

Hudson Area Library Oral History Project
Interview with Miranda Barry
Conducted by Jasper Francis
April 17, 2026

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FRANCIS: [00:00:00] This is Jasper Francis, I'm here at the Hudson Area Library with Miranda Barry. It is Friday, April 17th, 2026, and we're recording an oral history interview for the HAL LGBTQ+ Oral History Project collaboration with OutHudson. Miranda, I'm really happy you could join me today.

BARRY: [00:00:23] My pleasure, I'm excited to be here.

FRANCIS: [00:00:26] Could you introduce yourself, please?

BARRY: [00:00:30] So, my name is Miranda Barry. I live in Hudson; I moved here in 2013 from New York City. Uh, I immediately fell in love with this crazy town [laughs] and, um, got involved in the community. I've served on the library board for about 10 years, except for one where I had to step off because of the rules of the board. Um, I've also served on the Historic Preservation Commission also, since about, I think, 2014.

FRANCIS: [00:01:09] Alright. What were you doing in New York City before you decided to make the move to Hudson?

BARRY: [00:01:16] So I had a very big and very wonderful job when I was at the end of my time in New York. I had a lot of interesting jobs along the way, but this was a really great [job.] I was the executive VP in charge of creative... for *Sesame Street*, all over the world, including the United States and all the international productions, And I had headed up the international division for three or four years before I became – I took on the U.S. shows as well. And to be completely honest, I really didn't want to take on the U.S. show, because it was... kind of

political and divisive and... They asked me to become a change agent, for a group of people who really didn't want to change anything. So it was challenging, but there was also just fantastic people, and people who really cared about what they were doing. So... when the company decided to go a different direction with production, I knew it was time for me to leave. And I thought, "There really isn't gonna be another job like this for me, here in New York." And also, at my age, do I really want to start all over again someplace else? [laughs]

[00:0] And so I decided it would be great to move someplace that might be more affordable, where I could start a new life and meet people and have a community, and not strictly, like, go someplace to retire, but go someplace to have a next chapter, that would be more manageable. And my now wife – we weren't married then, because I don't even know if... I don't remember what year gay marriage came into effect, but anyway. Charlotte and I have been together since 1989, so coming up on forty years.

FRANCIS: [00:03:19] Oh, wow.

BARRY: [00:03:20] Which is a pretty good thing! And she had been spending summers in Maine and thought it would be great to move to Portland, Maine. I like Portland, Maine very much, but I didn't want to be a plane ride away from New York. Especially in the wintertime, I thought that that would actually be very hard for us. And she's a literary agent with a very busy business that she still runs from Hudson, at the age of 91.

FRANCIS: [00:03:58] [crosstalk] Wow, okay!

BARRY: [00:03:59] [laughs] She still works very full time!

FRANCIS: [00:04:00] That's impressive.

BARRY: [00:04:01] And has pressed me into service to help. So, um – as you saw this morning. [laughs.] But anyway, so having thought well, maybe Maine is *too* far, I said, "Why don't we rent a place in the Hudson Valley for a year, and just see how we like it?" We had been here –

we had houses here. I had a house in Dutchess County, in Clinton Corners, Charlotte had a place in Philmont at one point. So we knew the area and loved that, and we came up one day and I had, um, a couple weeks earlier, met some friends at Le Perche. Which I knew would appeal to Charlotte [laughs], because she's a Francophile, and so I said, "Let's get a little lunch at this nice little restaurant first, and then have a look around." And by the time we'd finished the croissant [Jasper laughs], Charlotte was saying, "Well, this might be a nice place to live!" So we went around and we called all the realtors on the houses that looked appealing, and one showed up and we bought a house through her. And, uh, it was... well, much more affordable that we realized it would be. And it's been a wonderful thing ever since.

FRANCIS: [00:05:30] Wonderful. Um... we'll come back to Hudson and your life here, but I do just want to circle back – what was the path of your career, prior to landing at *Sesame Street*? That's not really a... entry-level job, I assume. [laughs]

BARRY: [00:05:44] [laughs] No, no it wasn't. Although, my first job in television was at Children's Television Workshop, which is the company that produced *Sesame Street*. It's now called Sesame Workshop.

FRANCIS: [00:06:00] [laughs]

BARRY: [00:06:01] Um, I actually started out as a teacher for a couple years, then I moved into New York, to be an *actress*. And I had got an agent, I got a commercial, and I was doing a lot of auditioning, but... it quickly became kind of boring, and discouraging, as, you know, that comes with the territory. So I called up a friend of my parents who was – had moved to New York to produce a TV show that was supposed to be sort of the American *Upstairs, Downstairs*, it was called *The Best of Families*. And I invited her to dinner and asked her if she might have a job for me, just part-time, because I needed to be doing something besides going around and auditioning. And she hired me as a research assistant, and over time – that was about a three-year job, and over those three years I gave up acting, fell in love with television production, wound up surviving three complete staffs of researchers who were actually *qualified* to be researchers, you know, wound up with degrees in history and things like that. And I wound up being pretty much

the head of research for the series, which was a National Endowment for the Humanities-funded thing. And the reason why I did better than all these other scholars, who were far more qualified than I, was 'cause I knew about production. I grew up in a show business family.

FRANCIS: [00:07:42] Oh, I see.

BARRY: [00:07:44] And I also – I worked in theater before I got involved in television. And, um... so if a director said, “What did tenement dwellers do with dirty diapers in 1883?” The scholars would write a treatise on sanitation in the slums, which would take them a couple of weeks to do [laughs], and I would call up somebody who knew about sanitation in the slums, and find out that what they did was throw them out the window into the airshaft, and so that’s why there was so much disease in the tenements. So you can see how that went, that was an incredible experience. Um, the show bombed when it finally [laughs] reached the air, which was – people had had enough, it came out the year after the *Addam’s Chronicles*, and people had had enough of historical television. But I learned everything about how to make TV, it was really a great experience.

[00:08:55] And then, my next TV job was as head of program development for a series called *American Playhouse*, which was based in New York City at a consortium of public television stations, pooling their resources to produce American drama for American public television. Because the only drama that was on public television was English drama, pretty much. And, um, we were a tiny team. Lindsay Lowell was the head of production, I was the head of development, and, um... what’s his name, Davis, Dave Davis, was the president, the business guy. And we produced twenty-two films a year, and we didn’t fully fund any of them. Part of the challenge was if we put some money into this, where would the producer or director get the rest of the money that they needed to make this thing? And we did some amazing things, we did *Stand and Deliver*, *Thin Blue Line*, *El Norte*, which was a great – called the first independent... what did they call it? Independent... it wasn’t colossal, what was the word they used? Well, never mind, it will come to me later.

