	Wicker	What engines do you use? Google?
[00:11:03]	Kearns	I use Google, Yahoo, Gopile—
[00:11:05]	Wicker	How many would you say?
[00:11:06]	Kearns	I don't know. It's mostly, well, stuff about that Bad Puppy site that has various things. Transgender house, warriors, Feinberg listings who wrote, so there's different things just tributes to Marsha but there's no real information. And that's why I'm trying to interview everybody who knew

		Marsha, trying to get some real information to gather about Marsha.
[00:11:36]	Wicker	So Feing? Or Fein—
[00:11:36]	Kearns	Feinberg. Feinberg, I think.
[00:11:37]	Wicker	I thought it was Feingold, I don't know. <aybe I'm getting confused with [Unclear].
[00:11:45]	Kearns	Yeah I think it's Feinberg.
[00:11:47]	Wicker	Because I have a book that she autographed to Sylvia in my house.
[00:11:53]	Kearns	“Transgender Warriors,” I think the name is, right?
[00:11:54]	Wicker	<p>Yeah, right. I do hope that one thing I hope that you [Unclear] are tying things together, is that in the end Marsha's effort in 1989 was not successful, but she achieved in death what she didn't achieve in life, and 'cause it was when I sat at the memorial service for Marsha that they said what you do is invite people that met Marsha at certain times in her life, and of course the family came first but then Marsha met Sylvia when she was a 14 year old or 12 year old prostitute in Times Square and took her under her wing, so Sylvia went on the program before I did. And this is a memorial service where I carried the ashes down to the river with the family, so that was the day Sylvia and I met and said to one another for Marsha's sake, for Marsha's sake we have to bury the hatchet for today. And it was the walking along and through the experience of carrying the ashes to the river we commenced talking and that's when Sylvia told me she was living at gay pier which was a homeless encampment that I have an incredible video tape of a tour of gay pier up here. And so I said I always heard about the salt mines and would love to do a video tape because at this point I was getting interested in doing some videotape documentary making. I had these fantasies of getting a show on cable or something so I made an appointment and she dropped by and she never asked for money. I always expected she was one of those people coming by wanting to borrow 5 or 10 or 20 dollars, she never did, but when I did the interview with the pier which was a few months later, she gave this thing like, “Well if you gave me a shot at working at the store,” she says it on the tape. And I thought oh why not, she's gonna work at the store and completely, you know her, I'm gonna give the girl a day's trial and I know she's gonna be a disaster and a complete, you know, no way she could work out at the store. I just gotten Christmas ornaments at that time and I had these dolls that needed stringing so that sounded like womanly work. Oh, Sylvia came in and started working and all the sudden I can tell you when you hire somebody you can tell, the super employee the first day. Most people are, what I call the “super employee,” the ones that are</p>

		self-starting, energetic, they realize they're there to work, if I'm busy talking to you, oh the floor needs sweeping, that needs to be on top, this needs to be put away, let me get up and put a, burned out lightbulb, let me get it and put a bulb in that, that's what Sylvia was like. In the beginning she worked very diligently and much to my surprise. I mean I would have never dreamed she would have started working more and more and more. She ultimately became the manager of my store and my best friend, and then the blizzards came 3 or 4 months later. I couldn't leave them out in the cold so I took Sylvia, I took three of them in from gay pier into my living room and Sylvia lived with me for 6 months. So the Sylvia that wouldn't talk to me a year earlier—
[00:15:17]	Kearns	Was living with you?
[00:15:18]	Wicker	Ends up living with me 6 months after Marsha's death [<i>Laughs</i>], how strange. I really would like to be able to tell that story to so many people. I told it at her funeral but I didn't put in the final line and that was, "May each one of you be so fortunate as to have your worst enemy become your best friend." That was really, that was the punchline that I failed to put at the end of my talk.
[00:15:52]	Kearns	Well it's on it on the tape here.
[00:15:53]	Wicker	Oh good, that's true.
[00:15:55]	Kearns	And speaking of that, you mentioning about you did the interview with Sylvia at the pier, and I know you're closing the store, I know down in the basement you have Marsha's stuff.
[00:16:06]	Wicker	Right, obviously. I have it all here in a box.
[00:16:08]	Kearns	Oh you have it in a box, have you thought about putting it all in the gay archive at the community center?
[00:16:15]	Wicker	I'm going to take it to my apartment for right now and I have all this archival material and my friend and I talked and I signed my new lease and I said, "What happens if I die?" 'Cause I don't have a will and unless my relatives were notified, God knows if they would, so if I die there, apparently the Jewish guy because apparently the rabbi couldn't help, they'd put a couple of notices in the paper but if the relatives don't come forward, the state takes everything. And I wanna set up a will, and I want Ron Adele to be my executor.
[00:16:46]	Kearns	You've talked about it?
[00:16:48]	Wicker	Yes and he agreed.

[00:16:49]	Kearns	Okay, good.
[00:16:50]	Wicker	<p>Actually, I was going to leave him the contents of my apartment. [Unclear] I was originally going to set up my whole estate to fund a position at the gay archives and I may do a little bit of that, I don't know because now I have the cloning thing as well but I'm sure he isn't pro-cloning because he's studying to be a Catholic priest.</p>
[00:17:12]	Kearns	Does it matter whether he's pro-
[00:17:13]	Wicker	<p>It doesn't but I have valuable cloning archives on the first human cloning activist so my cloning archives I consider to be as important or even more important as my gay activist, people don't appreciate that now. I mean back in the 60's we didn't know we were making history. We didn't know that when we were 65 years old people would be coming by and talking to us about stuff that we did when we were 20. You know, who would have ever dreamed it. I mean my classic story is the story of when we picketed the Whitehall Induction Center. I did it as a homosexual living in New York and at that point I probably got tired of [unclear]. I've been active in the fight for sexual freedom. I remember half of them were wobblers but they did agree if you didn't want somebody to serve you should just let them go or don't give them a dishonorable discharge or after that you have to explain if you find someone gay in the service don't put dishonorable discharge which haunts them for the rest of their life. So then it was a question of who the hell wants to serve in the Army. You know somebody who wanted to, the government shouldn't have a right to refuse. So we went down with like 11 picketers, 2 or 3 were heterosexuals, there was a lesbian and myself, Craig Rodwell. You know there was almost as many straights as gays there and it was radical from the [unclear] and we picketed, we gave out two different leaflets-- which I don't remember why they were, mine emphasized "Let a man go, but don't destroy his life," and I forget was, but that must have been the difference that we couldn't agree so we chatted. And that night, Fred Sherry whose a homophobe was actually at [unclear] and he was on the phone and couldn't get any press to come. Nobody came out the induction center to scream at us, no passerbyers got angry and called us "faggots", we were just ignored. It was just like going to the river down here and shotmouth the river and having no response. So that night someone asked me "well Randy how did the demonstration go today?" and we were used to big results and they picketed like the academy at Madison and yes to pornography, they'd make the papers and go up to the public library and say "A little censorship is like a little pregnancy," and make the papers and they'd go to Central Park and take off their tops for women having the chance to go topless, to make the papers. So all that stuff made the papers but we had a total flop. 1988. 1988, that's literally 24 years later, I'm sitting and reading, what do you call it? The list of historical moments</p>

