

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Whitney Strub: I will start recording too, if that's all right. We are on the air now and on the record. I think maybe what we should do is begin by just going around the table, and everybody introducing themselves. It'll help the transcriber as well put names to voices. This is Whitney Strub with the Queer Newark Oral History Project. It's August 6, 2016. We're in Hillsborough, New Jersey talking about Raymond Proctor with the Proctor Family.

Mary Rizzo: This is Mary Rizzo with the Queer Newark Oral History Project.

Richard Proctor: Rizzo, is it?

Mary Rizzo: Rizzo, yes.

Debra Carter: Why don't you introduce yourself there?

Richard Proctor: Richard Proctor, Ray Proctor's brother.

Debra Carter: Debra Carter, Ray Proctor's niece.

Kevin Proctor: Kevin Proctor, Ray Proctor's nephew.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Angela Proctor Weaver, Ray's niece.

Whitney Strub: Great. Thank you everyone for doing this. Richard, I guess we'll probably start with you. Everybody, feel free to jump in and shape this as we go. Maybe you could begin by telling us a little about the family background, about your parents, when you and Raymond were born, where you were born, religious background, things like that just to give a profile.

Richard Proctor: Well, we were both born in New Orleans, Louisiana. —I lived there until I graduated from high school the second year. Ray followed me a year later. Then he moved to New York. I moved to New York when I graduated. He moved to New York a year later when he graduated.

Our life in New Orleans? Well, I don't know what I can say about Ray's life. He'd have to pretty much say himself. We lived pretty separately. We were close emotionally, but I did my thing. He did his thing. I was very sports oriented. He was not. He was more in the home doing things. I was very active with sports, especially football. What else?

Angela Proctor Weaver: Your parents?

Richard Proctor: Huh?

Angela Proctor Weaver: Your parents.

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Richard Proctor: My parents, yeah, the relationship with the parents. My mother, I call her a bully in my—this is my second marriage. They're the children of my first marriage. I've been in my second marriage now for 28 years. My present wife asked me not to call my mother a bully. She and my mother, they really loved each other. They were together very closely.

[Laughter]

Richard Proctor: I call my mother a bully because she was a—

Debra Carter: Because she was a bully!

Richard Proctor: When we grew up, here's the line. You don't even walk near the line. Once it's over the line, much less over the line.

Debra Carter: You know Raymond was all over the line!

[Laughter]

Debra Carter: It was like, you're not gonna draw any lines on me, lady!

Richard Proctor: I had a lovely coming up time. The first year, when I was here alone and Ray was in his senior year, he and my mother, they really battled. Raymond was, I said, a rebel. He was very rebellious to my mother. My mother, "You don't get near that line!" like Debra said. He was always trying to cross the line. They had a lot of fights.

Angela Proctor Weaver: He wasn't sneaky about it either.

Debra Carter: He knew his rights as a human!

Angela Proctor Weaver: He's like, "Here, I stepped on it!"

Debra Carter: He was very clear about who he was.

Whitney Strub: What kind of rebellion would he engage in as a teenager? What would that look like?

Debra Carter: Didn't he get thrown out of a few schools?

Angela Proctor Weaver: Did he?

Richard Proctor: I'm not sure.

Debra Carter: Xavier prep, or something like that?

Angela Proctor Weaver: That was Daddy.

Debra Carter: If Daddy got thrown out, you know Raymond got thrown out!
[Laughter]

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Richard Proctor: What kind of things did he do? I don't remember so much, except that my mother would write these letters, telling me how horrible Raymond was behaving. Raymond found one of those letters when he came to live in New York, and he was furious. He claimed that she was lying. He was furious. It's hard to answer. I can't answer your question.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Because her version of him stepping on the line could have just been coming close to the line.

Richard Proctor: That's true. You're right, Angela.

Debra Carter: Raymond had a flair for the dramatic that he got from his mother, so you could imagine the two dramatic ones living together.

Richard Proctor: That's right. Debra's right.

Debra Carter: She was, "Ahh!" and he was like, "Ah!" It just really—

Whitney Strub: At what age did you guys leave New Orleans?

Richard Proctor: I was 18, and then a year later he was 18. He came up.

Whitney Strub: Did you guys go into the service?

Richard Proctor: When I was 20. Raymond was drafted subsequently as well. About this rebelliousness though, in terms trying to answer your question, I can't give you details of what he and my mother fought about. The army was the same thing. He was rebellious in the army. I was just the goody two shoes. I got special awards and everything. Ray was in constant fights with the authorities, with the sergeants and people. He just rebelled.

Debra Carter: He knew who he was, and he wanted—

Angela Proctor Weaver: He had questions. He wanted to know stuff, and they didn't like that.

Whitney Strub: What was he like as a child?

Richard Proctor: I don't really remember. I don't really remember him as a child. I really don't. I don't remember him getting in trouble. He stayed in the house a lot. I was out playing football. I don't remember much about him coming up.

Whitney Strub: Were you raised in a religious tradition?

Richard Proctor: Yes. We were Catholics.

Debra Carter: That's probably what the fights were about?

Richard Proctor: Huh?

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Debra Carter: I said that's probably what the fights were about.

Richard Proctor: We were brought up as Roman Catholics. I stayed with it really 'till into my second marriage, and I was married to their mother for 23 years. I was in it for a long time, but I don't really practice anymore. Raymond gave it up ages ago too. I'm sure before I did.

Whitney Strub: What brought you to New York?

Richard Proctor: Well, my mother and father were divorced, and my father left my mother. I don't ever remember him living in the same house with us. He was gone. He was presumably he lived with us for a while. I don't remember that, ever. When I graduated from high school, he wanted me to come up and theoretically go to college if I wanted to go to college.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Was he going to pay for college?

Richard Proctor: Well, that was a problem. At that time, this was in 1950. At that time, you could go to city college for free, but you had to be a resident, and have had been a resident for a year. Which I did not. I had not been a resident for a year. I just come up. I couldn't go for free. He didn't have the money to pay for me. I went as a non-matriculated student, part-time. I was studying photography then. I really wanted to be a motion picture Director of Photography. That was my goal, which never happened.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Oh, learn something new every day.

Debra Carter: Oh, I knew that.

Kevin Proctor: He said that before.

Richard Proctor: Which never happened.

Angela Proctor Weaver: No, I didn't know that.

Kevin Proctor: He said that before.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I knew photography, but I didn't know that.

Richard Proctor: Yeah, motion picture photography. I have a picture somewhere of me operating the camera. Anyway, that never happened. Back to Raymond, when he came up, I don't remember what happened about college. I don't really remember. I know he eventually went to Seton Hall. He graduated from Seton Hall. The process was we came up, we were drafted. I stayed in New Jersey for two years. I was always asking questions, so I was afraid to go to Korea. This was during the Korean War. I didn't want to go to Korea. In basic training, I asked a million questions.

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I'd get on all the other private's nerves, because for the last part of the course, this instructor would always say, "Are there any questions?" I always had questions. That was good for me, because they said this boy wants to learn everything. We'll send him to leadership school. They sent me to leadership school. I did the same thing, because I didn't want to go to Korea. I kept asking questions. Put my hand up. They said, "We'll put this kid on the staff. He loves to learn everything." I became a leadership school staff member and stayed here in New Jersey for two years.

Ray on the other hand was rebellious. His rebellion led him to go overseas. He went all kinds of places. He went to Germany. I don't know if he was out of the army or in the army at this time he went to Morocco, and France, and a whole lot of places. He did go to Germany while he was in the army. I can't give you much more information on that.

Whitney Strub: That's great.

Mary Rizzo: I was wondering, as you all were growing up as teenagers, did Ray date women, or?

Richard Proctor: That's a good question, and it's in the back of my mind, because I was thinking that might be coming up. When we were married—

Debra Carter: When we were married? *[Laughter]*

Richard Proctor: I was married to their mother. We were living on Fulton Street in the Bronx. I remember Ray brought this beautiful girl to visit us. To answer your question, he was dating. He was dating. I don't know what the facts were. At this period, I thought he was, was what?

Debra Carter: Straight?

Richard Proctor: Straight. I thought he was straight.

Kevin Proctor: We have a picture of him and one of his girlfriends.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Couple of 'em.

Debra Carter: Jewel, right?

Angela Proctor Weaver: Jewel, yeah.

Richard Proctor: Jewel was subsequent to this girl. I thought he was straight. I think in my mind now, as I look back, I think when Ray was going through that difficult time trying to figure out what he was, where he was, what was his sexual orientation. That's what I think was happening. He was exploring. I think the turning point came when

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he went to Europe in 1966, I think. We were just looking at it. He quit CORE and went to Europe.

Angela Proctor Weaver: '66, '67.

Richard Proctor: I think it was '66.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Something like that.

Whitney Strub: I think I actually have a clipping. I was going to pass it around. I think it was '65 he leaves CORE and goes to Sweden. Is that what you mean?

Debra Carter: Oh, '65. Wow. Thank you.

Richard Proctor: I saw Sweden on there. I read that last night.

Debra Carter: Oh yeah, what a funny picture. *[Laughter]*

Richard Proctor: I don't know anything about him going to Sweden, really.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I don't remember this.

Debra Carter: You were five.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I remember him leaving though.

Richard Proctor: He went to France.

Debra Carter: I remember that too.

Richard Proctor: He went to Germany. I don't know about Sweden. Maybe he went to Sweden too.

Debra Carter: *[reading]* "The articulate 31-year-old Negro." Wow. *[Laughter]* He's so well-spoken. *[Laughter]* Wow, that's deep. *[Laughter]* That's deep.

Whitney Strub: Sorry, that connected to you? I kind of interrupted your story by passing this around. That era was when you—

Richard Proctor: Yeah, I think when he went to Europe, that was the second time he had been to Europe—no, no, no. Come to think of it—

Angela Proctor Weaver: That was the first.

Richard Proctor: Wait a minute, he was—yeah, he went to Europe, no when we were in the army, he was only 20, 22 or something.

Debra Carter: This would've been the second time, right?

Richard Proctor: This would've been the second time. I think this was when he found himself in Europe with friends that he had over there. I don't know this for a fact. He never told me this, because when he came

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back he was very different. I don't remember ever seeing him with a woman after that.

Kevin Proctor: Did Ray ever say to you, "I'm gay"?

Richard Proctor: Here's what happened, because I was thinking about this recently, because I guess I was thinking about this interview, and was thinking it was coming up. What happened was this: Gail Lissek. You remember Gail Lissek?

Debra Carter: We all remember Gail Lissek.

Richard Proctor: Well, Gail Lissek knew he was gay. Way before Bea and I did—Bea is their mother. At one point, Bea, I mean Ray invited us to go to New York to have dinner with him, and we did. Bea and I did. We had dinner. I can't remember who else was there. I'm sure there were—I feel that there was one or two other people there. Anyway, he announced that he was gay.

Debra Carter: Oh, he announced it?

Richard Proctor: Yeah. It was no surprise to us, because we suspected it.

Angela Proctor Weaver: That was not the story I had heard.

Debra Carter: No, it's not the story I heard.

Richard Proctor: That's not the story you—

Debra Carter: From mom? About mom?

Richard Proctor: Okay, tell the story you heard.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Mom didn't—

Debra Carter: Catch on. Catch on.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yeah, she didn't really get it. She said, "You never really talked about it." One day, she asked Raymond, was he gay.

Kevin Proctor: I just heard this story.

Debra Carter: Me too, I know. Right? I know, Mom—

Richard Proctor: You just heard that story?

Debra Carter: Because Mom likes to tell this story.

Richard Proctor: I never heard that story.

Angela Proctor Weaver: He started laughing. "Everybody knows but you!"