[00:10:33] And working closely with directors and writers who were sometimes complete novices, and sometimes Academy Award winners, it was the whole spectrum. It was a great, great experience. I also worked as a dramaturg at the National Playwrights' Center, the O'Neil, for five years. And I was also a part of the start-up team at Sundance, again working as what they called a story editor, working with writers to develop their screenplays. And I also taught screenwriting at Columbia University. So I was very immersed in the world of independent film, which was just really taking off, this was the 80's. I started *American Playhouse* in 1981. So, it was an incredibly great time where essentially what happened is that movie theaters started building multiplexes, so they could have the blockbuster films in the big auditoriums and they could have a couple of small auditoriums for independent films. And also the cost of production started going down, it really went down when, you know, cell phones – you could shoot a movie on a cell phone now, you couldn't do that then. But it was a really exciting time.

[00:12:03] And then I fell in love, and I moved to London in... 1987, I think it was. And... that was a difficult experience. [laughs] I ended up being left high and dry after about a year, and so, I literally was so broke, I had gotten myself some work there consulting for film companies on making co-productions, but I was so broke I had to get a grant to get a plane ticket home. So I did get a grant to attend the Input Conference, and, uh, I didn't use the return portion of the ticket [laughs.] So there I was, having to really kind of start all over again. My apartment had been trashed by some of the subletters that were in it – I mean, literally, some of my chairs were just a little pile of lumber in the corner, it was really trashed. And I walked in the door and the first thing I did was burst into tears, and then the second thing I did was I thought, "Wait a minute, this is New York! Who cares that it's ten o'clock at night, I'm gonna go out and get paint and paint this place!"

[00:13:32] So you could absolutely buy paint at ten o'clock at night in New York City, and so that's what I did, and I just sort of took it over. Um, I had been working on writing a miniseries for *American Playhouse*, which I was *almost* finished with, and I really needed another job. So a friend recommended that I see about this new series for kids that was being done by, you guessed it, Sesame Workshop, that was called *Ghostwriter*. And it's w-r-i-t-e-r, not rider like horse rider.

FRANCIS: [00:14:10] [laughs] That's a very different series.

BARRY: [00:14:12] Yes! [laughter] That's a different series. And it was – it was a fictional series about a group of kids who lived in Brooklyn and solved mysteries with the help of a ghost, and the thing was that the ghost could see only letters and numbers. He could travel in time, he could travel through the internet, he could read the labels in your clothes, but he couldn't describe what you looked like. So the kids and the ghost were – needed each other to be able to complete the mysteries. It was a big success, it was really hard to do, because it was truly educational, it was a literacy series for – [phone rings] oh, gosh, I can't do that right now.

[00:15:03] Um, for seven to ten year olds. And, um, it wasn't about teaching letters and numbers, it was about teaching strategies for if you get stuck while you're trying to read something – how you can infer the meaning of a word from the context, or where you can get help to understand something that you don't understand. And it was really great, and that was adapted into a half-hour regular series which I initially created. And so that's how I got into kid's TV. I took a little sidebar to write for a soap opera for a year [laughs], which I enjoyed, but I wasn't very good at it. I just wasn't that interested in the gossip, really. Um, and then I came back – actually I worked for a kid's multimedia company, developing television series and websites. I moved out to San Francisco during the internet boom, and the company went bankrupt during the internet bust, and so I came back to New York.

[00:16:29] I joined the New York City Teaching Fellows, and had a very difficult time teaching public school, and decided that I really loved the kids, but I was just not very good at it, so I should step aside for somebody that would be better. And then I went to graduate school and got a degree in education so I could actually know what I was doing as a teacher, and then while I was interviewing for teaching jobs, I got offered, from good old Sesame Workshop, to produce a show in Northern Ireland. And I thought, "You know, I might have been born to create a television show in Northern Ireland." Not only that, they were going to pay me twice as much for a part-time, non-exclusive job, as I would have been paid had I gotten the teaching job. So that was – I thought, "Well, I can always go back to teaching. I'll just do this 'cause it's such an incredible opportunity."

[00:17:35] And of course, I didn't go back to teaching. Um, which I actually regret, but anyway, that was that. And so that's what got me onto the final trajectory, of first producing Northern Ireland, and then going onto producing a show in India, and then Indonesia, South Africa, lots of really interesting places. And ultimately I became head of international and then head of all the productions, so that's my life story in a nutshell.

FRANCIS: [00:18:13] [laughs] That is a really fascinating career trajectory. Um, can we go back a little bit, even younger than that? You said that part of the reason you were able to succeed in your career was that you had grown up in a showbiz family. How was your family involved in – was it like theater, movies, television?

BARRY: [00:18:39] A little of all of that.

FRANCIS: [00:18:40] A little of everything, okay.

BARRY: [00:18:41] Um, my father was the son of a famous playwright, called Philip Barry.

FRANCIS: [00:18:47] Oh, okay.

BARRY: [00:18:50] Who wrote – *The Philadelphia Story* is his most famous play. And ironically, now at this point in my life, I'm the representative of the estate of Philip Barry, and working on new productions of Philip Barry plays, one in Chicago this winter and one in London this summer. So it – the legacy continues. But I, uh... My father was a producer, my mother an actress. They started in New York City, I was born in New York City, and they started in the days of live TV. And, um, then when the industry moved to Southern California, they moved out there – I was seven, I think, when we moved to LA. And they – we lived in a house that, um, Charlie Chaplin's wife had built with the money she got from divorcing Charlie Chaplin, which was, at the time, one of the highest divorce settlements ever in the history of divorce settlements. And there were big Hollywood parties, there was, you know, lots of crazy Hollywood stuff, which was... it was fun, and I think my parents had a good time. They were really part of the community.

[00:20:11] My father did some films, but he did mostly movies for television. He worked for CV – CBS for several years as the head of their movies of the week, which – at this time, remember there was no cable, so there were three networks and PBS.

FRANCIS: [00:20:31] Sure.