		in history, the gay movement timeline. First demonstration for homosexual civil rights in the United States was April 24th, I think 1964, whatever the date was, at the Whitehall Induction Center. So literally I discovered 24 years after the event that I had made history that day. And I was so flabbergasted, absolutely flabbergasted. And then when I went to the exhibit of “Become Invisible,” which I also have a complete video tape of—
[00:20:17]	Kearns	That was ‘94 right?
[00:20:18]	Wicker	Right, but I was the only one who went through the curators and filmed everything. I have it all on videotape, no one else did, they talked about turning it into a book but I don't think they ever did. But anyway—
[00:20:28]	Kearns	I read they had like a guy like a—
[00:20:31]	Wicker	I recognize a U.S. army, I forget what it said exactly now, poster. And it looked real familiar, and then I realized that that was a poster that I had made. Now I’m very bad at making posters but it was one of those times I had enough time to really work on it and make it look better than I generally succeeded in doing. But, that was my poster that I had carried and what had happened Craig Rodwell had taken the posters home from that demonstration and put them behind his bureau in his apartment, and they had survived.
[00:21:06]	Kearns	Well you definitely had to get a hold of these video tapes and audio tapes and all this stuff out of the archive because—
[00:21:09]	Wicker	Get the video tapes? Yes. There is an archive in Philadelphia that has some of my videotapes. I was gonna get copies and give them.
[00:21:18]	Kearns	Yeah because the archive here in New York, you know—
[00:21:21]	Wicker	And I’ve been giving Brendan Faye various video tapes that I have of his activities. But he doesn’t realize it, when he was injured, attacked in Brooklyn, Mayor Guiliani came to visit him in the hospital and they said they talked about the Catholic church, you know, Brendan being pro-Catholic church so they always look at the negative side of the church not the good things the church does, blah blah blah. And they had this Catholic to Catholic pep talk but it was still remarkable and I said, “Now especially Brendan now,” he’s working and doing documentaries and I said, “They have a documentary where mayor Guiliani comes to visit you in the hospital, gives you incredible stature.”
[00:22:08]	Kearns	Yeah. These documents are important so you got to get them into that archive. Don’t let it just slide because—

[00:22:16]	Wicker	No I won't. I want to make the vision in my will. There's several thousand dollars to be spent making copies of everything, I don't want everything to go to one archive. I want things to be copied and a set of copies to go to the gay archive and another set to go to the New York City archive and a third set to go to the Los Angeles archive.
[00:22:35]	Kearns	Okay, but as long as you send them.
[00:22:36]	Wicker	I want 3 or 4 sets around, you know what I mean?
[00:22:40]	Kearns	But I mean you can put stuff in the archive now, and then still have access to it rather than let it be in your apartment where it can get lost or, you know, could be destroyed.
[00:22:49]	Wicker	Maybe I'll do that.
[00:22:51]	Kearns	It is worth doing it now. Next time im over at the archive I'm going to talk to Rich Wandel to put a little pressure on you because—
[00:22:59]	Wicker	You put pressure on me to write a letter of intention and come by the source so I can talk to him about what I want done, you know. I do intend and I talk to my— you see, it's so hard to understand because I also want to make provisions possible to leave stuff for cloning and have that saved to have a later born twin. But all kinds of problems with that, you can't set up a living trust for a person that doesn't exist. If I set up an estate saying for myself I want to be cloned, the government may outlaw cloning and I'm setting up an estate for a criminal act. So all these things get incredibly—
[00:23:36]	Kearns	Complicated?
[00:23:37]	Wicker	Yeah, I mean getting something done after you die, you're right. Take it now. Do it now.
[00:23:42]	Kearns	Yeah, do it now, so I'm going to talk to Rich when I see him. The next person I'm going to talk to is Bob Kohler. I'm gonna get in touch with him. And then after that—
[00:23:50]	Wicker	You should push Bob Kohler or find what he—
[00:23:52]	Kearns	Find out what he has.
[00:23:54]	Wicker	Because he's 75 or—
[00:23:57]	Kearns	I mean I don't know if he collects things, like you've collected everything or some people don't keep things.

[00:23:58]	Wicker	Well, he's lived in the same apartment for years and years. I have a feeling he does because he was very focused on gay liberation and he's one of these people that hates GAA to this day. You know, there's another guy who lives here on the corner. Oh, what's his name? It's a boy that worked for me, Brian Olsen, lives with him. Did you ever see the tour, it was a great thing they had in windows of the gay tour of different villages put exhibits in their window, during gay pride '94. And he's the one that spoke for Bob Kohler when he was in the hospital. Oh, Jimmy what is Brian's roommate's name? That lives on the corner? Jerry. Jerry Hoosc, Jerry Hoosc. He's somebody who probably also knows—
[00:24:51]	Kearns	Marsha?
[00:24:51]	Wicker	Yeah, Jerry Hoosc he lives above me—
[00:24:53]	Kearns	How do you spell that? H-O-O-S?
[00:24:56]	Wicker	H-O-O-S-, I think. And he lives above the store over here right on the corner.
[00:25:01]	Kearns	So it's on Christopher St?
[00:25:02]	Wicker	He's a short guy, right, he's in his late 50s. And I know, he's one of these people that generally gives— dodges interviewers, he may. I'll give you Brian's, Brian lives with him. His name is Brian Olsen, he's also an employee of mine. Let me see if I have Brian Olsen's e-mail address.
[00:25:31]	Kearns	Oh that's great.
[00:25:31]	Wicker	You know I'll give you that.
[00:25:35]	Worker	I don't think I know Brian though.
[00:25:36]	Wicker	Sure you know Brian. Brian worked here for God's sake. Brian's the queen that quit when I got in a fight with her, she started giving me negative attitudes about hustling. And I told her I don't dig people that knock hustling. Then I said, "Well you're living with Jerry rent-free." He was having sex with Jerry, too, you know, you're hustling. And then he thought I had offended him and then he didn't talk to me. That was the end of our— I really liked him too. It was a shame. Brian Olsen. B-R-I-A-N, Brian New York City.
[00:26:14]	Kearns	B-R-I-A-N
[00:26:15]	Wicker	[email redacted]

[00:26:24]	Kearns	Okay great I'll send him an e-mail and ask him if I can get in contact.
[00:26:27]	Wicker	With Jerry, right.
[00:26:30]	Kearns	Right, that sounds good. And I'll probably, you know, have questions again in the future so I'll just call you later and maybe come over to interview you when it's time. You're keeping the store open until the end of June?
[00:26:40]	Wicker	Yeah. I may not be here the last weekend and I hope so I'll be working full-time at— Look, I haven't lived, you don't understand. I come in here having to deal with all this shit and get rid of all this shit I mean I've taken in \$150 to \$130 a day, I mean my rent, I need \$800 to breakeven. My expenses here are at least \$400 a day. I'm telling you it's a real turkey. I mean I'm starting to sell stuff on Ebay you know I'm— I don't have any choice. I mean I put off retirement, I want to retire at 62, I put money in the market, I lost money in the market. And actually in a way, circumstances, in a way I'm almost glad, I'm really glad that it collapsed because I don't have any choice. In other words, you know, when you need 23,000 to pay your bills and you only take in 15,000 two months in a row you're losing 4 or 5,000. It sounds terrible but the reason I've been able to go on as long as I had is that a lot of this inventory isn't declared or isn't really a business where you really keep inventory. So you know, while I may only took \$10,000 in salary, sometimes you can sell something for \$1,000 and just put the money in your pocket. You know what I mean?
[00:28:14]	Kearns	So pretty much you had it now, are you still gonna work out of your apartment and do things?
[00:28:19]	Wicker	I'm gonna work, I'm gonna go on a speaking tour for cloning, I mean you don't understand my resume, you don't go to the cloning shows, they're hard work. Go to my website and look under visuals and look under personalized in the issues. Let me show you, I think you'd find it very fascinating. I mean I spoken at Boston University, I've given a keynote address for the biotech symposium in Virginia, I've debated at Haverford. I mean those are all together \$400 fees for, to be put up in a hotel and everything in Boston and also in Virginia. And I haven't even tried to get a speakers bureau because I'm so busy here with this dead old stuff and getting my stuff here. And also I want to write a book, I mean I've been saving all this material and been living this adventure, you don't understand, this woman in the news Bridget Bossier. I went to Montreal, I know these people very well. I was on Prior TV, Court TV. Catherine Prior and I, just last month, I went out to CNA which is a cable thing that covers 8 states. I went on, I was on the Walsh show, what's his name, like John Walsh. No he has a show in the mornings, it's a national show. They