Kevin Proctor: She said he fell on the floor, his feet were kicking up on the air, and he was laughing. I can't believe—you're the only one that doesn't know.

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- Debra Carter:* You're so naive! If he announced it, she missed it.
- Whitney Strub:* When would both of these stories have been? Is this still the late 1960s, or?
- Richard Proctor:* When did this happen?
- Whitney Strub:* Yeah.
- Richard Proctor:* They were just kids.
- Kevin Proctor:* That must've been in the early—
- Richard Proctor:* They were small.
- Angela Proctor Weaver:* Sixties.
- Richard Proctor:* Let me see. He had come back from Europe. We say he went to Europe in '65, '66. This was late '60s, early '70s.
- Whitney Strub:* Is it the same period for your mother's story?
- Debra Carter:* Probably. We were small. It was probably around that same era.
- Kevin Proctor:* For me, I didn't know Ray was gay for the longest.
- Debra Carter:* Oh no, we told Kevin. We told Kevin, because Kevin was saying stupid stuff.
- Kevin Proctor:* How old was I?
- Debra Carter:* You were saying like, "Look at that guy!" We're like, okay.
- [Cross-talk 16:54]
- Richard Proctor:* When the kissing thing happened, yeah, he still didn't know.
- Kevin Proctor:* They just laughed.
- Angela Proctor Weaver:* We had to sit him down. We had to tell him.
- Debra Carter:* You don't remember us telling you? You were like 17.
- Angela Proctor Weaver:* I think you were like 17 or 18.
- Debra Carter:* You were like 17.
- Angela Proctor Weaver:* You were like, "What? No!"
- Debra Carter:* You were like, "Y'all sure?"
- Kevin Proctor:* Because it was so inconsequential.
- Angela Proctor Weaver:* It truly was. Like I said, we didn't want him to get married, and have kids, and replace us.

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Whitney Strub: Do you mind retelling your story as well? Of realizing that Raymond was gay. We were talking about it before we recorded. Might as well put it into—

Debra Carter: I don't know. What did I say? About when he kissed the guy?

Whitney Strub: Yeah, yeah.

Debra Carter: Oh, right. We had all gone out for dinner. Do you remember this thing?

Richard Proctor: You told me. You told me about it.

Debra Carter: His name was Maurice.

Angela Proctor Weaver: We were at Ray's house, weren't we?

Debra Carter: We were in the city. We got to some restaurant for dinner. We might've been at Ray's house. Went for dinner with this guy Maurice. We had met Maurice a couple of times. Then after dinner, we were walking him to the train station, because we were out on the street when it happened.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I don't remember Daddy and Mom there.

Debra Carter: I didn't say they were there. Maybe they were, I don't know.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I don't think they were there.

Richard Proctor: No, you told me about this.

Debra Carter: Maybe you weren't there, we went out for dinner. Then we're walking Maurice to his train. Then he kissed him. It wasn't a passionate kiss. It was just on the lips. We were like—

Angela Proctor Weaver: We were like looking each other like, "Did you see that?"

Debra Carter: I didn't know guys did that! It was no big deal. We liked Maurice, and we knew he was going away. I think he was going to Africa. We were like, "Alright, well, they're not going to see—" there was no conversation about it. It was not like no conversation but it was tense. I don't even think the three of us talked about it. Later, we discovered that we all noticed it. It was not an issue. It was just like, "Wow, Raymond's so cool." Just like the coolest person. He didn't have these hang-ups. We thought it was not an issue-

Kevin Proctor: My memory of Raymond is him being gay, once I even knew he was gay, it wasn't like he had boyfriends coming around. He had so many friends all the time anyway, but I don't really recall him having serious relationships for a long period of time if at all.

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Richard Proctor: I do not either. That's a significant. This is a significant point for me. I don't remember him having a long-term relationship with any guy.

Debra Carter: Well, see, that's interesting because we easily might not have known.

Richard Proctor: Well, that's right, exactly.

Debra Carter: I know he had a relationship with John who he moved to New York with.

Richard Proctor: He had 'em, I'm sure, but he didn't reveal 'em.

Kevin Proctor: It wasn't like, "This was my guy," kinda thing.

Richard Proctor: Exactly.

Debra Carter: Well, no, he didn't.

Kevin Proctor: Always around or whatever.

Debra Carter: Again, when he moved to New York and moved in with John whatever his name is. John Davis. No, it was John Davis that moved into West 21st Street. Listen. We didn't have any discussion about it, but I noticed it was one bedroom. I was like, "That's interesting!"

Angela Proctor Weaver: I didn't even realize there were two people there. I didn't even realize there were two people there.

Richard Proctor: I didn't realize—

Debra Carter: Well—

Richard Proctor: - John Davis lived there either—

Debra Carter: - we didn't see a lot of John.

Kevin Proctor: I don't think—

Richard Proctor: I knew it was John—

Kevin Proctor: - lived there.

Richard Proctor: Davis' apartment.

Debra Carter: He did live there.

Kevin Proctor: He was sub-leasing it for him.

Debra Carter: No, after they stopped seeing each other. John moved out.

Kevin Proctor: You know more than I know.

Debra Carter: That's a discussion, because Raymond—

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Richard Proctor: That's probably why.

Debra Carter: and I talked about that.

Richard Proctor: You said they broke up?

Debra Carter: When they broke up, Raymond got the apartment.

Richard Proctor: I see. right

Kevin Proctor: Do you ever remember seeing that guy?

Debra Carter: Vaguely. I remember seeing him. Vaguely.

Kevin Proctor: I don't ever remember him.

Richard Proctor: Seeing who?

Debra Carter: John Davis. If I'm not mistaken, he was seeing John Davis, or friends with him, or John was around when he was living on Park Avenue.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Who were these—there were times—

Debra Carter: When Raymond was on Park Avenue.

Kevin Proctor: Oh, you mean in East Orange?

Debra Carter: In East Orange, yeah. John was around and then he moved to New York. They lived together. Then John moved out.

Kevin Proctor: Twenty-first street.

Debra Carter: On 21st Street, right. I mean, I know he had relationship with John. I always thought he had relationship with Andre that was a long-term relationship.

Kevin Proctor: He may have had relationships, but it wasn't obvious to me.

Richard Proctor: Right, right. It wasn't obvious. It wasn't obvious to me either. There was another guy—is there somebody with a name with a W? I was asking Angela this.

Debra Carter: A W?

Richard Proctor: William something? Somebody, one of you told me this was his lover. One of you told me that.

Debra Carter: We don't know a W.

Richard Proctor: I can't remember the name.

Debra Carter: What about him? Do you know anything about him?

Richard Proctor: No, no.

Debra Carter: That's all you know?

Queer Newark Oral History Project

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Richard Proctor: All I know they were good friends, that's all.

Kevin Proctor: How about Terrence?

Richard Proctor: Who?

Kevin Proctor: Remember Terrence?

Debra Carter: Oh! Terrence!

Richard Proctor: That's who I'm trying to think of.

Debra Carter: Yeah, I think he was a boyfriend.

Angela Proctor Weaver: What I was going to say was I remember throughout growing up, there would be times when Raymond would take us to South Mountain Reservation, and we would go hiking and what not. When he did those things, there would be times when there would be him, and someone. Then that person for quite a while.

Debra Carter: Right, exactly. Then it'd be someone else.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Then it'd be somebody different. I would assume that would be more of a long-term relationship.

Richard Proctor: Terrence was one of these.

Debra Carter: Yeah, Terrence was around for a while. We liked him.

Richard Proctor: I didn't really know him, but I heard the name many times.

Kevin Proctor: He works I think in the New York school system as something.

Debra Carter: Didn't we run into him once in the city?

Kevin Proctor: Maybe.

Debra Carter: I swear. We were walking down the street when we were working in Manhattan and ran into him.

Kevin Proctor: I think you're right.

Debra Carter: Yeah. I think there were some long-term relationships.

Kevin Proctor: The point is, if he did have long-term relationships, we didn't really know the extent of them. I didn't. I don't know if anyone else did.

Richard Proctor: I didn't either.

Angela Proctor Weaver: What did we care?

Debra Carter: Right.

Mary Rizzo: Can I ask one more question about growing up in your teenage years, particularly with Ray? Was there any bullying, or did people outside see him as gay, or did that not become clear?

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Richard Proctor: I have no knowledge of that. I have no knowledge of that, because I didn't even know he was gay myself.

Mary Rizzo: Right.

Richard Proctor: I don't recall any bullying or problems of that nature at all.

Mary Rizzo: Was he popular as a young man?

Richard Proctor: Sure. He was popular. He was always very popular with his swagger. He always had this swagger.

Debra Carter: They had an interesting relationship, my father and his brother. They were like as opposite as you could imagine. Everything. Just everything he is. Just the opposite.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Neither had a lot of tolerance for the other—

Debra Carter: They didn't have a lot of patience for each other.

Angela Proctor Weaver: It was just like kinda got on each other's nerves.

Debra Carter: It was really interesting.

Richard Proctor: I didn't hear. What did you say?

Angela Proctor Weaver: You didn't have a lot of tolerance.

Richard Proctor: We did not?

Angela Proctor Weaver: No!

Debra Carter: No!

Richard Proctor: I thought we did.

Angela Proctor Weaver: They got on each other's nerves.

Debra Carter: It was really interesting.

Angela Proctor Weaver: They were very supportive of each other.

Debra Carter: They were very supportive, and they always seemed very close. They were just different. They were just different. For them to the day Raymond died. Listen, this was one of the last times I saw Raymond alive. My father came in. It was the—

Angela Proctor Weaver: Night before he died.

Debra Carter: - night before he died. My father came to the hospital in some patent leather shoes that Raymond thought were awful.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Looked down. Looked over the hospital—

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- Debra Carter:* He could barely move. *[Laughter]* It was just like, oh my God. Even to the very end. They just were opposites, you know? Very different.
- Richard Proctor:* My beautiful shoes. He didn't like them.
- Debra Carter:* You know how in a relationship, with parents who don't get along, and you pick up that essence as children, that there's something wrong and tension? They didn't always get along, but there was never that. It never felt like they didn't love each other, or they weren't close or supportive of one another. I honestly think in some ways, that that informed the way we relate, because the three of us are very close. It was just sort of that's the way you relate to your sibling. You don't have to like everything they do, but you love them. You're in their corner. You're with them. Yeah.
- Whitney Strub:* Sorry, this is way out of timeline now. Just to go back, I don't think I actually got on record when you and Raymond were born. Raymond was in 1934, and is that right?
- Richard Proctor:* Yeah, I can give you the exact dates. You can jot 'em down if you want. I was born December 12th, 1932. Ray was born January 21st, 1934. Thirteen months' difference.
- Whitney Strub:* Thanks. So many different places to pick up from. One thing you mentioned that we didn't follow through on was you said after Raymond went to Europe and came back, he had really changed. I was wondering if you could elaborate on that? What did that look like?
- Richard Proctor:* I never saw him with a woman anymore after that ever, not that I can remember. Like Kevin said, he had these lovers. I didn't know they were lovers. They were just friends.
- Debra Carter:* Right, because he had so many friends.
- Whitney Strub:* Did his personality change too? I wasn't quite sure what you mean by that.
- Richard Proctor:* I remember, I just asked about Gail. Raymond came back from Europe, and he was wearing these—he didn't like my shoes. I didn't like his pants. He had on these pants. They were flared pants.
- Kevin Proctor:* Never forgot that.
- Richard Proctor:* They were every color of the rainbow.
- Angela Proctor Weaver:* How many times did that happen? He was pretty conservative though.

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Richard Proctor: Huh?

Angela Proctor Weaver: I said how many times—oh, he went through that period, I guess you're saying.