BARRY: [00:20:32] And then Fox came along as a fourth network, and then came cable and everything changed. But you would have millions of viewers for these movies of the week, and they were very popular. Um, and he became known for making movies about serious subjects, like civil rights and the war in Vietnam, and... he, uh, got an Emmy nomination for a film called *First You Cry*, which was about breast cancer. He won the Emmy for a miniseries he did called, uh, *Friendly Fire*, it was based on a book. A true story of a family from Iowa that were, you know, conservative, pro-Vietnam family, whose son was killed by American friendly fire, and the mother, who's played by Carol Burnett – in an incredible dramatic role, not something you'd usually associate with her – sets out to find out how this can happen, and learned what was really going on.

[00:21:42] And... so he was, he was a very good role model in that sense. He did really good work. And, um, when I was thirteen I went to boarding school in Connecticut for high school, and then I went to Stanford for college, and then I moved back to LA when I was in my brief acting phase. [laughs] And then back to New York for the story you've already heard. I spent two years teaching at the school where I went as a high school student, and ran the drama department and directed a lot of shows, which was great fun to do. So yeah, I was very fortunate to have a lot of opportunities fall in my path.

FRANCIS: [00:22:32] That's wonderful. Um, did your mother and your father work together often? Because you mentioned that she was an actress as well.

BARRY: [00:22:41] [laughs] Well, that was kind of a sore point between the two of them.

FRANCIS: [00:22:43] Ahh, I see. [laughs]

BARRY: [00:22:46] My mother was quite critical of my father for not hiring her more often. [laughter] And there were certain actresses that she was exceedingly jealous of, because somehow my father kept hiring them instead of her, for roles she thought she would be perfect for.

FRANCIS: [00:23:04] Mm. Was Carol Burnett one of them?

BARRY: [00:23:06] No, Carol Burnett was in a class of her own.

FRANCIS: [00:23:10] [laughs]

BARRY: [00:23:13] Um, I'm trying to think now... so long ago, who were they... Um, well, I don't want to slander anybody, anyway. [laughs] But it is a volatile – Hollywood, you know. My parents were separated for six years, then they got back together again, there was all kinds of drama between them. My mother dated Howard Hughes, when she was a young woman.

FRANCIS: [00:23:39] [crosstalk] Oh, wow. Okay.

BARRY: [00:23:40] When she first came up. She actually – a funny but true tidbit is that she grew up in Iowa, she had no connections in the entertainment world at all. But when she was in college, she went to Syracuse for one year and she was in a sorority there, and her sorority sisters – without telling her – put her up for a Rita Hayworth lookalike contest, and the prize was a screen test. And out of all the girls in America, my mother won the Rita Hayworth lookalike contest! Which led to her getting a contract at Warner Brothers in the 1940s. So there you go.

FRANCIS: [00:24:25] That's quite a start to a career, very cool.

BARRY: [00:24:27] [crosstalk] Quite a start. [laughs]

FRANCIS: [00:24:31] Did you always... enjoy being part of a showbiz family? Were you excited to carry on the legacy or did that kind of come to you later?

BARRY: [00:24:42] No, I always... I just – yes, I always felt that I would be doing, in some way, theater or television or film, and like my father I kind of ended up doing both, because a lot of the *American Playhouse* films were released as features. But what I didn't like was the whole... kind of glamorous thing, and this was a source of tension between my mother and me because she loved all that stuff. And she didn't understand, and I don't know that I understood at the time, why it was that it just gave me the willies. I just didn't – [laughs] there was a period of time when I just had gotten my driver's license, where mother was getting invited to all these movie premieres at Grauman's Chinese and places like that. So I put on a short-hair wig and a black jacket and a white shirt and became her chauffeur, and drove her car to the... [laughs]

FRANCIS: [00:25:48] Oh, okay! [laughs]

BARRY: [00:25:51] And, uh, the parking guy would say, "Show's over at 8:30, son!" [smacks table] And I thought – I did it! [laughs]

FRANCIS: [00:26:01] [laughs] Excellent.

BARRY: [00:26:02] So, yeah. That was early days, but... it was actually, it was an incredible upbringing, because I was exposed to so many different kinds of people. And um, and I did feel that I belonged anywhere. That was something that was very important to my mother particularly, because she kind of had a chip on her shoulder about being from Iowa and thought people looked down on her because she didn't come from New York or Los Angeles. But in fact I think her Iowa roots gave her a kind of confidence that she might not have had if she'd grown up in New York, so I'm grateful for that.

FRANCIS: [00:26:48] Are you an only child, or do you have any siblings?

BARRY: [00:26:51] I have a younger sister, who's almost seven years younger than I am. So we were really not close as children because I went to boarding school when she was six, I guess. But we've gotten much closer later in life. She's a wonderful person who chose the opposite route – she lives in suburbia, she raised children, she was on the PTA, and, you know, that was her world, and she was great at it.

FRANCIS: [00:27:24] Alright. Um, what was – did you decide that you wanted to be sent to boarding school, or was that a parental decision?

BARRY: [00:27:33] Oh, I was very keen to go.

FRANCIS: [00:27:35] Alright.

BARRY: [00:27:36] I was really into it.

FRANCIS: [00:27:37] [laughs] And that was for all of high school?

BARRY: [00:27:40] Yes.

FRANCIS: [00:27:41] Mm. What was that experience like?

BARRY: [00:27:43] Um, well, it's not for everybody, but it was great for me. I went to Miss Porter's School in Farmington, Connecticut, and... people think of it as a finishing school. Only thing I ever learned that had anything to do with being a finishing school is I learned how to make a good bechamel. [laughs] Because they said, "This is the basis of so much cooking, if you just know how to make this one sauce, you'll be able to make a lot of other things." So I learned – and I use it to this day, I make an excellent souffle, which is based on the bechamel. [laughs]

[00:28:26] But anyway – I loved being away from home, I loved being in a community of women. It was all girls and all – you know, not all but most of the teachers were female. And it was an environment where it was assumed that everybody was special in some way. You know,

some were hockey players and some were scientists, and some were artists and some were writers. And so it was – I don't know exactly how they maintained that atmosphere, because it was remarkably not-competitive for a highly-regarded boarding school. Um, I did a lot of theater there, that's how come I ended up coming back and running the theater department for a couple of years, after our wonderful drama teacher, Ms. Gray – who literally was born backstage in a vaudeville theater, her parents were vaudeville performers. And, um, she was tireless. We did – I did twenty-two productions in two years there, because I always – the minute something got to performance, I would start rehearsing something else. And that was how it went so that everybody in the school got to participate, there were little plays that were done by dormitories and then there were big musicals that were done by whole classes, and then there were, you know, real plays. So it was great fun.