		had [unclear] as a guest they had me as a founder of the human cloning foundation but the audience saying, “What do you think of this,” and I said, “They’re all frauds.” And then I really claim my growing fame as a good example. My growing fame, worldwide, you laugh but type in Randolfe Wicker in quotes on google, how many things do you get? How many? How many do you think?
[00:30:02]	Kearns	I don’t know.
[00:30:02]	Wicker	Make a guess.
[00:30:04]	Kearns	25?
[00:30:06]	Wicker	How many do you think Sylvia has? She beats me.
[00:30:09]	Kearns	She beats you? I don’t know.
[00:30:12]	Wicker	Sylvia Rivera beats me big time, I hadn’t done it lately so try it and let’s see what happens. Cause I’ve been trying to close the gap and she’s dead. My goal is to catch Sylvia, this is the big media horse sweepstakes we’re in here now. We’ll go to Google dot net, Google dot net and let’s see how we do. You’re gonna be surprised. [<i>Mumbles and types</i>] Okay so first we will do a google search for Sylvia Rivera, if you put quotes around it—
[00:30:52]	Kearns	Yeah it’ll— it matches just to Sylvia.
[00:30:53]	Wicker	It makes it more specific. S-Y-L-V-I-A R-I-V-E-R-A. Now how many do you think? I know how many she gets.
[00:31:08]	Kearns	I don’t know, 25 or 30.
[00:31:11]	Wicker	Where have you been?
[00:31:11]	Kearns	I don’t do counts.
[00:31:12]	Wicker	You don’t know how famous Sylvia is?
[00:31:15]	Kearns	Let’s see.
[00:31:17]	Wicker	She has 1,660.
[00:31:20]	Kearns	Right, alright let’s see.
[00:31:22]	Wicker	Last time I did it she had 1740, I think she’s dropped. I don’t know why that would be but I could have sworn she was 1740 but maybe I’m wrong. Okay now we will go to the more lesser known who hasn’t spent quite as many years in activism as Sylvia.

[00:31:49]	Kearns	So was Sylvia an inspiration to you to like—
[00:31:51]	Wicker	This is, this is, this is ridiculous cause it says about 560 it was 740 for me.
[00:31:56]	Kearns	Maybe it's under Randy though. Maybe you want to type in R-A-N-D—
[00:32:02]	Wicker	Well if I typed in, no, it's Randolfe as a keyword. If I type in Randolfe, these are about two-thirds of these are mine. But there is a, there are 1240, but then there are some others. See switch from Randolfe to Randy and you see what I mean. So of this, I was up to 740, I don't know how I could have fallen off because I got more media since then. For instance, here's one. This is a full page article. You read Dutch?
[00:32:39]	Kearns	No.
[00:32:39]	Wicker	Column, it says here, I can tell you what this says, it says [Unclear] speaks Randolfe H. Wicker the first human cloning activist in the world. Now here it says Randolfe H Wicker [Unclear] in 1998, human cloning foundation, I mean this just came in the mail. I'm surprised it's, it's only 5— maybe it's because I put the quotes around it.
[00:33:09]	Kearns	Yeah, maybe.
[00:33:10]	Wicker	Let me see if I do it just as Randolfe Wicker, you got me upset because I was—
[00:33:13]	Kearns	Randy?
[00:33:15]	Wicker	[Unclear] No, Randy? I never use Randy, only Randolfe.
[00:33:18]	Kearns	Really?
[00:33:18]	Wicker	No, no. Randolfe is a key search because I spelled Randolfe differently than other people.
[00:33:24]	Kearns	Yeah I see that.
[00:33:27]	Worker	Randy I want to be, I'm sorry to bother you.
[00:33:28]	Wicker	What?
[00:33:28]	Worker	How much are the hanging, different color, they look like ribbons?
[00:33:35]	Wicker	Where are they? The ones that are spinners? Plastic?
[00:33:38]	Worker	Yeah. Yeah.

[00:33:39]	Wicker	\$6.50 for the short ones and the biggest, longest one over there is \$15.
[00:33:47]	Worker	This one here is \$15?
[00:33:48]	Wicker	You know it's funny because now at least I went up to 707. But they're all about me. I don't know why it would find more.
[00:33:58]	Kearns	More without the quotes?
[00:33:59]	Wicker	Yeah. See look and these are from all over. I mean they're not just, some of these are, are, are, are Gay Today but let me go up to some of these. I have some say that are very funny.
[00:34:13]	Kearns	Oh yeah.
[00:34:15]	Wicker	I didn't know NewYorkPost.com, oh this is one I never, I don't have in my computer yet. But you see this here, translate this page, this is so funny when they translate these things. Oh it's just, what is it they call me? A fossil. One says "Randolfe Wicker, a millionaire" and the other says "Randolfe Wicker, a fossil, who defends the cloning of human beings. How many nowadays defend a cloning of human beings with reproductive and probably much more than the ones already we declare 'pro'. Enough to see for this. Let's see, human— let's see where they say me.
[00:35:03]	Kearns	You know how to search for your own name?
[00:35:05]	Wicker	How do you do that?
[00:35:05]	Kearns	It's easy. See here, go to "Edit." This will help you out a lot. Hit "Edit," "Find on this page."
[00:35:12]	Wicker	Oh wow.
[00:35:13]	Kearns	Okay hit that. Go to the little box and write in "Wicker." Hit "Enter," find "Next" if you want to. It brings you to it. Then you can hit "Find next" again, so that way instead of having to read all this stuff and see you can hit "Find next" again. Okay there you are again and there you are again. So if you particularly looking for your own name or somebody else's name you don't have to be looking through all of this.
[00:35:49]	Wicker	There's my picture!
[00:35:49]	Kearns	Finish searching so Wicker doesn't appear but if you were looking for something else. Just remember on any document you can go to edit—
[00:35:58]	Wicker	Oh I didn't know that, that saves me a lot of time.

[00:36:00]	Kearns	Yeah you're not wasting your time reading all of this text and you can miss things.
[00:36:07]	Wicker	Where is that from? What's this say?
[00:36:08]	Kearns	That's Portuguese.
[00:36:09]	Wicker	Is that Portuguese?
[00:36:10]	Kearns	Yeah.
[00:36:15]	Wicker	Oh. I didn't know, let me see The New York post oh I didn't know that this had ever made the web. I didn't look for it on the web. Oh, this is fabulous. This was a full page about me in the New York Post. It's very short here. And it mentions the gay rights thing in passing.
[00:36:43]	Kearns	Once again just hit "Edit," put in your name—
[00:36:45]	Wicker	This is all about me. This is a profile of me.
[00:36:49]	Kearns	Right, but if you wanted to see if there's something about "gay" you would just hit "Edit," put in "gay," and then find that rather than search for the word. See I made your life easier. Alright I'm going to have to go.
[00:37:00]	Wicker	Okay.
[00:37:08]	Kearns	But I'll keep in touch and when I need to talk to you again.
[00:37:13]	Wicker	What are you doing your doctorate on?
[00:37:15]	Kearns	I'm doing my doctorate on architecture.
[00:37:17]	Wicker	Oh.
[00:37:18]	Kearns	But I just—
[00:37:19]	Worker	Sorry to bother you.
[00:37:19]	Wicker	Yeah?
[00:37:20]	Worker	Jenna wants to know about the reproduction of the sponce over here, with the long shade you know.
[00:37:28]	Wicker	Okay, just a minute. I'll be there.
[00:37:32]	Kearns	Okay, I'm going to shut this off now.