Debra Carter: It was the '70s. Go ahead.

Richard Proctor: Yeah, all that flamboyance of it. I said, "Oh my God." Gail said something like, she was tolerant. Like, that's alright. I said, "Oh."
[Laughter]

Debra Carter: I didn't know that Raymond and Gail were friends.

Richard Proctor: Oh, you didn't?

Debra Carter: I thought Gail was your friend.

Richard Proctor: Oh, she was my friend, but—

Debra Carter: She was Raymond's friend first.

Richard Proctor: - she was his friend first.

Debra Carter: I didn't know that. I'm trying to get back to your question. When he came back to Europe, he'd just kinda come into his own, would you say that?

Richard Proctor: In terms of, right. Exactly.

Debra Carter: In terms of the way he carried himself?

Richard Proctor: The way he carried himself. He was more self-confident. Oh yeah, he was a different person. Much more self-confident. Much more self-confident.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Oh, that's interesting.

Richard Proctor: Huh?

Angela Proctor Weaver: Interesting. That's interesting.

Richard Proctor: Yeah, he was much more self-confident. Well, I think he had gotten over in his own mind about the sexual orientation thing. He felt much more at ease.

Kevin Proctor: Was Europe back in those days more tolerant to gay relationships in America?

Richard Proctor: Was society?

Kevin Proctor: Yeah, society.

Richard Proctor: Hell no.

Kevin Proctor: In Europe.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

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Date: August 6, 2016

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- Debra Carter:* In Europe, in Europe.
- Richard Proctor:* Oh, Europe.
- Debra Carter:* I'm sure it was.
- Richard Proctor:* I don't know.
- Kevin Proctor:* Maybe that may have had something to do with it.
- Debra Carter:* My guess that it was. Absolutely.
- Richard Proctor:* It probably was, I guess so. I don't know. I would think so.
- Whitney Strub:* Did you have a—
- Mary Rizzo:* No, go ahead.
- Whitney Strub:* You guys had moved to New York. How did you then end up in Newark, Essex CORE? How did you get from New York to Essex County?
- Richard Proctor:* Me?
- Whitney Strub:* Both of you. You both wound up in Newark together.
- Richard Proctor:* We both did. We were in New York with my father. He lived on 159 Street. That's where we lived. When we came out of the service, I was there for two years. My father said do you wanna—he was moving to Teaneck, New Jersey at that time. During that two-year period, he was moving while I was in the army. He had made the decision to move to Teaneck, New Jersey from New York. He said, "I'm moving to Teaneck, and do you wanna come with me?" I said yeah, I'll be glad to come over to Teaneck. That's how I got to Jersey. While I was in Teaneck New Jersey, that's when I met Bea, and we got married. We lived a number of places. Actually, what happened was the first thing we did was actually, right, we moved. The first place we lived after we were married was in the Bronx. On Fulton Avenue. We weren't there long. Then we moved back to New Jersey.
- Debra Carter:* When did Raymond come to—
- Richard Proctor:* We lived in three or four different cities. Englewood, Orange, East Orange. Ray, now what about Ray?
- Kevin Proctor:* Did you and Ray live with your father when you came to New York?
- Richard Proctor:* Yes.
- Whitney Strub:* In Harlem?

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Richard Proctor: Yes, Washington Heights.

Debra Carter: Whatever. [Laughter]

Richard Proctor: Yeah, we lived together on 159 Street. Eventually, what we did was my father was a superintendent. He lived rent free. He took care of 20 units in the building. He took care of cleaning the halls, and fixing the fixtures, and bringing the heat up, and all that kind of stuff. He lived on the first floor. That's where we were. When my brother came out of the army, it was a little crowded for us with another party. We were able to rent a room on the fifth floor.

Debra Carter: You and Raymond?

Richard Proctor: Me and Raymond, from Mrs. Holmes. You all wouldn't know Mrs. Holmes.

Angela Proctor Weaver: How in the world can he remember that name?

Richard Proctor: Do you remember that name?

Angela Proctor Weaver: No, I said how do YOU remember that name?

Debra Carter: No, how do YOU?

Richard Proctor: Oh yeah, I remember Mrs. Holmes. She's a very nice woman. She was a very nice woman. We rented a room with Mrs. Holmes. I went to Teaneck with—

Kevin Proctor: No, you went to the Bronx, you said? Then from the Bronx you name—

Richard Proctor: I'm trying to figure out what happened with him. I don't know. I don't remember him ever coming to Jersey with us in Teaneck. He maybe what happened then was he got that apartment on—

Debra Carter: Park Avenue.

Richard Proctor: Not Park Avenue.

Debra Carter: Not Park Avenue?

Richard Proctor: Before Park Avenue.

Debra Carter: Before Park Avenue. I vaguely remember that.

Richard Proctor: I think the building has been torn down.

Angela Proctor Weaver: It was where 280 is. Where 280 is.

Richard Proctor: Huh?

Angela Proctor Weaver: Where 280 is.

Debra Carter: Where 280 is.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Richard Proctor: Exactly. That's where he was.

Kevin Proctor: That's the first place he lived in New Jersey?

Richard Proctor: I think that's the first place he lived in New Jersey.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yeah, I remember that.

Kevin Proctor: What town was that?

Angela Proctor Weaver: East Orange.

Richard Proctor: It was in East Orange. They build the road 280 and all of that new roads and everything.

Angela Proctor Weaver: You know where the fire department is? It was like over there.

Debra Carter: We had to have been at 52 by then, because I remember—

Angela Proctor Weaver: He was there first.

Kevin Proctor: We had to be at 52 when he lived there, because I remember when 280 was built.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yes.

Richard Proctor: Yeah.

Kevin Proctor: You do?

Debra Carter: I do.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I do too.

Debra Carter: Because I used to have to walk to the library. Then they closed the road, and I had to go a long way to get to the library.

Kevin Proctor: You old.

Debra Carter: It had to have been when we were—

Angela Proctor Weaver: It was.

Richard Proctor: Yeah, that's when he was a freedom rider.

Whitney Strub: Tell us about that.

Richard Proctor: That's when he was a freedom rider. I get kind of choked up with some of this stuff. I remember, I had come over early to his home. Some of these readings, this Doug Eldridge, Doug wrote—

Debra Carter: He did a lot of stuff, yeah.

Richard Proctor: He wrote most of the stuff. For a quick aside with Doug Eldridge, when I became involved with CORE, Raymond and Bob Curvin, they were already involved. I was in school then when I graduated.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

When I got my master's. Then I started working with them in CORE. Bob Curvin asked me to contact—well, we were doing some kind of activity. We were gonna do picketing, or whatever we were gonna do. Curvin asked me. He was the CORE chairman at the time. He asked me to contact the newspaper and have a press release put out. That's the name I had always called. Doug Eldridge. I thought that was his thing, because he wrote our stuff. I asked for Doug Aldridge, and I said, "Yeah, I'm asking for you, because I wanna get this press release." He says, "Well, I don't wanna be known as in effect a CORE writer. I'm helping a civil rights movement. I don't wanna be labeled that way."

Debra Carter: Oh, that's interesting.

Richard Proctor: Yeah, I don't wanna be labeled that way.

Debra Carter: Well, it's too late. Look at all these clippings.

Richard Proctor: My thing was that's all we see your name.

Debra Carter: Right, right.

Richard Proctor: I was embarrassed. Anyway, Doug Eldridge. What I was gonna say about this was some of these places—oh, somebody, whether it was Doug Eldridge or someone else wrote about Ray saying he was meticulously dressed.

Debra Carter: Isn't that interesting?

Whitney Strub: That may be in this article, the other one I brought, about him being elected—wait, am I passing the wrong one? Sorry.

Richard Proctor: Anyway, one of 'em said that—

Angela Proctor Weaver: Thank you.

Richard Proctor: We're talking about Raymond and the freedom rides. I was at his house that morning at the apartment which is no longer existing. He was getting all dressed up. I remember so well, he was getting all dressed up with his tie, and his jacket. Oh, he was being very meticulous about it. Fastidious. I remember that very well. He wanted to know if I wanted to go. I did wanna go, but I had a wife and three kids. I can't go down there and get hit in the head and killed. I got a wife and three kids to take care of. I mean, I'd like to go, but you alone. You don't have. If you dead, you dead.

Debra Carter: Hey! *[Laughter]*

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Richard Proctor: If I'm dead, I got three kids and a wife! I couldn't go. I remember that. Anyway—

Debra Carter: How many times did he do it, daddy?

Richard Proctor: I really don't know. I really don't know how many times he did it, but he did that—

Debra Carter: Did he get arrested?

Richard Proctor: He did that morning. No, not to my knowledge, he never was arrested. I don't think he was ever injured or anything like that. I don't know how many times he did it. Anyway, that was freedom rides. At some point, subsequent to that, he got an apartment on the top floor, Park Avenue in East Orange, right along the parkway.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Garden state.

Richard Proctor: Garden state parkway. His apartment overlooked the Garden state parkway. You could look out and—

Debra Carter: We used to watch the cars go by. *[Laughter]*

Richard Proctor: See the cars go by, right.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Look in other apartments with the binoculars.

Debra Carter: *[Laughter]* Yeah. Another trick he taught us. *[Laughter]* He knew how to entertain us. *[Laughter]*

Angela Proctor Weaver: *[Inaudible 37:50]*

Debra Carter: *[Laughter]*

Richard Proctor: He lived there. He lived there. Now comes confusion again, because he went to Europe. That's where he and Rita had the fight when they came back.

Debra Carter: My aunt was—

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Richard Proctor: I guess he was living there at Park Avenue. That was '66. He went to Europe. He went to Europe. I told you, my sister died a month ago. Well, he allowed that sister to take over the apartment.

Debra Carter: To stay.

Richard Proctor: To stay while he was in Europe. I don't know. I never heard the agreement.

Debra Carter: [Laughter]

Richard Proctor: On his part, she was supposed to move, give him his apartment back when he got back. Her position was no, that was her apartment. They had the biggest fight.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Well, how could that be when he had all his stuff still there? That wouldn't make sense.

Debra Carter: Right!

Richard Proctor: That was the biggest fight.

Debra Carter: Yeah, Rita. Just live in my house. When I come back from Europe, I'll go find some place else to live! [Laughter]

Angela Proctor Weaver: You can just keep my stuff too! [Laughter]

Debra Carter: You can just keep my stuff too.

Richard Proctor: It was a big fight. As I recall—

[Cross-talk 39:00]

Richard Proctor: - she put some of his stuff out, didn't she?

Angela Proctor Weaver: I remember her mom says her boyfriend—

Kevin Proctor: Some football player.

Debra Carter: Some football player.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Angela Proctor Weaver: Some football player was gonna beat Raymond up. Raymond came over, talking about I'm gonna beat his ass up. Mom said, "You need to sit your little skinny butt down. How you gonna go beat him up, and he's a football player?"

[Laughter]

Richard Proctor: Professional football player.

[Laughter]

Mary Rizzo: What was he doing for work at this point? I know you said that—

Debra Carter: Oh yeah, work.

Mary Rizzo: - he didn't necessarily work.

Debra Carter: He worked in the beginning, until he figured out how not to work!
[Laughter]

Richard Proctor: He became a social worker. He was a social worker with the welfare board, Essex county welfare board. He was a social worker. Now, the social worker, yeah, that's right. He was doing the social. I guess when he came back, he probably returned to the welfare board, I guess. I don't have good remembrance of that, but that's probably what happened, 'cause he was there before. I know in '63, he was there, 'cause that was the march on Washington. We all went together in his supervisor's car.

Debra Carter: Is that right?! *[Laughter]* How'd he swing that? *[Laughter]*

Richard Proctor: I drove the car back. Huh?