[00:30:00] And as a student there, it was big enough that you could find a group of pals that were really close. Um, but not so big that you felt isolated. And I had some wonderful friendships with teachers. So yeah, it was a great experience for me. A lot of people found it too restrictive, I mean, especially if you lived nearby, you didn't go home for the weekend, you know, people really lived there and they had all these weird traditions... [laughs] Daisy chains, and hazing to join the teams, and... stuff like that. But it suited me very well.

FRANCIS: [00:30:47] Were there any romances at the time, on campus?

BARRY: [00:30:51] Really, not that I was aware of. Uh, I mean there were lots of girls who had boyfriends at other schools and things like that, which... But they – they were mostly, you know, they all were in the same place in the summer, stuff like that, and I went home to LA in the summer, so I didn't hang out with this crowd. And I – looking back, there were a couple of girls that I was really very attracted to, but I didn't... I mean, it just wasn't something you would do. Later on when I was teaching there, I became aware there was a lot more going on. But it may have been the changing times, too.

FRANCIS: [00:31:33] [laughs] Mm. Um, what year was it that you were attending the boarding school?

BARRY: [00:31:40] Ah, 1964 to '68.

FRANCIS: [00:31:42] '64 to '68...

BARRY: [00:31:44] So I started college in 1968, which was a pretty exciting time. And the night before my high school graduation, Robert Kennedy was assassinated. And our commencement speaker was John Lindsay, who had been a very good friend of Robert Kennedy – he was the mayor of New York City at the time. And he gave us an incredible speech about how, sort of... for those to whom much has been given, much is expected, and that we had a great base of learning and community and we needed to take that out into the world and make the world a better place. And I really took that to heart. I mean, we were all feeling very... you know, Martin Luther King had been killed just a few weeks before, and of course, Jack Kennedy – I was in eighth grade when he was killed, so that was kind of the first big political event that I was very much aware of.

[00:32:51] Um... so, I forget how I got on this. You were asking me about what years I went to college. So then I was in college from '68 to '72, which was the peak in the Vietnam War period. I was very active in the anti-war movement, um, demonstrating, getting arrested, getting tear-gassed. We started a Speaker's Bureau where we went out into the community and talked to people about the war and why it was wrong and why they shouldn't support it. But you know, there was – I've just recently did an interview with a young friend who's a senior in college and was taking a class on the '60s, and he asked, you know... How similar were the '60s to today, because there are a lot of these same issues that are coming up. And I – my feeling is superficially it's very similar, and maybe it's cyclical, you know, the 1920s had this too, so. But under the surface I think it's very different now, and very – we were the most spoiled and optimistic generation ever, probably, in the United States.

[00:34:07] Our parents had lived through World War II, had come out feeling victorious that they had saved the world from fascism, and now what they had to do was, you know, go to suburbia and have lots of babies and everybody would be happily ever after. So we were told that

we could do anything in the world that we wanted to do, that we were the best and the brightest, and so our efforts to make change, to make social change, came from a base of being really secure. Um, the economy was booming, the middle class was doing really well – this was the peak of labor unions, you know, people who worked in factories could have a very good living. Could have two cars and a summer vacation and a little cabin by the lake, and, you know, send your kids to college. It was also – four years of Stanford cost \$20,000. Even if I'd had to borrow it, it would have been nothing to pay it back. I mean, it's – so I think today young people have really serious obstacles that they need to overcome. We don't live in a happy, warm, supportive world, we live in a suspicious, divided world where everybody is afraid of everybody else.

FRANCIS: [00:35:33] Yes.

BARRY: [00:35:34] And, you know, the cost of housing, the cost of college, the cost of a car, which you need to be able to get to work – all these things. Um, and it's interesting looking back, thinking how did we get here from there? But I'm very concerned about the well-being of young people today, that's one of the reasons I'm so involved with the library. And yes, it's super important that everybody be literate, but it goes so far beyond that. People need to be able to visualize a life for themselves. You heard my life story; I just walked from one exciting adventure to another! And yes, I had some tough times in my 50s where I got fired a couple times, that's always unnerving. But young people today start by being fired, because AI is going to take over their job. I mean, really! We have to pay attention to that.

FRANCIS: [00:36:43] Yes. I really appreciate you bringing that up, I really appreciate your perspective. And I definitely want to touch more on that, but I am – I do want to circle back just a little bit, because '68 to '72 were your Stanford years. When did you move to the city?

BARRY: [00:37:03] Well, I moved home to my parents in LA for – uh, in 1972. And then... let's see, '68 to '75, I was invited to my – no, it would have been '73 I was invited to my fifth high school reunion. And I was working for my mother at the time so that I could be free to go to auditions, and I got this invitation. And suddenly it seemed like the most important thing in the world to me to go to this reunion, but I didn't have the money to buy a plane ticket to go to this

reunion. And I went to work, my mother asked me to order flowers for somebody, I called up the florist and was, uh, making an order. I made some kind of mistake and the person at the florist said, “Aw, get glasses!” [laughs] And I just burst into tears.

FRANCIS: [00:38:04] [laughs] Aww!

BARRY: [00:38:07] Hysterical sobbing, *my life is nothing, I can't do anything...* And my mother says, “Well, I'll buy you a plane ticket to go to Connecticut for your reunion, I think that would be nice for you to do that!” So that was very nice of her. And I went, and that's how I ended up teaching at the school, because the – my dear Ms. Gray, the drama teacher, had had a heart attack, and she was due to retire at the end of the year but she couldn't... she was trying to make it through her last big production. And I stayed and helped her with that, that's what led to the next phase of my life. So that's – I went to teach at Farmington, and while I was there, I went into New York and auditioned, got an agent. So that when I left there I was ready to go.

FRANCIS: [00:39:04] Okay. Could you tell me a little bit about your social life in New York, while you lived there?

BARRY: [00:39:12] Yeah, it was, um... now again, it was a time when my mother was worried about me living in some crummy neighborhood, so she said she'd split the rent with me. So for \$420 a month, we had this gorgeous apartment in Lincoln Center with a huge panoramic view of the city, and doormen and all that sort of thing. 'Cause it was right near where I was working on *The Best of Families*. And I used to give parties there, I met – I had some school friends, but mostly I met people through my work. And I was always a workaholic, I worked day and night. Sometimes all day and all night. And um, that was when I first fell in love with a woman. She was the head writer on the show, she was considerably older than I. And I admired her immensely, and her brilliance and her ability to oversee this whole big show. And she had asked me to research events in... 1886, I think it was, where one of the characters could make a ton of money, and another one of the characters could, um... I don't know, lose a ton of money. I forget exactly what it was.