[00:47:20]	Kearns	I'm going to leave this here, is that alright?
[00:47:22]	Wicker	Yeah sure.
[00:47:24]	Kearns	This is an interview with Randy Wicker on February 1st, 2003. Let me put that there, this has pretty good sound. Before we even get started to ask questions, I listed, if you remember a couple of years ago you had me go through a box on Marsha's stuff, I went through and I listed all sorts of people from that information and from other, so I wondered if you could just sort of look at this list with me and if any of these people you know or know how to get in touch with them. Like this is Alvin Baltrop.
[00:48:14]	Wicker	Oh, Alvin Baltrop.
[00:48:16]	Kearns	Yeah, did a photograph of Marsha.
[00:48:18]	Wicker	No I don't. I mean if she used to work, Jorge Calvo?
[00:48:24]	Kearns	Yeah, I see him around, I used to see him around.
[00:48:26]	Wicker	I'm not sure— are you sure that's the way to spell his name?
[00:48:29]	Kearns	Yeah Jorge Calvo?
[00:48:32]	Wicker	Amber is dead. Marsha's cat Ashes [Unclear]. I don't know that Bambi was at Stonewall. I doubt it because the story of Bambi is that she was a very beautiful young queen who had an older mother who turned into an alcoholic that she aged. And she didn't have, as I recall the story of her life, she just became a terror on Christopher Street before her death. I mean believe me you would see her and she would threaten to smash up and she caused scenes constantly and she was a real sort of living menace. You know, I don't know the Penny Arcade.
[00:49:12]	Kearns	Yeah, this, this next grouping is Hot Peaches Review—
[00:49:18]	Wicker	They're still around, the people that run it the New York, what's that theater over there, New York, 2nd Avenue, around 10th or 11th street.
[00:49:27]	Kearns	Oh, Theater of the New City?
[00:49:27]	Wicker	Yeah. Those people, Green, Green is their name, they would be able to probably put you in touch with a lot of those people.
[00:49:34]	Kearns	I've actually interviewed a number of the people on this list here.
[00:49:36]	Wicker	Oh you did?

[00:49:37]	Kearns	Yeah.
[00:49:38]	Wicker	I mean Jimmy Camicia, he, he, he lives over here on 6th Avenue.
[00:49:42]	Kearns	He still does, okay. I haven't looked for him but he's on my list.
[00:49:46]	Wicker	International Chrysis in Hot Peaches is deceased. I don't know these other people, Mark Kennedy, Michael Lynch.
[00:49:56]	Kearns	Yeah, any of the Hot Peaches crowd I can get in touch with all of those people. And then you gave me Norma's number, I'm gonna get in touch with her. I'm gonna go to Elizabeth and hopefully interview her so that;s the family, then if you just go to the next page.
[00:50:19]	Wicker	She's home all the time though with arthritis so you should really get over there because I don't think she's gonna go back to work but she may.
[00:50:24]	Kearns	Oh okay yeah, I'll give her a call. Lieutenant Fahey of the 6th precinct, is he still around?
[00:50:30]	Wicker	I don't know.
[00:50:33]	Kearns	Okay. Because he was the one who sent a letter—
[00:50:34]	Wicker	Right.
[00:50:35]	Kearns	About Marsha's case.
[00:50:36]	Wicker	But he was put in charge of Marsha's case when it got too hot to hand in. I did not only a letter but I took over the tape, which I thought was a tape. I made a copy of it, thank god, but I had interviewed someone that said he had seen people harassing Marsha. Right and I left it there saying, "This is a solution to a murder." Don't you know they lost the tape? I don't know if that was mentioned in my letter, but of course I had a copy so I had been able to make another copy of it. I mean, what if it had been the only copy? Unbelievable, you know?
[00:51:04]	Kearns	Oh, I know. Maybe you know [Unclear].
[00:51:08]	Wicker	I don't know.
[00:51:09]	Kearns	Okay because there was a poem that he wrote for Marsha in 1974 or so, he as of 10 years ago lived on 2nd Street but I'll find him. Jeremiah Newton? He was [unclear] a detective at—
[00:51:24]	Wicker	He's still around. He's in the housing over, he's still active with one of the, was active at one of the Stonewalls but he's over at the public housing

		projects passed Avenue G in Manhattan. I don't—
[00:51:44]	Kearns	Did he know Marsha very well?
[00:51:47]	Wicker	He tells a story that when some bar in East Village wouldn't allow Blacks he went over and broke in the door with I guess GAA, breaking in the door because they were discriminating against Black people and Marsha gave him some great—, did you have a videotape of her funeral service?
[00:52:04]	Kearns	Yes.
[00:52:06]	Wicker	Because he speaks in that and I think he tells that story in there, it's hard to hear but you have to listen to it.
[00:52:11]	Kearns	Yeah I need to listen very carefully to the tape.
[00:52:18]	Wicker	I don't know, I never knew Michael Swergo. Phil Dobbs, he's still around. He's here in the village. He was the one that marched with us. Bob Kohler is still here in the village, he should come in because he—
[00:52:32]	Kearns	I did, I talked to him at Sylvia's funeral and I told him I would eventually contact him.
[00:52:37]	Wicker	Well you should hurry, because he is 75 or 76 years old, you know what I mean?
[00:52:41]	Kearns	But he's looking pretty good in health.
[00:51:41]	Wicker	Susan Willard's very familiar but I don't remember was she, was she, she was a straight woman of some sort.
[00:52:49]	Kearns	I don't know.
[00:52:51]	Wicker	Was she the one, somebody put some photographs of Marsha up at the, might still be hanging over there at that, what's that place called? The duplex on the corner of Christopher and West 7th St. Chelsea, Chelsea is now out of Transy House, let me get you her new number. Transy House, she was involved with— She'd be a very good one because she was one of the ones taken in by Marsha and Sylvia. And so when Sylvia had nowhere to stay and was living with me, she met Chelsea at some NYU, and ended up moving out with Chelsea in Brooklyn. And Chelsea's house was very famous. It had been on, among other things, I never saw Jerry Springer but I can imagine how that was but, I wonder if that [Unclear] was in their area. I didn't see the show, I only heard about it, at least you think they'd let you know or give you a copy of the show. Let me find Chelsea's number before I forget that.

[00:54:03]	Kearns	Chelsea goes way back to the early 70s with the.
[00:54:06]	Wicker	Yeah Chelsea goes way back to the 60s because she, [<i>Mumbles</i>]. My book is just integrating so.
[00:54:24]	Kearns	Maybe get the [Unclear].
[00:54:24]	Wicker	Huh? Oh please, and have my whole life wiped out and have a big crash.
[00:54:35]	Kearns	Well if she's at Transy House.
[00:54:36]	Wicker	She's at Transy house, you have their number?
[00:54:37]	Kearns	Yeah, because I used to call Sylvia there.
[00:54:41]	Wicker	Okay, fine. Okay right, okay.
[00:54:42]	Kearns	Alright so then there's Mama Jean-Devente.
[00:54:45]	Wicker	Yeah she's somewhere in Connecticut. She talked on and on and on at Marsha's memorial service, just wouldn't shut up. Gave me the idea of how to dominate Craig Rodwell's memorial service. She was given 5 minutes, she took 35 minutes.
[00:55:02]	Kearns	She's somebody who goes way back with Marsha?
[00:55:06]	Wicker	I'm not— I'll tell you, I don't like Mama Jean because I'll give you an example. Mama Jean was very active in GAA and when they all turned to Stonewall Parade, I was giving people posters of Marsha or even, that must have been '94, and she was driving the car and Queen Allison, you know her various names, do you know who Queen Allison so? What's her other name, her given name. She's the one that has the Stonewall car that has a very murky and says lots of things that would be controversial things.
[00:55:44]	Kearns	It's controversial whether or not she was there.
[00:55:46]	Wicker	Yeah and she had a whole patchy background on the gay movement and the imperial court claims she swindled them out of money and the tenants association claimed she swindled them out of money. But I will give her this, she took Marsha's sign, she was a true lover of Marsha and put it on the aerial of her car at the parade and Mama Jean-Devente threw it on the back floor of her car, so I don't— for someone who dominated Marsha's memorial but then behaved that way too, it was like she was using Marsha. She's somewhere in Brooklyn, I don't know— Do you have a phone number for him? He's still around.