Debra Carter: I said how'd he swing that? *[Laughter]* How did he swing that? Getting the supervisors? He was charming, right? *[Laughter]*

Richard Proctor: Like he say, he had a lot of friends. He had a lot of friends. He had a lot of friends. That's right. She had this big thunderbird. They talked me into driving back. I drove back, in the wrong gear.

[Laughter]

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Richard Proctor: I'll never forget. When I discovered it was the wrong gear, she said, "You had it in that gear all the while?" I said, "Yeah." I said, "Well, I didn't know." She says, "Well, you coulda asked."

[Laughter]

Angela Proctor Weaver: Who said that? Who's saying that?

Richard Proctor: Huh?

Angela Proctor Weaver: Who was saying that?

Richard Proctor: His supervisor who owned the car. Thunderbird. We drove to march on Washington and back. I didn't drive there. I drove back. Anyway, yeah, that was '63. He was working at the welfare board then. I guess he was there 'til '66. Went to Europe. Came back. I presume he went right back to the welfare board.

Whitney Strub: Then you'd gone to Seton Hall before that?

Debra Carter: Right, after the service, right, Daddy? He went to college? He went to Seton Hall after the service.

Richard Proctor: Right. Right. Right.

Whitney Strub: Can you say a little about the kinds of activism that both you and Raymond were involved in with CORE? I know a lot of it was about employment, I believe.

Richard Proctor: Yeah, he—

Debra Carter: Here, you wanna use these?

Richard Proctor: After Bob Curvin retired as the chairman of the chapter, Raymond became the chairman of the chapter. I became the employment committee chairman. In other words, a step down. Employment committee chairman. There were a number of committees. I was one of the committee chairman. Raymond was the leader of the chapter. The chapter director. We did that for years. I'm trying to think. Trying to think. When did he say he stepped down? What year?

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Angela Proctor Weaver: Oh yeah, [cross-talk 42:26]—

Whitney Strub: The next year, in '65.

Richard Proctor: '65 they say?

Whitney Strub: Yeah, I think it's May 9, '65.

Richard Proctor: '65? Yeah, Proctor leaving CORE post, '65. Okay, yeah. That's when he—okay, that's when he went to Europe. That's when it says Sweden, huh? Yeah, that's when he went to Europe. He was working at the welfare board. Right, he and Curvin, they were working at the welfare board. He went there. They came back, and went back to the welfare board and college. I'm trying to remember if—I don't remember him working with CORE again after that. Maybe he did, maybe he didn't. I can't remember.

Mary Rizzo: Did you continue to work with—

Richard Proctor: I'm sorry?

Mary Rizzo: Did you continue to work with CORE after he was—

Richard Proctor: Yes, I continued for many years. As a matter of fact, I represented CORE on the job I said Ken Gibson had this Business Industrial Coordinating Council. The Business Industrial Coordinating Council was a forum of business people and civil rights people. They came. They wanted to be a part of it to keep CORE from picketing them and raising hell with them. They came to the forum and tried to be good guys.

Debra Carter: That's on the day he died, only in 1964.

Richard Proctor: They had the civil rights group there. I represented CORE. I did that for 10 years with the BICC. For 10 years I represented CORE at the BICC, Business Industrial Coordinating Council. One of the jobs that I got was that I said Ken Gibson was a part of because he was a part of it, we got funding. BICC got funding from the feds through Trenton to fund employment, hard core employment programs. We taught women. We taught men. We started off with men. I remember one of the meetings that we had that I did play a significant role, because the guy who would write all of the

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

programs up to get all the funding—what do they call ‘em? Programs? Proposal writer.

He was the proposal writer. I can’t remember his name. One of these meetings, I was saying to him, “We need to get something for women, because we have more women applicants than we have male applicants!” He said, “Great!” He wrote a proposal for women. Then we had typing classes, and we had stenography classes, yeah. Anyway, the point I wanted to make about that, those programs was run by the BICC. We were like in charge. The funding came through BICC. I worked on the staff. I was also on the board, which was a direct conflict of interest. Nobody ever complained about it. I guess I was a good guy. Nobody ever complained about it. That was a direct conflict. Here I’m making rules, and then I’m working on the staff.

Debra Carter: Here’s a civil rights picketing at Rutgers’s Law School, special to the New York Times. You guys should look at these!

Whitney Strub: Yeah, absolutely.

Debra Carter: Yeah, you should look at these.

Whitney Strub: I think if you don’t mind, I’ll wait ‘til we’re done recording, and then if I can photograph that.

Debra Carter: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I’m just looking while you talk.

Whitney Strub: Were you gonna ask about police issues around the courts? I wanna come back to a different thing, if I can.

Mary Rizzo: Sure. One of the questions I was interested in was when—so when you were working with CORE, when you and Raymond were working with CORE, you did a lot of work on employment issues. Were there other issues that CORE was involved in? In particular, was there any work on police violence or police brutality in—

Richard Proctor: Yeah, there was. Well, when the riots occurred in ’67, we were out there with flags and everything, protesting the police, police brutality. That’s when I’m trying to remember what happened. I know a black person was injured or shot. That was what set off—

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Whitney Strub: Yeah, the taxi driver John Smith.

Richard Proctor: - the revolt. We were protesting. Yeah, we were definitely protesting police brutality. No question about it. We were picketing all the time. That was—

Mary Rizzo: Before the riots happened, or only after?

Richard Proctor: I don't remember us doing it before. I don't remember us doing it before '67, '66 and '67. I don't remember us doing it then, no. We were more focused on employment. I had the employment committee, which was the most important committee. There's some things, one or two questions I'd like to share with you—I mean one or two stories, short stories I'd like to share with you about that too.

I had just graduated. I got my Master's from Teachers' College. Raymond and Bob, they had been involved in CORE. I wasn't, because I was too busy studying and taking care of my family. Studying and take care of these three. These three mouths I have to feed. I had to feed. Once I was finished with my master's, I was free. I had this extra time. I became a CORE participant. Right off the bat, they made me the chairman of the employment committee.

There's the girls' picture. We saw it a little while ago. Bob Bender's wife. Bob Bender was the employment committee chairman before me. I guess he quit or whatever, and Curvin decided to make me, asked me if I'd be the employment committee chairman, and I agreed. I took over the employment committee. That was the big focus. That was really the big focus. One of the asides I wanted to say was this: I had no experience in this.

Nobody taught me anything either. Nobody ever said, "Richard, you do this, or you do that." Bob Bender was gone. I couldn't even talk to him. I was on my own. I had to do everything on my own. I'm saying, well, how do you get this started? How do you institute? You wanna picket somebody, or you want more jobs?
[Chuckles]

Well, I can remember so well, Englehard Industries. I picked up the phone. These people didn't know me from Adam. I called up, and I said, "I'm Richard Proctor. I'm the employment committee

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

chairman for Newark Essex CORE. We'd like to sit down with you and talk about your employment." They said, "Okay." Invited me over. We set up a meeting. We set up a meeting. I had a meeting with the former governor of the state of New Jersey, Robert Meyner. Remember him? You've heard that name. You've heard Robert Meyner.

I'll never forget Robert Meyner, former governor. His hands were almost twice the size of mine. You hear Trump and what's his name? Talking about small hands? *[Laughter]*

Debra Carter: Daddy, really?!

Angela Proctor Weaver: Really? Daddy! C'mon.

Richard Proctor: Robert Meyner, we shook hands. His hands engulfed mine. Big, big hands. He liked me. He liked me. Robert Meyner, many years later, we were at another thing. I was at the affair, and he said, "Yeah, there are some of the CORE people there who helped us make changes." Because I'd seen him when he came in. Anyway, he was in the meeting. Charles Englehard, the multi-millionaire was in the meeting. I probably never told y'all none of this. Wow, to brag about—

Debra Carter: How come none of this was in your bio?! *[Laughter]*

Richard Proctor: I don't tell—

Debra Carter: Did you hear me?! *[Laughter]*

Richard Proctor: I don't wanna brag.

Debra Carter: Did you hear me?!

Richard Proctor: People are asking, so I'm telling.

Angela Proctor Weaver: He's selectively not hearing what you say.

Debra Carter: I know!

Richard Proctor: Anyway, yeah, Robert Meyner was there. Charles Englehard was there. Charles Englehard had not much to say. Meyner did most of

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

the talking. Englehard had all his top executives. Department heads. There was about 40 of them. You know who went to that meeting? Charlie Tuller.

Debra Carter: Charlie Tuller

Richard Proctor: Remember Charlie Tuller?

Debra Carter: Tuller?

Richard Proctor: Remember Charlie Tuller? Y'all will remember Charlie Tuller.

Debra Carter: Was he the one that hijacked the plane?

Angela Proctor Weaver: The one that started up—

Richard Proctor: That's right.

Debra Carter: [Laughter]

Richard Proctor: He's the one that hijacked the plane.

Debra Carter: [Laughter] I remember in second grade going to school. It was a big story. This guy hijacked a plane and took it to Cuba. I remember telling my friends, "Yeah, my dad knows that guy!"
[Laughter]

Angela Proctor Weaver: We saw him. What was that show?

Debra Carter: I saw him on America's Most Wanted! [Laughter]

Kevin Proctor: Not the guy that jumped off the plane. Not the guy that jumped off the plane with the money.

Debra Carter: Do you remember me telling you that?

Richard Proctor: I don't remember.

[Cross-talk 52:16]

Debra Carter: I was in my twenties! I'm like laying on the couch watching America's Most Wanted.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Angela Proctor Weaver: That's what it was. It was America's Most Wanted.

Debra Carter: It's the story of this guy.

Kevin Proctor: I do remember that. I do remember that.

Debra Carter: I'm like, "Oh my God!"

Richard Proctor: Ken Gibson, when it happened, I ran into him on the street. He say, "Yeah, your buddy Charlie Tuller hijacked the plane!"

[Laughter]

Angela Proctor Weaver: Oh my God.

Kevin Proctor: Remember this is being recorded.

Debra Carter: What was do you remember the story?

[Laughter]

Richard Proctor: Well, that's true! It's true! I heard one of these politicians say the other day, if you tell the truth all the time, you don't have to remember what you said. As long as you're telling the truth.

Kevin Proctor: Judge Judy says that, I believe.

Richard Proctor: I can't stand her. On file, I can't stand Judge Judy! She's a bitch!

Debra Carter: Daddy! [Laughter] I am shocked!

Richard Proctor: I hate that woman.

Debra Carter: Oh my God.

Richard Proctor: My mother loved her. Anyway, back to Englehard—

Debra Carter: Oh, is that your—

Angela Proctor Weaver: Oh, is this beeping?

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Richard Proctor: Okay.

Mary Rizzo: Oh, I have no idea. If it is beeping, what that means?

Debra Carter: We scared it.

Mary Rizzo: It seems like it's still recording, so I'll say we'll just—

Richard Proctor: We'll try to edit out those—

Mary Rizzo: Continue. Right, exactly.

Debra Carter: Yeah, right! *[Laughter]*

Angela Proctor Weaver: Does it need a battery?

Whitney Strub: The battery looks alright.

Mary Rizzo: Yeah, it looks fine. It should say if the battery's low. It is low, but it's not—

Whitney Strub: I could probably—

Mary Rizzo: This is why we have two recorders.

Whitney Strub: Yeah, we may wind up using that—

Mary Rizzo: Oh, it seems to have stopped. That's good.

Whitney Strub: This one's fine though. Anyway, that's a good moment I'm gonna guess maybe to pivot in with a question, if it's alright, which is this: I mean, it sounds like you guys were really successful with CORE in the mid-'60s. Really pressuring these companies and getting results, right? Why did Raymond step down after one year? I mean, he's elected here head in May 1964. Leaves in May 1965.