[00:41:01] But it took me to the economics division of the New York Public Library, it was not a field I knew anything about. And I ended up – it turned out it was a depression year, so the idea of the rich guy making tons of money was not obvious. Um, so I figured out a way. This was when the Standard Oil Trust was just beginning to be put together, and the forming of monopolies which later became a really important issue. And I wrote this treatise about how this could be done, that he could make a lot of money and he could get on the board of one of the companies that was then taken in. And I ended up saying, you know – I basically created a character that had this whole economic trajectory. I was very – I literally did work all day and all night for about two or three days, I didn't sleep. And then I handed it in, and I said, "I'm really sorry, I'm very tired, I have to go home." And the next day when I woke up, I thought, "Oh my God, I have really overstepped." I wasn't asked to create a character, I was asked to give information, and I should not have done that. And I became very scared that I was gonna get fired or that I had done something really wrong. So I baked some biscuits. [laughter]

[00:42:38] And took them with me to the office, to Corinne's office, and said, "I'm so terribly sorry." And started to cry. And she's – what was she going to do with this crying child?

FRANCIS: [00:42:53] [laughs]

BARRY: [00:42:54] Um, she said, "It's okay, it's okay, it's okay! It's brilliant, it's wonderful." I go, "Really? You think you could use that character?" [laughs] She says, "Yes, yes I can." So that was kind of the emotional connection. And I... it's funny because at the time, I didn't really consider myself a lesbian. I just felt that I was in love with this wonderful person, and we were together for seven years. We had quite a long relationship. Um, and it caused a lot of trouble in my family. My parents were not supportive. And it was a... it was a tough time. But it was really a very supportive, wonderful relationship. There was a big age difference, and I... you know, when I got to be about thirty, I thought... it's too confining for me. I need to be able to get out in the world, and meet more people and do more things. And so we split up.

[00:44:09] And ironically that summer, after I split up with Corinne, um, I was staying with some friends at a place in Pine Plains and we went down to a poetry reading, and afterwards had

coffee with a producer, and a literary agent, called Charlotte Sheedy. And somehow in the – Charlotte was very quiet, she doesn't talk a lot with people she doesn't know – somehow the subject got on, you know, the state of my love life. All the other women there were lesbians, so. And Charlotte thought to herself – this person is so kind about the person that she just broke up with. That's really the kind of person that I ought to be with. But we didn't end up getting together for another seven years. [laughs] 'Cause my life veered off into various – I went to London, I had some other short relationships, but I was also on my own a lot during that time because I traveled a tremendous amount. There was no shortage of people in my life, but there was a period of about five years when I wasn't really involved with anybody and I didn't really... it didn't bother me. Um, 'cause I loved my life. But... one thing was that – so this was the '80s.

FRANCIS: [00:45:51] Yes.

BARRY: [00:45:52] And... I-I thought it was very important not to conceal my sexual orientation. I thought that, you know, you didn't have to ram things down people's throat, but I thought that if people knew that I was a lesbian, that lots of people I worked with were gay or – um, and that we were just, we were normal people, that would have an impact. And I think actually it did. But I remember there was a period of time when I was interviewing assistants and later found out that my friends were laughing, because I told them that one of my interview questions was, "Would it bother you if I received flowers from another woman?" [laughs] So...

FRANCIS: [00:46:49] It's a good litmus test.

BARRY: [00:46:51] Yeah, it's a good – [laughs] it's a simple thing. So... and it was surprising to me, the conflict with my family. Because, I mean, my father made progressive movies for television and they lived in Hollywood, it's not as if they didn't know any gay people. Um... but it was very hard.

FRANCIS: [00:47:19] Were you, um, politically active at that time, as well?

BARRY: [00:47:22] I was, to the extent that... I was really up to my eyes in the work, but we did a lot of political films. We did films about, you know, a film called... *Testament*, with Jane Alexander, she got an Academy Award nomination, about – based on a poem about what would happen if there were a nuclear bomb. And it was a beautiful film, actually, really beautiful. And we did *El Norte* which was the first film that I know of that anybody made about the immigrant experience, coming from Central America to North America, and it was in three languages, it was in English and Spanish and also an Indian dialect. Because part of the reason was we – and it was released as an English film and also released as a Spanish film. And I felt it was really important that the audience should experience, at some point in the film, what it feels like to not understand anything anybody's saying, and so that's why there was a third language so there was times for – even if you spoke both English and Spanish – there would be a period of time when you were like, “What are they saying?” To get into the mindset of the film.

[00:48:56] Um, so... yeah, I wasn't – you know, that was the heyday of Studio 54 and all the nightclubs, I used to go occasionally to the East Village to the Pyramid Club, that was... but I wasn't deeply into that. And politically... I was, I thought my work was, you know, fighting back against the Ronald Reagan era. Which shocked me, I have to admit, because I was so... growing up the way we did, being the center of the universe, it just didn't seem possible that the world could suddenly turn against you for no reason. [laughs]

FRANCIS: [00:49:43] Um... did your relationship with your parents improve over the years, did they come to terms with your orientation? Or did it stay kind of... a sticking point?

BARRY: [00:49:57] Um, I would say it stayed a sticking point until... very much later, there was a sort of [inaudible] moment with my mother, because she began to see that there were a lot of lesbians who were being successful in Hollywood and so she thought, “Well, maybe... [laughs] it's not all that bad.” Um... but I mean, there were dumb things. Like, you know, my grandmother had told me that she was leaving me her dining room table, and Charlotte and I bought a beautiful old house in Dutchess County, in Clinton Corners. And I wrote to my grandmother and said, “I have a place at last where I could use your dining table,” she was just moving to a smaller place so she needed a home for it. And her response was, “Oh, no, I-I gave

that to your sister.” [laughs] It was like, what? And it led to a whole huge drama. And it was just hurtful, but I didn’t really care that much about the table, it was just... being, you know, abandoned.