[00:56:27]	Kearns	No, I don't. It's in Brooklyn.
[00:56:27]	Wicker	I think he's in Brooklyn but I found out at Beats the Saddles because I know he hung up his art up there. Now, M.T Graham.
[00:56:41]	Kearns	Is there like a particular bartender at Beats the Saddles? Do you know?
[00:56:46]	Wicker	No I don't, he might be one of these places of operation or maybe he had the portrait of her hanging in there.
[00:56:51]	Kearns	I think you're right.
[00:56:51]	Wicker	I might be wrong.
[00:56:54]	Kearns	No, I think you're right.
[00:56:57]	Wicker	Bob Kohler might know who he is.
[00:56:59]	Kearns	Okay yeah, each person I talk to I go through this list.
[00:57:00]	Wicker	M.T. Graham who lives in Staten Island, actually the fella in the back room John Helicker might know his current phone number. Marcus Man, oh, he is just somebody who just was a boy who's probably now dead from drugs. He was someone that was there. I don't know Susan Calvin. I don't know who Shika Van Cal was.
[00:57:36]	Kearns	Okay yes somebody said that she died so, I have it in my notes here.
[00:57:42]	Wicker	Okay. Vincent Machado.
[00:57:46]	Kearns	Yeah he was described as a long term friend but Michael Lynch of the Hot Peaches knows who he is.
[00:57:50]	Wicker	Oh he does, okay. Marcia Peach, she now lives in Florida, she didn't—that might be interesting. She lives in, where do they dive for the— Tarpon Beach, Florida. I don't know if I have her current phone number for her, she's somebody I've wanted to get in touch with for a long time. So she volunteered and went to Russia as a peace worker and I know she bought a house but then she rented out her house because she fell at 65 or 70, she still had something to give, plus they were going to send her to Africa as a— [redacted address]. I mean I have her old number which I'm sure is long since no good, [redacted number] but she probably still owns that house.
[00:58:58]	Kearns	Okay I can try to track her down, in fact I'm going to be in Tampa the first week of March so if she was down around there I can probably even talk to her.

[00:59:06]	Wicker	Well you should call her and talk to her on the phone.
[00:59:06]	Kearns	Oh yeah yeah.
[00:59:08]	Wicker	Because what's interesting is she was a middle class women who came in and got to know Marsha and her daughters. Her daughters met Marsha just like George [unclear]'s family. People would come to the house to see George and they would fall in love with Marsha. You know what I mean? And they would, Marsha had a way into everybody's heart. You would have to check with Saint Mary's thrift shop about him.
[00:59:33]	Kearns	Okay yeah, they were just mentioned in one of the—
[00:59:35]	Wicker	[Unclear] in that riot, she was just someone upstairs. I don't think she would know anything more than she [Unclear] Hoboken, of course she still lives upstairs in [Unclear] closet number one. Margot Hower Howard died. She died.
[00:59:49]	Kearns	She's deceased, I know. Barbara Ashida, was she the one who photographed Marsha in front of Raul's?
[00:59:52]	Wicker	I don't know. I don't know if Raul's still exists but they might, let me tell you.
[00:59:57]	Kearns	Okay that's good. Okay yeah that's helpful. Each time I talk to somebody I get a little more of the— and then I just—
[01:00:07]	Wicker	How much do these things cost?
[01:00:09]	Kearns	What, the recorder?
[01:00:10]	Wicker	Yeah.
[01:00:11]	Kearns	I think it was about \$25.
[01:00:13]	Wicker	And that's all?
[01:00:14]	Kearns	Yeah. It's actually got good sound quality. Yeah not bad. I had one that was about \$15 that was kind of scratchy and then I got this one and it's been pretty good so. Okay, we don't have to finish today, if you have other things you have to do, I'll come back. I'm just around the corner anyway.
[01:00:34]	Wicker	You picked a bad time because if he leaves I don't have anyone. Are you here Cole?
[01:00:41]	Worker	I'm here.

[01:00:42]	Wicker	Call Hoboken and tell—
[01:00:43]	Worker	He is. He's on his way.
[01:00:44]	Wicker	Oh he is, okay.
[01:00:46]	Kearns	Okay, why don't we start with— I've done an outline of Marsha but why don't we start with the year that you met Marsha. Do you remember what year it was?
[01:00:59]	Wicker	I think it was 1980.
[01:01:02]	Kearns	1980, okay.
[01:01:03]	Wicker	I might be wrong on that but I just remember, yeah I think it was because Willie and Marsha entered my life at the same time and I have our old Christmas letters.
[01:01:11]	Kearns	That's alright I mean just a general idea 1980?
[01:01:14]	Wicker	Yeah because somehow I remember when she died in '92, I could say she lived with me for over a decade so it must have been '80. I don't think it was '70s or '81.
[01:01:25]	Kearns	Okay, what were the circumstances when you first met her?
[01:01:27]	Wicker	Well, I had adopted this street boy who really turned out to be, he was a hustler, brilliant but illiterate. Comes from an abusive family, learned that and he had become my adopted son for the next decade, name was Willie. When I first met him he was actually a dancer at the Gaiety Theatre which was a hustling bar. And he had been a head of gay youth in Baltimore and he knew I had been an old gay activist. So, he came by where many of the boys [Unclear] never bothered on coming by because of the gay activism connection. To make a long story short he ended up moving in with me at a very reasonable rent because he was a delight and he'd make me laugh all the time, you know there was a very brief fleeting sexual interest I had in the beginning that quickly ended. And one night he said to me, it was very cold, it was like 10 degrees out, he said, and he told me when he met me about hanging out with Marsha on Christopher Street. And I had met Marsha when she had been rescued at the mental hospital by the GAA, they had gone in and rescued her.
[01:02:35]	Kearns	Oh so was it Ward's island?
[01:02:36]	Wicker	Yeah somewhere she'd gone, I think Bellevue wherever, they had scared her out and I mean my impression of Marsha was that she was just a spacey street queen, you know what I mean? So I said to Willie, I said, "I

don't think that's somebody you really want to associate with right?" So after Willie moved in, he said, "It's awfully cold out," and it was. It was like 5 to 10 degrees. He said, "Would it be alright if Marsha just came here and slept on the floor? Marsha likes to sleep on the floor." Now when I heard that statement, I thought what a, it was really manipulative, very clever. I thought, you know what a story to tell somebody that Marsha likes to sleep on the floor. So I said, "You sure she won't steal?" "Oh no, I know Marsha wouldn't steal." So Marsha came in and began that night to sleep on the floor and lived there for the next 12 years. I remember David, [Unclear] telling me also became a great fan of Marsha, especially when she was dying he came in, we picked him off the floor when he fell off the couch and all this stuff. David said his favorite people in life were Marsha, Dr. [Unclear], and myself. I thought the four of us in a row would be about the strangest crew you've ever saw, right? Anyway, he told me when he walked into my living room the first time and saw Marsha sitting on the couch, he said, "My blood ran cold." I mean that was the horror of which people, and when I tell people because Marsha would come to the village and I remember telling some people that Marsha's living with me now. And middle class gay white males would say, "Oh Randy, you have such a sense of humor." They laughed. I remember one somebody in particular, it was so funny because I said, "No, she's really very nice and very sweet and helps around the house and blah blah blah, a lot of fun." And my God we literally walked out of the store and stood in front of the store and about that time we heard this loud, screaming and screeching down at the corner of Christopher and Hudson and there Marsha is in drag pulling up her dress or reading somebody in a loud tacky voice. I mean just the behavior that makes you want to shudder and hide your face after I just sat and told these people what a nice person Marsha was as they sat there with big eyes not believing me, and then we go outside and see Marsha acting in this absolutely outrageous manner. Which is something that, I had this one guy come up to me when I had my stand and he told me he once saw Marsha pull a knife on somebody. I said, "What?" And he said it was this queen, she was having a fight with a street queen and he said she pulled out this knife that was, I don't know, 6 or 8 or 10 inches long, just threatening. I don't know if it was a showdown between the two queens or whatever, I don't think it was at him I think it was at somebody else. Anyway he came over because I had my table about Marsha's murder and sat there and told me this story about how terrible she really was and then gave me a \$10 or \$20 donation. You know, it's just sort of very interesting. He goes out of his way to tell me this story and I said, "Well, I don't know what the circumstances were but I know that Marsha," but then again Marsha would go through periods where she was mentally ill. I mean, which I didn't believe until the first 6 or 7 years she lived with me. I thought this mental illness was just a crock of bologna that she fed to the government to get a monthly check. And when you talk to Norma, they'll tell you, they might call her Mikey, was a social security