Richard Proctor: I think it's the reason you're here, because LGBT. I think he was struggling with his sexual orientation. I think he went there to find himself, and he did.

Debra Carter: He said, "Enough of this stuff!" *[Chuckles]*

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Richard Proctor: That's my analysis.

Whitney Strub: You mean he left New Jersey to go to Sweden for that? Is that what you mean?

Richard Proctor: Yeah, to—

Debra Carter: Right, right.

Whitney Strub: Gotcha.

Richard Proctor: I don't remember the Sweden thing at all. All I know is he went to Europe. As I recall, he went to Germany and France. That's my recollection.

Whitney Strub: Here's a question for you then. The two articles that I passed around to you, I'm not sure the whole articles are here. This passage might not be here. You probably have them somewhere. Somewhere in here, when Douglas Eldridge is writing about Raymond, he describes him in these terms that today read to me as kind of coded. He called him soft-spoken. I think he mentioned meticulously dressed.

Debra Carter: [Laughter] Articulate!

Whitney Strub: Yeah. He says he lives in a well-furnished bachelor apartment.

Debra Carter: Oh, is that right?! That's hilarious!

Whitney Strub: Somewhere in one of these articles, he writes that. I'm just wondering, when people are reading this in the mid-60's, is that obvious? Is that like—

Debra Carter: Do you think that he was saying he was gay, but he wasn't saying it?

Whitney Strub: Right, I mean it's—

Debra Carter: That's interesting.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yeah, that is interesting.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Whitney Strub: Is that how it would've read? Because as a historian, that's how I read it, but I don't know—

Debra Carter: I think it was more—

Whitney Strub: As a historian, that's what I would say. As somebody who was there—

Richard Proctor: I really don't know. I never thought about that aspect.

Debra Carter: When I read that, I read it more racial than—

Whitney Strub: Well, the articulate, I agree. That's a loaded term.

Debra Carter: They call it articulate, but also the—

Richard Proctor: Something is coming back to me.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Like it's amazing. Right. It's amazing. Look, he's got this, he's got that. College graduate, and he's black! That's how I read it.

Whitney Strub: Right.

[Cross-talk 55:50]

Debra Carter: Of course, that's my own lens.

Whitney Strub: I think I guess I'm looking more at the soft-spoken, and—

Debra Carter: That's true too! That may well be true—

Whitney Strub: - the actual apartment. Things that seem a little gendered, kind of—

Debra Carter: - as well, yeah.

Whitney Strub: I didn't know if that was related. I didn't know if there was tension within CORE around that. I mean, if—

Debra Carter: Do you think people thought Raymond was gay at that point?

Queer Newark Oral History Project

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Richard Proctor: I don't think so.

Whitney Strub: Okay. Yeah, I wasn't—

Richard Proctor: I know subsequently, much later, that was the case.

Debra Carter: What?

Richard Proctor: That they were aware that he was—

Debra Carter: Much later when? What do you mean?

Richard Proctor: I'm talking about I guess maybe '70s. Later '70s.

Debra Carter: Who was aware? When you say they were aware? Not the CORE people, who?

Richard Proctor: I can remember when they say, I can almost remember a name. I can't get it. I can't get it positive. I remember her saying something about Raymond being gay. This was much later. In the later '70s.

Debra Carter: Not the CORE folks. Not the civil rights folks?

Richard Proctor: No. This was a girl who we—what were we working on? We were working with CORE. Yeah. She was a CORE worker, as I recall. This was later. Much later. Plus, you know, I'm his brother. They ain't gonna say. If they wanna say—

Debra Carter: Right. "Wow, he's gay." Right, right.

Richard Proctor: - negative things, they ain't coming to me to say it. They might've been saying 'em among themselves, but not with me.

Debra Carter: I never got the sense from Raymond that—he had his own kind of world. I never got the sense that he—I'm sure that he experience discrimination, and but it was never something that felt like an issue for him. He was really emphatic about who he was. I never really got the feeling that he had a lot of—

Angela Proctor Weaver: Stress behind it? Of course, we were kids.

Kevin Proctor: We never talked—

Queer Newark Oral History Project

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Debra Carter: Of course, we were kids.

Kevin Proctor: Even when we were older, we never talked about being gay. We didn't really talk a whole lot about racial issues, from what I remember.

Debra Carter: I did. I talked about—he used to tell me that—well, he used to get upset that I read so many white magazines. *[Chuckles]* He used to say, “Why don't you read something that's black!?” *[Laughter]* Then he told me that I was also too race conscious. That I needed to stop identifying so heavily with race and with black, and that I needed to—he wanted me to be diverse. Basically, he wanted black magazines, white magazines. He wanted me to identify as black, but not just identify as black, you know? Because I was Rutgers when Raymond was living with us. Yeah. We talked about that kind of stuff.

Whitney Strub: Did he talk about—when he was teaching at Essex County College in the '70s, right, I mean, that's the period when Amiri Baraka was at his most prominent in Newark. Whatever else we can say Baraka, he's a complicated guy. He was explicitly homophobic at that point. I mean—

Debra Carter: Huh. Is that right?! I didn't even know that!

Richard Proctor: I didn't know that either.

Whitney Strub: Oh yeah, I mean—

Debra Carter: I didn't know that.

Whitney Strub: - it's part of his—

Richard Proctor: I did not know that.

Whitney Strub: - rhetoric in the '70s was very much about homosexuality as a social illness that plagued black masculinity.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Oh boy.

Richard Proctor: I didn't know that.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

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Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Angela Proctor Weaver: I didn't know that either.

Debra Carter: I did not know that.

Whitney Strub: Well, that's interesting. I wondered then if Raymond ever talked about that, and whether he related to Baraka, or whether that alienated him.

Debra Carter: We were pretty small then, though.

Richard Proctor: I never heard. I didn't even know Amiri was that way.

Whitney Strub: Yeah, I mean, he came around much later. I don't know if you know the story, but he had a lesbian daughter who was murdered.

Debra Carter: Oh yes, I did know that.

Whitney Strub: Much later.

Richard Proctor: He had a what daughter murdered?

Whitney Strub: He had a lesbian daughter who was murdered.

Debra Carter: That was in the last ten years, right?

Whitney Strub: Yeah. I think like yeah, early 21st Century.

Debra Carter: Last ten years, right.

Whitney Strub: Then he and Amina tried to form a PFLAG, parents of gay and lesbian children group in Newark. He certainly came a long way, but in the '70s, he was very homophobic.

Richard Proctor: He and Amina tried to do what?

Whitney Strub: Form a group, a support group for parents of gay and lesbian children.

Richard Proctor: He came around?

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

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Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Whitney Strub: He did. He did. In the '70s, he was very homophobic. I just wondered, because he was so prominent in Newark, whether Raymond ever talked—how he grappled with that.

Debra Carter: Oh, that's interesting. Yeah.

Whitney Strub: That's not something that came up?

Richard Proctor: No. Not to my knowledge at all. I mean, I was very active in CORE. Like I said, if people had negative things to say about him, or about his sexuality. They wouldn't have said it to me. Except like I said, one girl I seem to remember, might've made an allusion to it. I'm not even sure about that. I'm not even sure if she was making an allusion or not. I'm not sure. That was what she made it anyway.

Whitney Strub: Do you remember what she said? What, was she speaking in suggestive language?

Richard Proctor: Yes. This is all very vague to me. Very, very vague. I may be completely off base. I may be just totally mistaken. I seem to remember this girl saying something—yeah, I remember something, which is very vague and not enough for me to jump on it, being defensive about it, or defend him about it. It was just something I let go. Ninety-nine percent, no, I never heard anything.

Whitney Strub: As far as chronology goes, do I understand this correctly, that Raymond is teaching at Essex County College and also working at Studio 54 in the '70s?

Angela Proctor Weaver: No.

Whitney Strub: Maybe you can set that chronology straight for me.

Richard Proctor: Yeah, that was much later.

Angela Proctor Weaver: 54 was much later.

Richard Proctor: That was much later, yeah.

Angela Proctor Weaver: That was, what, early '80s? Early '80s, I think. Because I got—

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Richard Proctor: I guess the best way to do it is to tell her how you folks were. That's how we could tell.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I know I was married. I was married to Michael Latimore then. That had to be—that was like '81, '82. It was before Michael was born. It had to be early '80s.

Kevin Proctor: There's something right here with Studio 54 on it. June 13th, 1980.

Whitney Strub: Oh, okay, what is the document?

Kevin Proctor: It's a receipt for something.

Whitney Strub: Oh wow.

Richard Proctor: What is it? What?

Kevin Proctor: Some kind of receipt.

Richard Proctor: Receipt for what?

Kevin Proctor: Oh, no, wait a minute. No, this isn't a receipt. It's just talking about a party that was gonna be there.

Richard Proctor: He's probably got a resume in there too, that he has a lot of resumes. When he was with the Urban Institute, people were applying for jobs all the time. People were writing recommendations for the candidates applying for jobs. He kept a lot of that stuff.

Kevin Proctor: This is some kind of agreement or something.

Richard Proctor: I didn't go through all of them, but I know some of that stuff is in there. He's probably got a resume in there too.

Whitney Strub: While he was teaching at Essex County College, he was living in East Orange? Is that right?

Angela Proctor Weaver: I think so. Right, Daddy?

Richard Proctor: Yeah.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yeah, 'cause when he moved to New York, he was gone from the college.

Richard Proctor: Right, exactly. Yeah, you're right. He left. I don't know when he left, but yes, when he was working for the college, when he was working for the college, he was in New Jersey, right. What happened? Why did he leave the Park Street? I just don't remember—

Angela Proctor Weaver: Well, he said he loved New York.

Debra Carter: Why'd he leave Park Avenue?

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yeah. He really wanted to be in New York. He had said that.

[Cross-talk 01:03:45]

Angela Proctor Weaver: Well, but he kept saying he wanted to be in New York. New York was the place for him. He wanted to be there. That's all I know about it.

Richard Proctor: Maybe he had this love affair with John Davis and John Davis had an apartment over there, so he went over there.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I'm sure that had something to do with it.

Richard Proctor: Huh?

Angela Proctor Weaver: I'm sure that had something to do with it.

Richard Proctor: Yeah, that's probably what happened.

Whitney Strub: What he did, he went from teaching at Essex County to working at Studio 54? Was there something in between?

Angela Proctor Weaver: Well, no. There was a whole thing at Essex County.

Richard Proctor: Yeah, I don't know what he did. I don't remember that gap, where he was working—

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Angela Proctor Weaver: That's mom. Mom remembers that. There was something happened at the college, and he left.

Richard Proctor: Is this mine too?

Debra Carter: That's yours.

Angela Proctor Weaver: There was some issue. Because of it, he decided to leave. From my understanding, is it was such a traumatic type thing for him that he never wanted to go back to a regular 9 to 5 kinda thing. That's when he decided he was not gonna do that whole work thing. That was not for him.

Whitney Strub: You don't remember what the issue was?

Debra Carter: My mother will know.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Have to ask her. I'll ask her.

Richard Proctor: How would she know? Why would she know?

Angela Proctor Weaver: She remembers. She told me.

Richard Proctor: She told you there was a issue, but you don't remember what the issue was?

Angela Proctor Weaver: I think he sued Essex County. Didn't he sue? I think he sued. I think he sued Essex County.

Debra Carter: Yeah, you could ask her now.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yeah, why not.

Debra Carter: Won't be able to get her off the phone.

Mary Rizzo: Just put her on speaker.

Whitney Strub: We'll add her to the interview. *[Chuckles]*

Debra Carter: Thank you.