[00:51:21] And... my father, I think he took it very personally. He felt that he had done something wrong to cause this problem, and I don’t think he ever got over that feeling. We did get – we were always close on a certain level, we were very similar kind of personalities. And um... I still feel, you know, he was hurt too. It wasn’t just a one-way thing. But it was painful. And even at the very end of his life... um, I was there with him in the hospital, when he was in intensive care at the very end of his life. And um... [laughs] my mother would sort of flit in and out, and she – one day I was there, I was talking to dad and looked over, and he was not looking at me. And I followed his gaze... mother was – it was one big room with a lot of beds and a nurse’s place in the center, and she was animated in conversation with one of the workers there. And I followed my father’s gaze, and he was looking at her legs. [laughs] And I thought – he really loved her, and he loved her madly. And their relationship was complicated too, but... um, the world was a lot more – turned out to be a lot more complicated than he thought it was gonna be when he was a young man. Despite having served in the Navy and the second World War and... that’s a long story we don’t have time for, but.

FRANCIS: [00:53:24] Sure.

BARRY: [00:53:26] [laughs]

FRANCIS: [00:53:29] Thank you for sharing that with me. I really appreciate, um, talking about that with you. I wanted to jump forward a bit in time, just because we do, unfortunately, have a limited amount of time. Um, you mentioned that you were sort of a change agent for the network, and that *Sesame Street* was sort of... political and controversial at the time. Would you be willing to talk a bit more about that?

BARRY: [00:53:58] Yeah, it wasn’t that... At the beginning, *Sesame Street* was very political. I mean, you know, Morgan Freeman was part of the original cast of *Sesame Street*, and lots of

other activist actors. And I think, uh, Obama was president during the time I was working in that job, and there was an article that came out in *Time* magazine calling Obama the first president from *Sesame Street*. And what they meant by that – it’s true, he was the first president who was young enough to have watched *Sesame Street* when he was a child.

FRANCIS: [00:54:37] Yeah.

BARRY: [00:54:38] But also, the worldview that *Sesame Street* puts out – that we all live in a metropolis with all kinds of different people, and everybody’s worth your attention, and everybody has their, you know, reason for being, and their special qualities. Um, and I do think that that was ultimately the most successful thing that *Sesame Street* has done and continues to do. And now their key curriculum includes kindness, which is something I think is sorely needed in our world today. And I don’t know how very successful they were in teaching letters and numbers, but that doesn’t really matter. What matters is that children loved feeling in this safe place where people were appreciated and, you know, even *Ghostwriter* was like this too. There were no black kids on television, there were no Latino kids or Asian kids, everybody was white. And um... So doing a television show for kids that had diverse characters was really important, and empowering to kids who... said, “Well, yeah, of course, *white* kids can read, but *I’m* not like that.” Well, you are. [laughs] In your own way.

[00:56:09] So the... what I meant was that it was around the fortieth anniversary of the show, and the ratings had been declining. And they were really thinking they should not... uh, mention that the show had been on the air for forty years, because it would show that it was so... out-of-date. And so I was hired to sort of fix that, and the first thing I did was say, “It’s fantastic that we’ve been on for forty years! We have to celebrate that! And not only that, we have to change the format of the show, that’s what’s dragging us down. And pretend it’s – if we’re gonna keep it an hour, pretend it’s an hour-long television network that has a bunch of little shows in it, and wonderful interstitial material that drags you from one to the next.” And it really worked! Our ratings went up by sixty percent, and stayed that way for the next five years. So I was very good at that part of it.

[00:57:18] But what they – I wanted to get more people of color on the writing team, I wanted to... you know... The executive producer at the time was really great at the popular culture part of getting, you know, recording artists and things like that to be on the show, which was great. But then let's integrate them more into the world of the show, let's modernize the world of the show a little bit. And that was very like pulling teeth.

FRANCIS: [00:57:47] [laughs] I see. And working on *Sesame Street* was your last... sort of big, showbiz job?

BARRY: [00:57:58] Yes.

FRANCIS: [00:57:59] And that ended right around 2013?

BARRY: [00:58:01] Yes.

FRANCIS: [00:58:03] So you've been in Hudson for just about thirteen years...

BARRY: [00:58:06] Yes.

FRANCIS: [00:58:07] Thirteen this January, okay. What has life been like for the last thirteen years? [laughs]

BARRY: [00:58:12] [laughs] Oh, this and that. No, I worked for a while for, um, an upstart company that had a – an ebook library for schools and libraries. My dear friend Liz Nealon, who was also the executive producer of *Ghostwriter* – we've been friends and worked together for decades. And it was a fascinating experience, you know – there was a lot of concern about whether children would adopt ebooks, we did a wonderful experiment at the, uh, intermediate school then, here in Hudson. And they used it a lot, and really liked it! You know, it gave access to children to a big library of books that they could choose from, and unlike the services that provide ebooks to public libraries, an unlimited number of kids could check out the same book at

the same time. So it had a lot of advantages to it, but ultimately it was bought by somebody who wanted to do something – I'm not sure what, but he killed the company.

[00:59:25] And then after that, um, I got involved with the Philip Barry estate. And we've been having some productions, we just had a production in Chicago this winter. We had commissioned a wonderful playwright called Richard Greenberg to adapt *Holiday*, which was another of his famous plays – to a contemporary setting. And he did a brilliant job, really, and that was produced in Chicago this winter, but sadly Richard died last summer of cancer. And so I had a real role to play as a dramaturg, kind of like what I did at the National Playwrights' Center, working with the director to figure out where script changes were needed. That was very – it was wonderful to do that again, I love that work. And the show was a huge success, and so we may be coming to Broadway next year.

FRANCIS: [01:00:32] Oh, wonderful!

BARRY: [01:00:34] Yep.

FRANCIS: [01:00:36] Alright, I'll keep an eye out for that.

BARRY: [01:00:37] [crosstalk] Just need to get some stars. [laughs] That's what you have to have for Broadway. Uh, and then there's another play going on in London, in June. So business is picking up there! And then I've also been working with Charlotte, in the literary agency, and helping her. Mostly I've also been doing – *oh*, and I've got – ! I can't believe I didn't even think...

FRANCIS: [01:00:59] [laughs]

BARRY: [01:01:00] I produced a play and toured it, it took almost a decade of my life, called *Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom*. It was a music – well, it was the story of the youngest person on the Selma to Montgomery Voting Rights' March. And it was based on an autobiography written by Lynda Blackman Lowery, who sadly just passed away this – on

Christmas Eve this year. Um, and it was a story of how, like – who could be more powerless than black kids growing up in public housing in Selma, Alabama, in 1960? Or 1950. But these children got together and were trained by SNCC [Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee], and stuck to their guns and demonstrated, and changed the world! They actually brought about the Voting Rights Act in 1965. And yes, they were beaten unconscious on the Edmund Pettus Bridge, and had 38 stitches in their heads, and...