		cheat. They called her to her face, “You’re just a social security cheat.”
[01:06:10]	Kearns	She was on disability kind of?
[01:06:12]	Wicker	Yes because they were middle class, Marsha would be called down for an SSI interview check up and have to recertify every two years, she just put on her drag outfit and most outlandish drag outfit and go down, I mean the social worker couldn’t fill out the forms quick enough to really recertify her for SSI. [Unclear] in charge of the apartment.
[01:06:33]	Kearns	And this was years into living with her?
[01:06:34]	Wicker	Yes, it was 6 or 7 years later. I’m in Florida and I find out that she’s gone over and she’s lit candles on the balcony and she spray painted my kitchen, she smashed up all this wonderful glassware that I had gotten at flea markets over the years, hundreds of dollars worth of glassware. And she had actually gotten to the point she was about to throw some bronzes off the balcony and fortunately somebody, the manager of the store here, had the keys and lived nearby. And somehow they got over there and they got Marsh. Marsha went from the apartment, she was wearing a red feather boa, and she went over to David’s apartment and knocked on the door and David wouldn’t open the door and she’d say, “Is Mr. Combs here? Is Mr. Combs here?” And it’s funny because a week later, several days later, when we came flying back from Puerto Rico, we could see red feathers all the way from along the street from [Unclear] to 2 or 3 blocks over, we kept walking along and there was bright little red feathers here and there all along on the gutter and on the street. It was amazing there was a whole trail of Marsha. She finally, they got the keys away from her, locked her out in the hall, got her out of the apartment and locked the keys away from her and that point she pulled the fire alarm. And when the fire department came she told them that God told her to pull the fire alarm and that’s how she ended up in the mental hospital in Hoboken. I think that’s the way, the first time I believe, that I met Norma.
[01:07:59]	Kearns	Oh okay.
[01:08:03]	Wicker	That was years after.
[01:08:05]	Kearns	Do you think this behavior was anyway related to you leaving?
[01:08:07]	Wicker	It could have been because what I did was I bought \$250 worth of groceries and she proceeded to come down to the village with, I understand, shopping bags full of cans of groceries and throw them at the bus. I mean she obviously had become unglued, you know, and I mean it was a real disaster and that was the only time, the first time that I had finally realized Marsha actually was mentally ill. Up until that point I

		<p>would have told you she isn't mentally ill at all. She's as sane as you and I. And after that, that must have been '86 or '87, same one as my one of my Christmas letters, and it was after David was already sick so it must have been '86 '87, '88. After that, it became more frequent. It got to where we realized she decided we hired somebody to follow her. She announced she was starting to go through a mental breakdown, they stay up for like 22 hours straight and they start rummaging through drawers and they don't make sense when they talk. So she'd stay awake and then she'd go to sleep and we'd thank God and we'd go to sleep and she'd be up an hour later and you'd have to watch her because she may burn down the house or anything else. So she decided she wanted to go to Atlantic City to see Donald Trump. I understand she got to Atlantic City and walked in the entrance of the Trump Plaza towers and she got about 6 feet inside the door and 4 guards beat her and just jumped her. And she ended up at the Salvation Army, because I had to talk to them at the shelter or whatever and I paid her way back to the city. I don't think she got any medication [Unclear] by herself because I know we were terrified and we were so glad when we heard she gotten on a bus to the city. It was just a nightmare because another time she had a mental breakdown she'd just start wandering the city and come back home all beaten up, false teeth had been, it's amazing that people, and I don't think she did anything to attract it,.I think it was being in our society. I remember driving down the valarie and seeing middle class looking guys in fairly new cars jump out and beat up a derelict,I mean a derelict walking down Valarie and I couldn't understand what would motivate anyone to pick up the weak and disabled. But apparently it's very dangerous to walk around in a big city in a disoriented mental state because she was— And one time, she told me one of her experiences that was relevant to her final death that she had looked into the river and saw her father at the bottom the river. And I don't know whether her father, if she had never know him or whether he had died when she was very young, I'm not sure about the details on that. But that tied into the fact that she ended up, I think it's a 50/50 call, I really think it's a 50/50 call but still doesn't excuse the police for not doing more investigation, you know what I mean? She couldn't thought she was gonna walk on water or something. She could have hopped into the river to get away from people who were cornering her and being abusive because they had been harassing her. And in those days the drug dealers held out, hung out in that park all the time down there. So she was seen alive at 11 o'clock at night up at, what is that bar where they have sex and everything, [Unclear] something up on 20 or 21st street. I forget what the name of it was. What?</p>
[01:11:38]	Employee	What's the best price on this one, \$249 for the whole thing?
[01:11:43]	Wicker	\$199. You'll never see another one as long as you live, even if you live to be 160 years old. I guarantee it. It's the only one I've ever seen in 26

		years in the antique business. I mean, ever seen, not seen, not passed by it, and I never show one on sale at an antique show or anything.
[01:12:12]	Kearns	I just want to go back to when Marsha first moved in, were you aware of her connection with Stonewall and S.T.A.R. House and all that?
[01:12:21]	Wicker	S.T.A.R. House, yes. S.T.A.R. House, yes. S.T.A.R. House.
[01:12:24]	Kearns	So you knew that before she moved in that she was—
[01:12:26]	Wicker	No no, not before she moved in.
[01:12:27]	Kearns	I was just wondering what you know—
[01:12:29]	Wicker	Oh no I only knew her, I only knew her as a news reporter for one time seen her and written a news story about her for GAY about how the GAA people had rescued this Black drag queen from a mental hospital because GAA's political take on it was that they locked up Marsha. Of course, I would have been the same way. Knowing Marsha and how she was most days, if someone had come to me and told me, "Have you heard? They picked up Marsha and put her in a mental hospital." I would have been right there with the GAA crowd steering her out of there. And she just struck me as harmless but spacey.
[01:13:02]	Kearns	So like eccentric, kind of thing?
[01:13:02]	Wicker	Just spacey, spacey is the only word. She was just a little bit spaced out. It's not saying anything profound, not being, not actually not being the way I got to know her later when she moved in with Willie very quickly. Because when she moved in, she was extremely intelligent and extremely sharp and extremely witty and just had a way. I remember two things that stand out in my mind. We went to visit my mother and we took this huge wooden bowl which I since gotten back since my mother went back and sold for \$2,500, but we brought it and we hung it in the kitchen but we sat there with the family in my mother's house and suddenly it's 11 o'clock and it's time to go home because we got to get the plane in the morning or something. And Willie says, "Oh we don't, we don't, we can't hang the bowl now." And Marsha has been very quiet because she realized in this middle class family, you couldn't hoot and holler about cooking and said "Of course you can." So of course, you know I mean Marsha literally just, the one thing she said that evening we ended up hanging the bowl, which was quite the adventure because I'm holding these rubber gloves and I tell people [Unclear] to turn the power off for the switch and it was a double switch, so when one thing on the switch went off, it was [Unclear] side of the building, I assume that both switches were on the same circuit. So I merrily hung the bowl and I'm putting, I'm connecting the wires to the