Mary Rizzo: Do you know when? When did he leave Essex County?

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Debra Carter: Oh, I don't remember. I don't know.

Angela Proctor Weaver: There are papers in here. There are papers in here somewhere that actually—

Whitney Strub: We'll look.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I think I even saw legal papers.

Debra Carter: Not in this folder!

Angela Proctor Weaver: No, in one of these. All of these papers. I believe he sued them, and he left. That's my understanding.

Whitney Strub: We can return to that then. I mean, there's so many different directions we can go from here. You mentioned a story about him taking you to Fire Island. Maybe you could just tell that story.

Debra Carter: I mean, I don't know. He was like we were his kids. You wanna go? Yeah, we wanna go! *[Laughter]*

Angela Proctor Weaver: I remember the ferry ride!

Debra Carter: All I remember was there was nothing but men there. *[Laughter]* We just noticed!

Angela Proctor Weaver: Somebody, was Lenore? I think Lenore was there with us.

Debra Carter: Oh, Lenore and John. John—

Angela Proctor Weaver: Lenore and John were there too.

Debra Carter: - was one of the CORE—was he in CORE? John?

Angela Proctor Weaver: CORE, yes.

Debra Carter: His family was there. It was Lenore, and John, and Luis and us, and a bunch of men. *[Laughter]*

Angela Proctor Weaver: It was a house they were renting. There was just as I remember, there were just so many people there. We all slept, all

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

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Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

the kids, me, Kevin, Deborah, Lenore, we all slept on one bed. We slept like the long—

Debra Carter: The long way, right.

Angela Proctor Weaver: - the short way. The long way, yeah.

Debra Carter: Right, so we can fit.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I remember that. I remember walking Fire Island and seeing the houses, and all that kind of stuff. That everybody was in this house. Everybody was cooking together, and hanging out together. It was wonderful.

Whitney Strub: When would this have been, roughly?

Debra Carter: I was about six. Five to six.

Whitney Strub: I should've had everybody say when you were born, actually.

Debra Carter: I was born in 63, so like '68, '69. It was early.

Kevin Proctor: Yeah, I really don't remember much about it. I remember walking through Fire Island. I remember walking over this long—

Debra Carter: Bridge.

Kevin Proctor: Like a bridge.

Debra Carter: A wood bridge. It was swaying! *[Laughter]*

Kevin Proctor: Yeah, I remember.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I remember that.

Kevin Proctor: I don't really remember that much about it. I remember being at a house. There were a lot of people there. That's all I remember.

Angela Proctor Weaver: That was the first time I had clams. Raw clams.

[Laughter]

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Debra Carter: We were young to get things. We might have noticed, but like I said, it was all men, but that didn't mean anything to us.

Whitney Strub: Kevin and Angela, when were you born?

Angela Proctor Weaver: I was born in '58.

Kevin Proctor: '62.

Whitney Strub: Gotcha. Thanks. Since we're on this topic, and you had mentioned a few of these maybe long-term boyfriends, or lovers. Just a little fuzzy. Could you just tell us a little bit more about the men in Raymond's life? Just in as much detail as you can remember. Just to sort of get a sense of his social life.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I didn't really—

Debra Carter: He had a serious social life. Romantic life may have been different, but his social life—I mean, he just was always a party. He was—

Kevin Proctor: They were all nice. Most of the guys, most of his friends.

Debra Carter: Yeah, I remember like we said, Terrence, who was around for a while, and—

Whitney Strub: Yeah, except what was he like? What did he do?

Debra Carter: Oh gosh. We were kids, you know?! We weren't like, "What do you do for a living? Are you good enough for our uncle?!"

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yeah, we don't know.

Debra Carter: We were just like, "Oh, somebody else that wants to play with us!" You know? We remember 'em being like I said the guy that he kissed, I remember him. We had met him a few times. I remember Terrence.

Kevin Proctor: What about Andre?

Debra Carter: I was gonna say, Andre was much later. Don't you think Andre was his boyfriend, lover?

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Kevin Proctor: I don't know.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Absolutely.

Debra Carter: I have pictures of Andre somewhere.

Kevin Proctor: The guy from D.C.?

Angela Proctor Weaver: Absolutely.

Debra Carter: Yeah, right?

Angela Proctor Weaver: Because he went through a period where he was always going to D.C. for the holidays.

Kevin Proctor: He had so many friends he was always going somewhere to hang out with some friends.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yeah, but he went through a period where he was really going to D.C. a lot.

Debra Carter: Yeah, I think he was. Don't you think so? Andre?

Richard Proctor: I don't know what their relationship was. I really don't know.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I would bet money.

Kevin Proctor: They were close.

Richard Proctor: Was it Andre? Doesn't mean you can't be married, but wasn't Andre married or something?

Debra Carter: I never remembered hearing that.

Richard Proctor: Had a girlfriend or something?

Kevin Proctor: I don't think so.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yeah, I don't think so.

Richard Proctor: No? No?

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Angela Proctor Weaver: Huh-uh. Didn't Andre speak at the memorial?

Kevin Proctor: I don't remember.

Debra Carter: No, I don't think Andre. I don't remember Andre being there.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I think Andre spoke at the memorial, because—

Debra Carter: Oh, wait a minute! You know what? I do think you're right.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Wasn't he the one that said, "Raymond didn't like everybody."

Debra Carter: No, that was John.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Oh, that was John that said that?

Debra Carter: At the memorial he said that.

[Cross-talk 01:10:03]

Debra Carter: Everybody in the audience was like—

[Laughter]

Debra Carter: If he liked you—

Richard Proctor: That was a real moving moment. [Chuckles]

Debra Carter: Moving moment, right. If he liked you, you felt like the sun was shining just for you. [Laughter] If he didn't like you, he could say some cutting things. [Laughter]

Angela Proctor Weaver: Well, but if he didn't like you, he just kinda dismissed you.

Debra Carter: That's not nice.

Angela Proctor Weaver: He didn't have confrontations with you or anything. He just would dismiss you.

Richard Proctor: Right, dismiss you. Right.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Angela Proctor Weaver: He just wouldn't bother with you.

Whitney Strub: Just sort of demographically, were the men that he was close with and probably involved with white, black, Latino? All of the above?

Debra Carter: Oh, that's interesting.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Oh, I'd say all of the above. Remember the two young guys in New York? They were these two young guys. Raymond used to come, and he'd say, "Look what they got for me. They stole something—"

Debra Carter: I vaguely remember that!

Angela Proctor Weaver: Some ring or something.

Debra Carter: Yeah, I vaguely remember that.

Angela Proctor Weaver: They were young. I remember. That's my memory.

Debra Carter: Once he started with the club—

Angela Proctor Weaver: They were Spanish.

Debra Carter: - everybody was young. Once he was with 54—I don't know if he was having relationships with these people, but they were the revolving door at the house. Was young guys. A lot of them were Latino. They were white. They were black.

Angela Proctor Weaver: A little bit of everything. He had a lot of what he would do with the numerology, the science of the mind—

Debra Carter: Do the charts.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yeah, the different charts. Teaching different subjects, talking about metaphysics. He had a lot going on.

Debra Carter: It was hard to know.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yeah, he really couldn't—didn't know.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Whitney Strub: That was the next topic on my list, was asking about his kind of beliefs in that regard. Just before getting to that, could you just explain what exactly he did at Studio 54? What was his actual job?

Debra Carter: I think his title was—

Kevin Proctor: Manager.

Debra Carter: - business manager.

Whitney Strub: What did that mean?

Debra Carter: Yeah, that's a question.

Whitney Strub: I'm not sure what that meant. *[Chuckles]*

Richard Proctor: Business manager—

Debra Carter: At Studio 54. I think he was paying the bills, to be honest. He was the person who was trying to make the books. He was running—

Richard Proctor: I think he called it Mike Stone Enterprises.

Debra Carter: Yeah, Mike Stone. Yeah.

Richard Proctor: It was his operation. Raymond ran it.

Mary Rizzo: How did he get that job?

Richard Proctor: Mike was gay too, so the whole flock of gay ones. They all knew each other.

Debra Carter: *[Laughter]* Because they all give each other jobs! Daddy!
[Laughter]

Richard Proctor: I'll tell you what happened here. Let me tell you this story.

Debra Carter: *[Cross talks 01:12:43]*

Richard Proctor: What do you call these things? Antidotes? Antidotes, yeah. Let me tell you this antidote. The woman I'm married to now, her name is Connie. Connie had a friend. Her name was I can't remember.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Anyways, white woman. I'm married to a black woman. She and her friend and I went over—we were living in Jersey. We came over to New York to Raymond's apartment on 21st street.

Angela Proctor Weaver: What year was this?

Richard Proctor: This was maybe this must've been—it probably was 1988. Probably was 1988.

Debra Carter: Couldn't have been 1988. What year did Raymond die?

Richard Proctor: No, no, you're right.

Debra Carter: What are you talking about?

[Cross-talk 01:13:46]

Richard Proctor: You're right. It couldn't be. It could be—

Debra Carter: He moved in with us probably '85, '86.

Richard Proctor: It couldn't have been '88. No, wait a minute. Wait a minute. Oh, maybe I was just going with Connie then.

Debra Carter: Maybe you were. [Laughter]

Richard Proctor: I wasn't married. That's where I got the confusion. Because my wife, I knew her like six years before I married her. When she and her friend, I was thinking it was a year after we married. It was probably before we even married. Anyway, the point is this. Her friend, this white woman, when we met with Raymond and I don't know, four or five of his friends. Three or four. When we got out, we went back in the car. Let's say her name was Rose. I don't know what her name was. This white woman. Rose said, "Well, I can tell you who was gay and who wasn't. She went down the list. Ray is gay. She named number one, number two, number three. Mike was gay.

Kevin Proctor: This was after you guys had gone to the club or something?

Angela Proctor Weaver: This was after going to 54?

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Richard Proctor: No, at Raymond's house.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Oh, at his house.

Richard Proctor: This was his house. Of the four, five people, there was one woman. One guy. She says, "I couldn't tell whether he was gay or not." All the rest, she could identify as gay people.

Angela Proctor Weaver: What does that mean?

Richard Proctor: What it means is she had some knowledge. Some vibration.

Kevin Proctor: Gaydar.

Debra Carter: Or she was wrong. *[Laughter]*

Richard Proctor: I don't think she was wrong.

Debra Carter: Well, how would—

Richard Proctor: I don't think so.

Kevin Proctor: She had good gaydar, you're saying.

Richard Proctor: Huh?

Kevin Proctor: You're saying she had good gaydar?

Richard Proctor: Good what?

Kevin Proctor: Never mind.

Debra Carter: *[Laughter]*

Richard Proctor: Good what?

Debra Carter: Gaydar! Like radar, only—

Richard Proctor: Radar, gaydar.

Debra Carter: - Gaydar! *[Laughter]*

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Richard Proctor: Well, one or two of the people I knew was gay.

Debra Carter: She got those right. You thought she was right all around!
[Laughter]

Richard Proctor: She didn't know the other people.

Kevin Proctor: What was the question?

Richard Proctor: She could tell that we got into this—

[Cross-talk 01:16:13]

Richard Proctor: We got into this talking about his friends. These guys were all black guys.

Debra Carter: I wouldn't necessarily say Raymond had—

Richard Proctor: These were all black guys.

Debra Carter: We say Raymond had more gay friends than straight? He just had a lot of friends! It was all over—

Richard Proctor: I didn't know who was gay and who was straight.

Debra Carter: That's what I'm saying. We didn't know. We didn't know.

Kevin Proctor: Very diverse mix of probably gay, straight, white, black, Latino, all kinds of people.

Richard Proctor: Right. He didn't discriminate against gay people.