[01:02:16] So, it was a very inspiring story about a young person who comes of age in a really exciting time. And it started out as a one-person show and then I developed it into a small musical using mostly the, um, civil rights songs of the period, and a marvelous music director, Joshua Campbell, who wrote a song called, “Sing Out, March On,” to honor John Lewis when he got an honorary degree at Harvard, so we used that in the show. And my dear friend, Fracaswell Hyman, who I worked with on *Ghostwriter*, was our director and he did a great job. And it was very – we did it in New York at Riverside Church, we did it at the Center West Park, and then we had an agent who wanted to tour the show all over the country and told us he had all these bookings, and half of them weren’t real. So we went out on the road and then sometimes had to wait. And it was frustrating, I know, for the cast, and it was very expensive for me, um... And this was also, then came the murder of George Floyd, and the pandemic, and this period of anger – justifiable, completely. It was a tough spot to be in, and required... it’s still a very painful episode in my life. I feel grateful that we were able to reach a lot of people with this story, particularly young people. But it was very hard to do, and I wouldn’t do it again, I think.

FRANCIS: [01:04:11] I see. Going back... I mean, thirteen years in Hudson, the pandemic –

BARRY: [01:04:20] That started in 2015, by the way.

FRANCIS: [01:04:22] 2015, I see.

BARRY: [01:04:23] And ended in... summer of ‘24, or ‘25? Summer of ‘24. Um, we had a reading at the International Black Theater Festival in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and two thousand people came. It was incredible. So that was a very good place to end.

FRANCIS: [01:04:50] That's wonderful. Um, thirteen years in Hudson – the pandemic, the murder of George Floyd, even more local things like the kind of development that we've seen of... a very politically-active gay community here in Hudson. How has your experience of living here changed? Or your experience of the town itself?

BARRY: [01:05:15] That's a good question. I... I sort of dove in headfirst when I first came, and met a lot of people – many of whom have actually left Hudson since that time period. And I really loved getting to know people in Hudson, I felt like I knew everybody – and then there's this moment when you realize, you don't. [laughs] Um, but then I got involved in the play and I was away a lot, and I kind of disconnected from a lot of the people that I knew. So coming back, I find... it's complicated, because I'm a kind of... I joke that I'm the moderate on the Historic Preservation Commission, that I'm the – oh, goodness, what's the name of the Supreme Court Justice? The first woman?

FRANCIS: [01:06:18] Oh.

BARRY: [01:06:20] From Arizona, um...

FRANCIS: [01:06:25] Ginsburg?

BARRY: [01:06:27] No, before Ginsburg... someone before. I can see her face, she went to Stanford! I heard her speak... um, Sandra Day O'Connor.

FRANCIS: [01:06:37] Yes, okay.

BARRY: [01:06:38] And she was appointed as a conservative, and then became a kind of middle person who often decided cases, because she didn't know for sure which way she was gonna go. And I feel, um, I feel the preservation of the historic architecture of Hudson is extremely important, extremely important. But on the other hand, I also believe that when there's new construction, it's sometimes better to build a really interesting, modern architecture than to build

a copy of old buildings. And it depends very much on where it's located and the size, and, you know, all that. So that puts me in a kind of interesting – not everybody agrees on that point, which is good! We have great discussions, and um, I think the sudden development of all these hotels and everything – I hope it's going to work. I worry that it may be over-developed, um, especially with the times that we're living through right now where people don't have a lot of extra money. But on the other hand, you know, it is a great place to visit, and that hopefully will create jobs that will pay well, that will create the need for other kinds of services like doctors and lawyers, and everything else – and restaurants, people who work in restaurants. I think the housing problem is really serious, but there's also just a *capital* issue, which affects the library, too. You know – are we going to have to buy this building? And if so, how in the world could we do that? So there's a lot of, um, a lot of question marks, but I also have a lot of faith in the people of Hudson. I do think there's some people who are kind of stuck in a more negative outlook, but then there are others who are stuck in an outlook that's not respectful of what's here. So it has to be, somehow. I'm excited about Joe Ferris – he was on the library board for years, so I got to know him a little bit, and I think he's a sensible person that really wants to do the right thing and is willing to work really hard. And he won't get it right all the time, but I think he'll try.

FRANCIS: [01:09:25] Alright, thank you so much. Um, I sort of want to loop around to something you were discussing earlier, and sort of framing it – again, through negative outlooks. I do think it's a good point, what you made, about how – you know, the political activism of the '60s was born out of sort of... this sort of very optimistic world that had existed before then, and kind of – it was a more hopeful sort of activism then I think we see nowadays. I think that there is a lot more... pessimism and paranoia around the world, and a lot of that is fostered by social media and stuff like that, by the decisions of our current administration. But what are your hopes for the future, for Hudson and for America and... just the world?

BARRY: [01:10:35] That's a simple question. [laughs]

FRANCIS: [01:10:37] [laughs]

BARRY: [01:10:41] Um... I'm very much afraid that we are at a tipping point, I really do believe that. If not a little past the tipping point. And I think, you know, progressives have been running around with their hair on fire for years, and people have just tuned it out. But this concern that I mentioned about our young people is very, to me – I mean, I've really been an educator all my life. I've worked in the media, but that's always been the center of my interest. And either your generation is going to get a grip and find a way to move together with others, to get away from, "I hate this, I hate this, I hate this, I hate that," towards, "Okay. What are our big problems?" Housing. You know, the tax structure that favors the very rich over everyday people. Racism. Those are three simple little problems. [laughs] You know, but to look at each of those and say, "What do we need to do to make this better?" Instead of saying, "You wanna hurt this person!" Instead of blaming everybody, instead of creating chaos and conflict, say, "We can all agree that these three things are serious issues in our society, so what can we do?"

[01:12:38] How can we address the housing problem? That's one that – if people of goodwill sat down together, everybody'd have to give up something but everybody'd get something. We would come up with a solution. I don't honestly believe – I mean, I think Hudson needs public housing, and I'm in favor of the Bliss Towers redevelopment, although I'm afraid it's going to be really ugly and not consistent with the historic architecture of Hudson. Which troubles me very much because it's not fair to the people who live there! You know, it's – they deserve to have attractive housing. And I also am afraid – I do think it's necessary, because there are too many people living here who are not able to progress economically, for various reasons. But I do think that in general, the concept of public housing, over on the other side of the tracks, wherever it is, has proven not to be successful. The idea was that people would get a hand up and they would get educated and, you know, the kids would leave and go get educated and get jobs and go live in other places. And after a while, maybe you wouldn't even need so much public housing! Seems like we need more and more public housing.