		dimmer I put in for it. And when I touched the wire to the dimmer it sparked, so all this time I was dealing with live wires and not realizing it. So that was very interesting and the other thing, what was the other thing that was, she was very real. Like, there was this middle cross-eyed queen named “Pogo” and as I got older—
[01:15:00]	Kearns	Pogo?
[01:15:01]	Wicker	Pogo, with a name from the comic strips or something. Is he cross-eyed and short, strange looking, short. I think it’s Pogo. Pogo?
[01:15:10]	Kearns	I have to look.
[01:15:12]	Wicker	Pogo, or maybe some other name from one of the children's stories I wasn’t familiar with, one of the semi cartoon characters. But anyway, he came by the store and I used to drink every night, David was sick, and he told me his parents owned an antique shop and knew I was interested in antiques. And this boy was only 18 or 19 years old but extremely homely. I mean he was a little bit cross-eyed and he was short, he was just not in any way attractive. But I liked him as a person and he knew how to flatter so he’d sit there and have a cocktail and I’d tell him to go up to the Gaiety or I’d go uptown, pay some boys for sex or something. He’s like, “Oh Mr. Wicker, who could think of charging you for sex?” You know what I mean? And then of course he’d want to borrow \$5 or \$10. And I said I got this thing going on I really hate to spoil his good company, he was fun and he had a certain interest in antiques and I was looking at this boy not as a hustler but as somebody who was homely, younger person that I actually might have in my delusions. At that time I must have been, well I think I was only in my mid 40s, might actually have a chance right? One night Marsha came home and did, what I call, fed me a reality sandwich. And she said, “Oh I saw Pogo on the street.” Pogo or if you think of some other name that starts with P, some real short and cross-eyed. Not necessarily comics, he could be one of those nursery stories or one of those stories they tell children. One of those, you know, Mother Hubert in the shoe characters. Anyway, I said, “Oh you did?” She said, “Yeah.” She said, “I asked him, what do you think of Mr. Wicker? And he told me, “Oh he’s much too much of a troll for me, I’d never go to bed with him in a million years.” Well, I mean, reality sunk in. She was very good in that way.
[01:17:35]	Kearns	She was trying to protect you? Was this her way of just telling you what’s going on?
[01:17:39]	Wicker	Oh yeah, yeah. She was always very honest and she had a way, she had a way of, it’s called “reading.” She was so clever when she would read people. And, she would read you in a way that you would laugh and it

		wouldn't hurt but you know what she was saying was true. I have her on tape, on video tape here in the store, talking about, "Hurry up now, we're having a party!" And I had just done a thousand dollar sale, we'd close the store to have a birthday party I think for Willie or something, I have that on tape.
[01:18:12]	Kearns	You might have given me that tape of the party in the store.
[01:18:15]	Wicker	Yep. And she says, "Hurry up because Mr. Wicker is losing hundreds of dollars an hour." I think I say [Unclear] hundreds of dollars an hour, I just did eight hundred dollars in half an hour, I'm losing thousands of dollars an hour, but you know what I mean? She was just really, she gave Willie her gift and he looks over at the camera and says, Howard in the back he's very cheap and has good taste so inevitably he'd give me something like a deco clock but it squeaks so much I had to spent \$35 to get rid of the squeak. He'd give you stuff that's beautiful but it'd have this crack or a chip, there was something wrong with it. Willie on that tape is reading some of the way Marsha would be, "This is a gift from Mr. Helicker, where's the crack or the chip, where's the damage?" But she was very real and she'd say things like, she'd live in the moment and she's been arrested and she knew how to fight the system because when they arrested her, she'd get out of paying a \$100 fine. "I'm not paying no \$100 fine." well, if you didn't pay a \$100 fine they'd send you right to Rikers Island for 30 days. So she'd get out of the 30 days on Rikers Island and she would, these boys would be coming on to her and I don't know if they had, I don't think they had gay segregation then. And they'd say, "What do you mean us pay you for a blowjob?" Or something like that, and she'd say, "Oh honey you're gonna pay for it if you go to bed with me." And then she'd do these things like wash their socks for a cigarette and stuff like that, you know what I mean? Apparently she liked, she told me when she'd come out of jail, she knew all the people in jail, she said, "Oh I saw my friends in jail, you wouldn't like him Mr. Wicker." And I said, "Why not?" She said "Because they're in jail for shoplifting and all they talk about is how they can't wait back out so they can go back out shoplifting again." [Laughs]
[01:20:09]	Kearns	She would be arrested and not go to an institution?
[01:20:12]	Wicker	Right right. She would not pay the \$100 fine so the judge would sentence her to jail for 30 days and just about time we resigned to her being in jail for 30 days, the system has a certain intelligence about it. Maybe it was over her crying or whatever but inevitably they let her out after 8 or 9 or 10. Fact of the matter is, that's the way to fight the system. Marsha wasn't going to give them \$100 of her money, so they'd send her to jail. What did they spend? \$30 or \$60 or \$100 a day keeping her in jail, whatever it costs at Rikers and after 8 or 10 days they realized, they knew that this

		<p>queen was harmless. And then I told you the story about Morty Mansburg didn't I? That Marsha after she quit hustling, as she got older she'd only be able to turn tricks like one blizzard day she'd be out there in a fur coat and all. Once I got her a new fur coat, the cop took it off her back because they didn't like seeing a drag queen in a fur coat. It was only a fur coat. I paid like \$20 for it, but it was horrible how they tore it off her back. But, she would say she was just going out to see how the girls are doing, check it out because she enjoyed the environment. So she would go up to 16th Street or 15th Street, I think they still hang out there. The transvestite hookers would hang out and she'd say I'm just going up to see what's going on, chat with the girls and catch up on the news and see what's going on. Well, she was apparently somewhere like that I think outside of a housing project or something. And she wasn't hooking, and she wouldn't lie to me so she really wasn't hooking. The cops came by and said, "You better move it along. You better move it along." And she continued to sit there on the stoop. Now Willie said that she used to go out in drag and sit out on stoops just to get attention. I said to Willie, "Why do you think Marsha gets dressed up?" He said, "Because when she goes out dressing normal, no one pays attention to her. When she puts on a dress all of a sudden she's the center of attention." So maybe Marsha was sitting there just, just enjoying the attention but she wasn't hustling, she would have told me if she was hustling. So they came by and they arrested her because she had been there for 15 minutes for loitering for the purposes of prostitution. So she went downtown and Woody Manford, who has been president of GAA and was a young lawyer, ran into her and said "What are you doing here Marsha?" And she said, "Oh they arrested me for prostitution but I wasn't prostituting." Woody Manford said, "I'll take your case Marsha, I'll defend you." So they went into the court and Woody Manford got up and said, "Your Honor," you know Malcolm Michaels was his name, you know, "Marsha P. Johnson wasn't prostituting." And at that point they brought out this file which I understand was about as thick as a telephone book, and the judge says, "What do you mean? Look at this file for prostitution, it goes back to 1962," and she was convicted anyway even though she—</p>
[01:23:01]	Kearns	At the time she wasn't?
[01:23:03]	Wicker	<p>Yeah and other times she wasn't and other times she'd be going to the, the way the police work, she was going to, what's that, The Anvil, up the west side highway running to meet Willie at The Anvil and the cops had a quota to meet and they were out to pick some hustlers and they knew she was a hooker right so they just pull her over and said, "Okay sweetheart, it's your night to go in." And she'd say, "Well I'm not hustling, I'm on my way to The Anvil to meet a friend." So I mean, you know the deal, get in the car." So it's just the way the system works, you know what I mean? They don't sit and wait until they see somebody approach especially in a</p>

		case like that, they just make an arrest for hustling so everyone they see who they ever knew was a hustler, they simply would pick them up and take them in.
[01:23:45]	Kearns	Yeah. Well during the 10 years or so that she lived with you, did she have any employment or a paycheck kind of thing?
[01:23:53]	Wicker	No, what it was is that I used to give her, it's funny because actually the way it worked out, yeah she had SSI. And I managed her money, she'd get a check for \$500 or \$600 a month.
[01:24:08]	Kearns	Like an allowance?
[01:24:09]	Wicker	And what it is is I would hold her money, she could take it all that first day if she wanted to but she had me hold \$200 or \$300 when she needed \$20 I had a card in my wallet, I'd give her the \$20 or \$30 but then when she got down to \$0, that's when it would get dicey because she'd say, "I need \$30 to go to The Anvil tonight." And I said, "I'm not giving \$30 of my hard earned money to go to The Anvil tonight, I'd lend you \$5 to get into the city but I'd be damned if I'm going to splurge you to pay your way to The Anvil." I have to go to work and get up to go to a flea market, to hell with you. And, she would run up a bill with me but I would fight her. As long as she had money on account she could take any amount she wanted but she learned that after that money ran out, so she tended to try to keep money within balance. She didn't like to be in that situation where she has to ask Mr. Wicker for \$20 to go somewhere, I would only give her \$5 for care fare into the city, you know what I mean? So then at the end of the month she'd always pay her bill, out of her check. And the thing that they mentioned at the funeral was so funny and she'd used to say to me in front of people which was true but it made me, I mentioned it in my speech at the funeral, is that when she did the laundry, I'd give her a \$10 tip for doing the laundry. I mean it's a lot of work, at that time there were 3 or 4 people living in the apartment. Willie, Marsha, me, I don't know you know, we always had 3 or 4 people living there. I always had a new dancer sleeping on the couch for a few days before Willie started stripping at The Gaiety. Never got robbed either because you know at The Gaiety they'd make \$3,000 a month so they probably would have robbed anyone else but me. But, she'd introduce me to friends and saying, "This is Mr. Wicker, I do maid's work at Mr. Wicker's, I get paid \$10 a week." You know, it's funny but guess what you were allowed to make on SSI without having your check endangered? \$10 a week. See, she was as sharp as a tack. It was incredible how Marsha, really, you thought she was spacey and you thought she was crazy but she was crazy like a fox. Of course, I said to her, "Please Marsha," Oh another thing, Marsha used to brag about how I flew her to Puerto Rico with Willie and sent them on a trip.