Kevin Proctor: Or straight people.

Whitney Strub: Then what about theosophy? Since you had mentioned that that played an important role in his life, and his kind of spiritual belief system. Could you just talk about that a little? How did he get into that?

Richard Proctor: I don't know how he got into it. I'll tell you this, now, well, if you look at the things she's got—

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Debra Carter: The letter? What?

Richard Proctor: The thing you brought. The record.

Debra Carter: Oh, the DVD.

Richard Proctor: Yeah. That will give it—

Debra Carter: That's true. He really explains.

Richard Proctor: That'll give you some flair.

Debra Carter: We should watch it. That really does—

Richard Proctor: That'll give it some flair of that.

Debra Carter: He can explain it better than we can! *[Laughter]* He does.
[Chuckles]

Richard Proctor: It's so heavy stuff. I never followed it really.

Debra Carter: You wanna set it up, Betty?

Whitney Strub: Do you mind? Before we do that—

Debra Carter: Oh, you wanna wait? Okay. Finish talking?

Whitney Strub: Would it be alright if we sort of narrate—

Debra Carter: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Whitney Strub: - our way through his life and then shift gears? Just for the sake of the recording?

Debra Carter: Absolutely.

Whitney Strub: We'll hold that question. Then I guess the other big topic, and I know this is going to be—a somewhat more somber topic. About AIDS, and his decline, and—

Debra Carter: Yeah, it was awful. *[Chuckles]*

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Whitney Strub: I'm sure it was.

Debra Carter: It was fucking awful—

Whitney Strub: Could you—

Debra Carter: Well—

Whitney Strub: I know this is a sad topic.

Richard Proctor: I'll give you something on that.

Whitney Strub: Please.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Remember, you're gone to New Orleans.

Richard Proctor: I know. In 1986, was June of 1986. My mother lit the stove in New Orleans at her home. The whole house went on fire. The roof flew right off the house. She was all burned up and everything. I think it was June 26, I think it was. Anyway, the next day, even though I didn't have any money, the next day I was in New Orleans. She was like—

Debra Carter: She was in bad shape.

Richard Proctor: - half dead. They had these things over her eyes and everything. Anyway, I stayed down there with her for 13 months. I was there from June to February '87. February '87 I came back. Raymond was living at 52 Eaton Place. He was living with me then. The whole time I was there, Raymond was living with me. I was a little angry with him, because doing this 13-minutes, this—

Debra Carter: Thirteen months?

Richard Proctor: Months. March. No, eight months. Eight months I was down there, from June to February. Eight months. For the first four or five months, Raymond didn't come to visit his mother. His mother was halfway dying. We tried to get him to come. "Raymond, come on down and see mom!" He didn't come for whatever reason. He didn't come. That annoyed me. Anyway, that's not even important. What's important is when I got back in February '87, soon after I

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

observed that Ray was not well at all. He told me that he was coming from New York.

I don't know. I must've told you all this story. I don't know. Maybe I didn't. He was coming from New York, and he could hardly stand up. He said they sat down. They had on the subway platforms, places or benches you could sit. He sat down, and he could barely get up. He continued that way. Very weak. It was soon after that, I don't know, maybe days, I said, "You gotta go to the hospital. You gotta go to the hospital." He didn't even wanna go to the hospital.

He was so weak he could hardly stand up. I had to struggle to get him in the car and took him to the hospital. When we got to the hospital, they didn't release him. He was in horrible shape. He had pipes and tubes all over him. I'm trying to remember what the doctor said. Something about his corpuscles, lack of white corpuscles or something. I don't know.

Debra Carter: T-cells, right? Like white T-cells or something.

Richard Proctor: I don't know what it was.

Kevin Proctor: This was right at the beginning of the AIDS epidemic, and a lot of people didn't even know a lot about it at that time.

Debra Carter: Exactly.

Richard Proctor: That's right.

Kevin Proctor: His health just, it went up and down a little bit—

Debra Carter: It went up and down a lot, actually.

Kevin Proctor: - but it really—I don't think they had a whole lot of medications, and he didn't really know a lot about how to handle to deal with AIDS at that time. He just got what I remember is he was just really weak all the time. It's not like he broke out with lesions all over his body or anything like that.

Richard Proctor: Well, he did eventually.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Debra Carter: Eventually.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Later.

Kevin Proctor: Maybe at the very end. It was mainly he was just so—I remember shaving him one day. He was so weak he couldn't even shave, so I just sat him up in the bathroom and I shaved his face for him, because he just didn't have enough strength to shave.

Debra Carter: In the beginning, it was up and down. It was up and down.

Richard Proctor: It was up and down, yeah.

Debra Carter: He stayed with us. He was living with us I guess when he was diagnosed, as Daddy said. Then he—

Angela Proctor Weaver: That was after he lost his apartment.

Debra Carter: Actually, that's what we really believe made him sick. He lost the apartment in Manhattan.

Angela Proctor Weaver: He lost the apartment.

Debra Carter: It was the combination of if your immune system is compromised, when you're under a great deal of stress. It was the apartment he subletted from his ex-lover. I'll never forget this story. They had to go to court, because when Raymond had gone to California, he let another bum friend of his stay in the apartment. *[Laughter]* The guy, Raymond would send him the rent. The guy didn't pay the rent on time. They had him. Then they wanted to get him out of the apartment. They went to prove that John didn't live there. They had to go to court.

They got ready to go to court, and John comes to go to court with him, and they're like sixth on the docket. They're sitting outside, and John decides he has to have pancakes. Raymond never forgave him. *[Laughter]* He insisted—

Angela Proctor Weaver: He says they thought they had plenty of time. That's the story.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Debra Carter: John insisted they go for pancakes. They go for pancakes. They miss the call. He lost the apartment. He had to move. That was his whole life was there. That was his place of peace. When he lost it, I believe that was the trigger for his health problem. He got diagnosed. He was living with us in East Orange at 52. Then he went through this period of real weakness where he was hospitalized. When he came back, he was on his feet. He was much better for a while.

He decided to go to California to live with John Fast and his family, because he thought that the California weather would be better for him, and so forth.

Kevin Proctor: They live out in the woods—

Debra Carter: They lived in Northern California in Mendocino in a yurt.
[Laughter] ‘Cause John—

Kevin Proctor: Really out in the woods

Debra Carter: Because John is a whole ‘nother story. He moved there, and he stayed there for about a year. He did well for a while. He was walking, and he was writing us. Walking three miles to dam—then because that’s the way the disease is. Then he was not doing well. He was near death. They had given him days to live. John called us. Do you remember? I went to California to see him.

He was in the bed, but you couldn’t even—he had lost so much weight, you couldn’t even see his body in the blankets. You know what I’m saying? He was that thin. He rallied again and came home. He lived about almost two years after that.

Richard Proctor: Two years? No.

Debra Carter: After he came back from California, he lived about 18 months.

Richard Proctor: Yeah.

Debra Carter: About 18 months.

Kevin Proctor: Which is probably pretty spectacular, considering he wasn’t
[cross-talk 01:25:13]

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Richard Proctor: Anyway, whatever. What happened was when he came back home—this is another thing that really upset me a lot. He wanted to go to Teaneck to see our father. His father, my father. They lived in Teaneck where I had lived with them earlier for a while. He just insisted on going. I'm saying, "You're too sick. You can't make that trip. You can't go. You need to stay home and rest in the bed." He just insisted he wanted to go to Teaneck, so I had to take him to Teaneck. He never really recovered from that. I took Raymond to the hospital seven times. Seven times I took him.

Debra Carter: I don't remember that.

Richard Proctor: Yes, seven times. Seven times. I remember one time, I took him to the hospital, and they wanted me to take him back home. I said, "How can I take him back home?"

Debra Carter: Because there was nothing they could do, right?

Richard Proctor: He's sick! You can see he's sick. What can I do? I can't do nothing for him. He's sick! They said, "Well, we just can't keep him here." I had to take him home.

Debra Carter: There was quite a lot of—you know, in the early days of AIDS of course, I don't have to tell you guys this. There was a lot of discrimination. There was a lot of—

Angela Proctor Weaver: Fear. Fear.

Debra Carter: You have to put on a mask. There was a lot of fear. There was a lot of judgment. You got that from the medical community when we would take him to his doctor's appointments, or go to visit him in the hospital. You know? You got that. People wanted to know if he was gay, because they wanted to know how he got AIDS. You got that from the medical community. Yeah. Which was—

Richard Proctor: It was sad times.

Debra Carter: - definitely tough.

Kevin Proctor: I actually think we probably willed him to live as long as he did.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

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Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Debra Carter: I think we did too.

[Laughter]

Kevin Proctor: Seriously, because we would just—we loved him so much. We just like—

[Cross-talk 01:27:24]

Debra Carter: Obviously, we used to tell him all the time, “You’ve cheated death so many times!” He’d tell us stories about how many times he should’ve been dead. *[Laughter]* He’d tell us all the stories about how many times he should’ve been dead!

Angela Proctor Weaver: Or tell ‘em how he’d be laying in the bed, half gone.

Debra Carter: Oh god.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Oh, he’d be so sick. Then you’d come in to visit—

Debra Carter: And he’d sit up! *[Laughter]*

Angela Proctor Weaver: - and he’d turn around. He’s like telling you some gossip!
[Inaudible 01:27:44]

Debra Carter: *[Laughter]*

Kevin Proctor: I don't know how significant this is, but he also was kind of in denial too. He didn't think he had AIDS. Often, he would say, “I don't have AIDS. I don't have AIDS.”

Richard Proctor: He thought eating the right—

Debra Carter: He thought he could beat it.

Richard Proctor: - foods, the nutritional foods. He thought it was gonna pull him out. He was gonna be okay again. He always felt that way.

Debra Carter: That he was gonna rally. He did rally, a couple of times. We didn't know. Nobody knew that that's how the disease operates, or did at that time.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Whitney Strub: Did he lose a lot of his own friends in the epidemic?

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yes.

Whitney Strub: Is that—

Angela Proctor Weaver: I think so.

Whitney Strub: - something he spoke about? Given where he was—

Debra Carter: See, I was gonna say at that time—you say yes, but I don't know that to be true. Because it was—actually, that's not true. In the beginning, but I do remember some of his friends coming to visit, and they'd talk about other friends. "Oh, does so and so have it?" Like that. It was sorta, it was early, but it was sorta spreading through their community. I don't know about having lost them, but they were—they would discuss who other friends that were sick.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I remember once before we knew Raymond was sick, we were in the kitchen at 52, and he came downstairs and said—he was all bundled up.

Debra Carter: He did bundle up a lot. *[Laughter]*

Angela Proctor Weaver: He was all like he was going out into the cold weather. He made sure he had the sweater, the scarf, the hat, the gloves. He was totally wrapped up like a good package. He was going. He was very, very serious. He was like, "I'm going to somebody's memorial. This is like the fifth or the sixth—

Debra Carter: Oh, I didn't remember that.

Angela Proctor Weaver: - or whatever number it was. He was so upset about it. He wasn't. It was different for him. Not that he didn't show concern, but this was different. I thought, "What? What's different." I remember that.

Debra Carter: Oh, I don't remember that.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I also remember before we knew that he was sick, Daddy coming to my house. I lived in Plainfield. Telling me that something serious was wrong with him.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

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Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Debra Carter: I remember you telling me that too. You says, “You don’t hear him coughing?!” I’m like, “Okay, so he’s coughing! He smokes!”
[*Laughter*] “What is the problem?!” [*Laughter*] “Why you trying to give him AIDS?!” [*Laughter*]

Angela Proctor Weaver: We didn’t even think of—

Debra Carter: Not AIDS, but like why do you want Raymond—[*Chuckles*] we didn’t want him to be sick. Yeah. I guess it did run through their community. It was again, it was so early, you know? I guess he probably knew more than we knew about, you know, the things that were going on. Did you say that he—oh, you said did he lose a lot of friends. Right. Yeah.