[01:14:06] And so I think we need to look more deeply at how to create economic opportunity for everybody, regardless of their race, regardless of their family background, regardless of their immigration status – I mean, it goes without saying that we can't function as a country without our immigrants. And this cruel campaign to – literally just humiliate people and injure them, kill

them, is just born of sheer hatred. Hatred can't solve any problems, it has to be set aside. If, unfortunately, you're a hating person, then you can't be part of the solution. Maybe you won't be as much of a hating person if the rest of us can come up with something that works, but hatred never solved anything. So I think either we're gonna decide what our problems are and face them and try to solve them – and I think we have a good chance of success if we do that, because we have *immense* resources in this country. Human resources, economic resources, mineral resources. The other is that we just continue to divide and conquer, and this has been done to us. It is not – I mean, human beings are basically afraid of something they don't know, something new. That's a defense mechanism, it's born into babies; that if a stranger comes, if the light goes away, whatever – you smell something you don't know, you cry. *It's different, I don't like it!* As we grow up, we learn that some things that are unfamiliar are actually okay and some things are still to worry about, and so forth. We are being constantly attacked – by social media particularly, but not only – to turn against, to fear, things that may be kind of ordinary, like voting by mail.

[01:16:30] You know – [laughs] just, like, *really?* And then you have to be suspicious – why are we against voting by mail? Because we're trying to stop people who live in remote areas from voting or we're trying to stop people who don't own a car from voting, or, you know. So I'm afraid if that division continues, it could get really bad. What we've already done – and I don't want to go down the road of the current administration, either – but what has happened over the past *short* period of time, two years, to ruin our allies, our relationships with other countries around the world. And they'll never trust us again, or at least not for a very long time, because they could always say, “Well, four years from now another person like Mr. Trump could come into office and turn against us, so you're not dependable. We can't rely on you.” So I'm very, very scared about all of that. I don't think it would be the worst thing in the world if the United States became England or France, you know – or Germany, which would be most likely because it's going to have a big, robust economy. But not be the be-all and end-all leader of the world, but who's going to do that instead? How are we gonna like it when we're, you know, China's in charge or Russia – I don't think Russia's going to be in charge, because they're too... based on hate. But China is very, very smart, and they don't mind playing the long game. They have patience, which Americans don't have.

FRANCIS: [01:18:29] Is there any advice you would give to activists today? Particularly young activists who have kind of been born into... a failing empire, that are kind of feeling the weight of this pessimism and dissociation from their fellow citizens?

BARRY: [01:18:44] I think it's really hard. I don't wanna, you know, sugarcoat anything. But I do think that the best thing that a person can do – I find myself doing this – is kind of... take care of your community. The people you care about, the people who care about you... where you get your food, where you – you know, Charlotte and I just applied for a home equity line of credit, because we have to do some work on our house. And we actually had been accepted for this line of credit, all we had to do was close, and we learned that the bank that we had applied to was – had to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars, financed the building of these private prisons. So we had to say, “No thank you.” [laughs] There – you just don't know. But I think you have to identify your values, know what it is that is really important to you, know what kind of person you are, in your heart. And find people who share those values. They don't have to be just like you, but they have values that are compatible with yours. And form a community and take care of each other.

[01:20:11] And hopefully those little groups get – you know, go out to a No Kings march or a pride march, and they meet others that may or may not be just like you but they share your values, and off we go, and soon you have a giant crowd, and maybe that works. But just – people need to have a certain basic sense of confidence in order to be able to carry on life. And it is really dangerous right now. You know, I told you we have a trans grandson, who we worry about a lot. I think in general he's doing incredibly well – um, he has a good job, he has a community of friends, but he can't get a passport. You know, there are things that, um – we bought a number of years ago, some land in Wyoming that we were gonna leave to him. But it's not safe for him to be in Wyoming, so we're not gonna do that. You know, it's stuff like that that makes you...

[01:21:20] And Charlotte and I finally got married in the middle of the pandemic, after being together, I think, 33 years. Is our marriage going to become invalid, and what will happen then? What about families with children? There's a lot to worry about. And the only solution is to form

your community and stick with it, stick there. And be reliable, be good. [laughs] And be sad, and be angry, and be all the things you are. But in a place where you feel safe.

FRANCIS: [01:21:58] Thank you, Miranda. I really appreciate that. We are... I'm pushing the limits quite a bit on our allotted time, but before we wrap up, is there anything else you would like to say? Anyone else you'd like to highlight who's been a source of support in your life, or stories you'd like to share? Just to wrap us up.

BARRY: [01:22:23] Well, I want to think about Hudson a little more.

FRANCIS: [01:22:25] Sure.

BARRY: [01:22:26] And see, you know, the trio of wizards – Theresa Parsons and Mark Horton and David Murphy, who made the move happen from the old building to this building, are people who really deserve the honor of this community. And we actually are going to honor them at the gala this fall, it's ten years since we've been in this building.

FRANCIS: [01:22:47] [crosstalk] Oh, wonderful.

BARRY: [01:22:50] But that's an example of people who just conceived an idea and stuck with it and figured out a way to make it happen. Um, my dear friend Liz Nealon, who lives near here still, we've been through – I call her my goodsister. [laughs] We've, um – she taught me so much, she was the head of... well, she worked at MTV in the early years, when I was at *American Playhouse* she was at MTV founding MTV networks around the world.

FRANCIS: [01:23:29] Wow.

BARRY: [01:23:30] She's a dynamo, and really fun. And of course my beloved Charlotte. It's an amazing thing, having a forty-year relationship, I feel so fortunate to have that experience. Our society, our culture, you know, it's full of *how* to fall in love, but it's not so – doesn't have a lot of role models for how to make a relationship work for a long time. And we weren't always, you

know, in perfect sync. We had some really tough times. But I feel so grateful that we're still together, and we have her kids and... there's something to be said for weathering the tough times because there is value in continuity and longevity in a relationship, and I think sometimes people are too quick to say, "No, this isn't what I was looking for," because our culture says, you know, love is just wonderful and perfect all the time. Um, and you need to weigh – well, what about this person? Is this someone who really shares your values? Is this someone who will be there for you, and you will be there for them? And that's a really great thing.

FRANCIS: [01:24:59] Alright. Miranda, thank you so much for meeting for – with me today. I've really enjoyed talking with you.

BARRY: [01:25:05] Thank you, you too! It's been a great experience.