[01:26:30]	Kearns	So is Willie her boyfriend?
[01:26:32]	Wicker	No, Willie, he was sort of like her sister, her dearest sister. You know, he would treat her very well when they danced at The Gaiety. She'd be like his servant, like "Bring me this! Bring me that!" But Willie was a hustler who make like \$2,000 in a week and he'd take her out. But with Marsha and me she used to love to tell people, "This is Mr. Wicker, he's bought me furs," I had. "He's bought me jewels," I bought many brooches or things, you know what I mean? "He sent me to the Caribbean. He sent me to the Caribbean, he bought me furs and jewels. And you know what he's gotten for it? Absolutely nothing!" And then would cackle like crazy, you know what I mean?
[01:27:16]	Kearns	And what was the Carribbean trip all about?
[01:27:17]	Wicker	I wanted her and Willie to see Puerto Rico and like a fool I didn't go with them. So I set them up with the owners of a gay house down there and gave them so much money a day, and what happened is they ended up in San Juan and instead of going, and as Davis said to me cynically, "You really expect Willie and Marsha with their backgrounds to suddenly go out and see 16th century Spanish architecture in Old San Juan?" Then I had to go on a campaign to get them to the rainforest because all they were interested in doing was running to the tacky, sleazy bars in San Juan. They could do that in New York City, I mean that's the least interesting thing. You know, and there wasn't even money to be made there. I think they hustled a little bit there too but there wasn't even the money to be made in San Juan. They were up against all these local native boys who were much better looking, much less expensive. Much more authentic.
[01:28:08]	Kearns	[Laughs] Is Willie still around?
[01:28:09]	Wicker	No Willie died in 1993 I think.
[01:28:12]	Kearns	Okay so [Unclear]. And did Marsha have any—
[01:28:21]	Wicker	He settled down. Just to finish with Willie, he settled down and left New York '87 or '88 or '89. He moved to, was it in '88 or '90, he moved to Baltimore and he met this boy who knew nothing about his background, this boy from Wyoming. And had this fabulous relationship with him for 3 or 4 years because he didn't have any other skills he learned how to make lamps here, he found out that there wasn't money in hustling in Baltimore so he began wiring people's lamps for \$5, \$10, \$20 and he began rewiring lamps and putting them for sale on these commission shops and he started working in an antique shop off the books. He got a lifestyle going there, until his health gave out, that was better than mine. I mean he lived in a big lavish apartment with all these \$500 this and \$800

		that, you know pieces of furniture.
[01:29:19]	Kearns	And he kept in contact with you and Marsha?
[01:29:21]	Wicker	Oh yes, not only that, not only that, not only that. When David got really sick, my partner got really sick, he and his lover came up and lived in David's apartment and ran my business from, for about 8 months, 8 or 9 months, so I could spend full time in the hospital with David when he was dying. David [unclear] still in the hospital, I stayed there with him. So literally I would spend everyday in the hospital full time and they totally ran my business, it reached its peak. I mean, because Bob said he spent his honeymoon working here in the store and he had very romantic attachment at this store because Willie and him were very interested in how you'd take a worthless piece of base and a interesting neck and a funky globe and you put it all together and you have a lamp that really is \$10 or \$20 worth of parts that you can sell it for \$200. They were masters at that. Bob had been a chef and he said the difference— he ended up making more than being a chef because as a chef you work to make this delicious dinner but you never see people enjoying it. He said here, "I work all night and somebody," and they would drop speed, they would work 8 hours, they'd stay up all night on drugs and amphetamines to work completely through the night, open up the next day at noon and go on until 8 that night. So that means you're talking about a 36 hour work day. Needless to say, I wasn't getting my money's worth the last 6 hours of that or the last 8 hours of the 36 hours. I mean, but it was incredible, they were just fantastic and then they were my lifesavers.
[01:31:04]	Kearns	But Marsha never worked in the store?
[01:31:06]	Wicker	No, Marsha worked in the store one time in the back and dealt with a stripper and found out how it burned her hand, we couldn't get Marsha in here.
[01:31:13]	Kearns	Really?
[01:31:14]	Wicker	That was enough for Marsha. Willie put her to work once. Early on, I think it was early on.
[01:31:19]	Kearns	So the others would work here but Marsha was not allowed?
[01:31:22]	Wicker	Yes Marsha never worked here, no. Marsha would sit around the house until about 4 o'clock and then suddenly she'd feel guilty. It's funny because her mother cleaned houses for a living so Marsha would lay around and then it'd be 4 o'clock and all the sudden, looking back on her I think it was almost the work ethic that she had absorbed from her family, that has a very strong ethic, she would suddenly get up and say "This

		floor is filthy.” And she’d mop the floor for an hour before she’d go out. [Unclear] has Jimmy gotten here yet?
[01:31:56]	Worker	Yes, I’m just waiting.
[01:31:59]	Wicker	Well I mean you don’t have to. Let me turn on the—
[01:32:02]	Worker	No I don’t want [Unclear] he’s on his way.
[01:32:06]	Wicker	That doesn’t mean a whole lot with Jimmy.
[01:32:07]	Worker	Well no, he said he already left.
[01:32:09]	Wicker	Oh he did?
[01:32:10]	Worker	Yeah. I mean, he’s on the train or, so I was just going to stand and wait for 20 minutes. And then when he gets here, I’ll leave.
[01:32:19]	Wicker	Okay.
[01:32:20]	Kearns	If you have to stop, that’s okay.
[01:32:10]	Wicker	No it’s okay, I mean if I have to stop it’ll be because some customer comes in or something. We had only the sale all day, right? How much did they—
[01:32:32]	Worker	Hang on just one second [Unclear].
[01:32:36]	Wicker	How much was the store credit for?
[01:32:39]	Worker	The store credit was—
[01:32:44]	Wicker	Did you adjust it?
[01:32:45]	Worker	What? I wrote it down, I just forgot [Unclear].
[01:32:52]	Kearns	Alright, did Marsha have any long term relationships or anything like that in the time you knew her?
[01:33:01]	Worker	Store credit was \$283.
[01:33:03]	Wicker	Not really. There was papa. Oh no, not long term, you talking about romantic relationships?
[01:33:09]	Kearns	Right.
[01:33:10]	Wicker	There was Papa \$10 she’d been seeing for about 20 years. She was 18

		when they started, she always called him Papa \$10. I mean that's the way Marsha was very real. <i>[Laughs]</i> She said \$10, she had \$10 and she started in 1962 and she got \$10 in the late '80s and \$10 just didn't go as far as it did in 1962. <i>[Laughs]</i> Kept getting her basic rate but— <i>[Laughs]</i> She had a lot of, she was deeply beloved. I mean Marsha did panhandling and hustling but she could go out on the streets— What did you pay for those?
[01:33:56]	Worker	What? \$8.20 for the pair.
[01:34:00]	Wicker	I don't know if that was any great buy. What do you think they're worth?
[01:34:02]	Worker	Well it's Manhattan glass—
[01:34:06]	Wicker	Yeah well they look like Manhattan glass—