Kevin Proctor: I don't know if he did.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Somebody at the memorial service said they did.

Kevin Proctor: When he moved to New Jersey, I think he probably lost contact—
[*Cross-talk 01:30:41*]

Debra Carter: No, he doesn’t mean that. He means did they die of AIDS.

Kevin Proctor: Oh, you mean lose, you mean die?

Whitney Strub: Oh, I’m sorry. To AIDS, I meant.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I remember someone at the memorial service. I don't remember who it was.

Debra Carter: Talking about?

Angela Proctor Weaver: Told me that they had lost 74 of their friends in the last whatever short period of time.

Debra Carter: Seventy-four? Good Lord! Wow. I wish we had videotaped the memorial service.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Me too.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

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Kevin Proctor: We do have it.

Richard Proctor: We sure should have.

Debra Carter: Why didn't we think of that?

Kevin Proctor: We have it.

Debra Carter: No we don't!

Richard Proctor: We do? Not video.

Debra Carter: Who has it?!

Kevin Proctor: Mom's friend.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Who?!

Kevin Proctor: Leon!

Debra Carter: Leon?!

Angela Proctor Weaver: Leon?!

Kevin Proctor: Leon says he has it.

Debra Carter: Ah, I don't believe him!

Richard Proctor: Who's Leon?

Kevin Proctor: Leon worked for Essex County College. He was a photographer—

Richard Proctor: Who's Leon?!

Kevin Proctor: A friend of Mom's.

Debra Carter: A friend of Mom's.

Kevin Proctor: He worked at Essex County College.

[Laughter]

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

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Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Richard Proctor: You mean she had another friend after me?!

Debra Carter: [Laughter]

Angela Proctor Weaver: You were her husband. This was just a friend.

Kevin Proctor: This guy knew Ray. This guy knew Ray.

Debra Carter: Yeah, he knew Ray.

Kevin Proctor: He has pictures of Ray.

Debra Carter: He was the photographer—

Kevin Proctor: He gave us that picture we showed you.

Debra Carter: - at Essex County College for like 35 years.

Kevin Proctor: He claims—

Richard Proctor: He did what at Essex County?

Debra Carter: He was the photographer. The staff photographer for Essex County for like 35 years.

Kevin Proctor: Mom says he recorded the memorial service, but he wasn't sure if he could find it. He might be able to find it.

Richard Proctor: Oh, recorded. Not video though.

Kevin Proctor: Videotaped.

Richard Proctor: Videotaped?

Debra Carter: I would be shocked! He would be worth something to me if he had that! [Laughter]

Kevin Proctor: She said she asked him for it—

Angela Proctor Weaver: I agree.

Debra Carter: I have never heard that! I've never heard that.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

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Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Angela Proctor Weaver: I heard her say something about that, recently, right?

Kevin Proctor: Yeah, apparently he has a whole lot of pictures of Ray too, which we've been trying to get for years.

Debra Carter: Yeah, that's what he claims.

Kevin Proctor: He might have that.

Debra Carter: Anyway, yeah.

Richard Proctor: You might as well check it out. More information for Whitley Starr.

Debra Carter: Whitney.

Whitney Strub: Close.

[Laughter]

Debra Carter: It's Whitney. It's Whitney.

Richard Proctor: What did I say?

Debra Carter: Whitley.

Richard Proctor: What did I say?

Debra Carter: That's what you said.

Richard Proctor: What am I supposed to say?

Whitney Strub: Well, you know, Whitley Strieber was the author who wrote that novel about aliens.

[Laughter]

[Cross-talk 01:32:38]

Richard Proctor: I'm really lost. I'm lost. Wait, what's your name?

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

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Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Whitney Strub: Oh, Whitney.

Richard Proctor: Whitney. What did I say?

Angela Proctor Weaver: Whitley!

Debra Carter: Whitley!

Mary Rizzo: Whit's good. Just Whit.

Whitney Strub: You break even.

Richard Proctor: W H I T?

Whitney Strub: N E Y.

Richard Proctor: N E Y. I didn't say that? Okay.

Whitney Strub: It's alright. You know, I think it was before we were recording that you told the story of going to visit Raymond while he was ill, and him looking at your shoes.

Debra Carter: Oh yes.

Whitney Strub: Did you want to include that story? Because I think that was a great story about you.

Richard Proctor: I don't care.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yes, I'll tell the story.

Debra Carter: She likes to tell the story.

Whitney Strub: Sure, sure. If you don't mind retelling that one for us.

Angela Proctor Weaver: We're all in the hospital. It's actually the day before Raymond dies.

Richard Proctor: Really? Is that right?

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yeah.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Debra Carter: I think it was just you, me, and daddy. I don't think Kevin was there.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Kevin was.

Debra Carter: Kevin, were you there?

Angela Proctor Weaver: Were you there?

Kevin Proctor: I don't remember that story.

Angela Proctor Weaver: We're in the hospital. Raymond's laying in the bed. I remember the nurse comes to him. He asks her for some hand cream and some Vaseline for his lips. He put Vaseline on his lips.

Debra Carter: We used to bring him candy and tabloid magazines. *[Laughter]*

Angela Proctor Weaver: He's laying in the bed. We're talking to him. Daddy's sitting there. He's reading the newspaper. He's got his leg crossed, and he's reading the newspaper. I said, "Daddy, what do you have? Your dancing shoes on?" Raymond looks over—

Debra Carter: He goes—

Angela Proctor Weaver: Looks at the shoes, and goes, *[Sighs]*.

Debra Carter: *[Laughter]* He was just disgusted! He was just like *[Laughter]* why?! *[Laughter]* Yes, they had an interesting relationship.

Richard Proctor: See, in the army, he didn't get his shoes polished! That's why he got in trouble. *[Laughter]*

Debra Carter: He was always like we said, very dramatic. There was a time when I don't know, he didn't like the food. He had a home health aide. She would come to the house. Because we were working. She would come to the house to make sure he was okay while we were at work. He didn't like her cooking. *[Chuckles]* He thought her cooking was bad. One of my friends actually was at the time, I think Daddy was in New Orleans. It was Raymond, Kevin, my best friend and I living at the house. Theresa was a good cook.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

She cooked some wonderful meal. Raymond was laying in bed, and he sat up, and he clutched his chest. I'm not even making this up. Told Theresa, "You saved my life!" We were like, "Really?!" I mean, honestly. This man was really—listen, wait—

Angela Proctor Weaver: What about the glass?

Debra Carter: I was getting. That was the next story I was gonna tell. In the morning, before the home health aide came, we'd go in and see if he needed anything before we left for work. He wanted some grapefruit juice this morning. I'm working in Manhattan. I'm rushing to get my train. I run downstairs to the kitchen. I get him the grapefruit juice. I run back upstairs. I hand it to him. I have it in a paper cup. He said, "Can I have a real glass?" *[Laughter]* I was like, you gotta be kidding me! I just looked at him, "Fine, you're dying! I'll go get you a glass!" *[Laughter]* Seriously! We were like he just never stopped being himself.

Honestly, I had a girlfriend who also died of AIDS. At the end, she lost her faculties. Raymond never did. He started to have some hallucinations toward—maybe the last two days of his life. Prior to that, he was always sharp as he had ever been. I used to think that it was kind of a—I wasn't sure if it was a gift or a curse. With Linda, she was only 30. I thought it was kind of probably a gift for her to have lost her mind, and not have to be aware of what was happening to her. I think for Raymond, if that had happened with any regularity and he became aware that he was starting to, that would've just been awful for him. I think it was kind of a blessing that he remained lucid until the end.

Richard Proctor: Yeah, well, I'll tell you. I have a story on that also. This was about your mother was very helpful to me about this. This was about a week before he died. It was very hard. He was dying. It was very hard to watch him die. *[Emotional]* I told your mother about it after this visit. I told her I wasn't gonna go anymore. She talked me into going. She said, "He needs you. You should go." She convinced me to go.

Anyway, what I wanted to say was, he said to me this was about a week before he died. He said that, he said my mind is alright, but my body is dying. That's what he said.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Kevin Proctor: I think one thing we hold good in our hearts about him dying is, and because he was such a spiritual person, we all feel that when it's time for us to cross over, he's gonna be waiting for us.

Debra Carter: We're like, "We get to see Raymond!" *[Laughter]*

Kevin Proctor: That's the one good thing that we can hold on to.

Debra Carter: And I think I'll speak for my—I can speak for my brother and my sister I think also on this one. Daddy might have had some awareness that Raymond was dying, but we didn't think he was gonna die. Even when we saw how bad his condition was.

Angela Proctor Weaver: When he came back from California, and Daddy came over once, and we told him about his medical—the files and stuff he got, and how it had gone and affected all of his organs. Once I realized all of his organs were affected.

Debra Carter: Okay, then I'll say Kevin and I. I was still shocked.

Kevin Proctor: We didn't know it was a death wish back then. Not a death wish but—

Angela Proctor Weaver: We felt like he could still—

Kevin Proctor: He was definitely gonna—

Angela Proctor Weaver: Well, hopefully, he would beat it. If anybody could.

Debra Carter: Right. I mean, I certainly was—

Kevin Proctor: We held on hope for a, yeah, for a long time.

Debra Carter: I was certainly shocked. Like, "Well, wait a minute. Raymond? Really?" *[Laughter]* Especially because I had seen him. When I saw him in California, he was so ill. Like I said, he was so—and he rallied. So I just expected that to be the way it went. Yeah. It was, you know. I don't know what else to say about it. I'll tell you something interesting though. Who's from California? You were in California. You're not from California, but you lived there.

Whitney Strub: I lived there. I spent my twenties there, yeah.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

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Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Debra Carter: Well, let me tell you. The hospital, it was a big difference between Essex County and the hospital! *[Laughter]* I mean, when I tell you the nurses, he had a whole harem of nurses waiting on him, loving him, taking care of him in Mendocino. In East Orange, in East Orange General, it was just a really—and obviously, the—what’s the word? The fear that people had about the disease was nationwide.

For whatever reason, in California, they didn’t treat him like—I mean, honestly, in New Jersey, they wouldn’t even answer a question for him without putting on a mask, and gloves, and scrubs. Standing at the door like they were afraid. In California, it was a whole different thing. People were in there. They didn’t have no—it was a contagious disease is what people thought at that time.

It was a real difference in the medical treatment. I think that certainly made a difference. It’s just like I used to say with Derek Wynans when he came, don’t cry. It really helped Raymond when we were up. When we were visiting him. It really made a big difference to his spirit.

Richard Proctor: Yeah, but Derek knew that he was going.

Debra Carter: I know, but I didn’t want him to tell him. *[Laughter]* I know, yeah.

Richard Proctor: You said you didn’t believe he was going.

Debra Carter: Well, I didn’t. I knew that it upset Raymond. I saw him after visits from people who were upset when they saw him. I saw him after visits from people who were, you know, positive about things.

Richard Proctor: I give him credit, Derek. He paid Raymond’s telephone bill.

[Laughter]

Debra Carter: Now listen, nothing against Derek! It just always upset me that he upset him.

Whitney Strub: Their friendship went back decades? They knew each other out of the CORE era and stayed close?

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

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Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Debra Carter: I guess so, yeah.

Richard Proctor: Yeah. Well, I mean, I don't know when they met. I don't know when they met.

Debra Carter: Maybe even prior.

Richard Proctor: Huh?

Debra Carter: Maybe prior to CORE is what you're saying?

Richard Proctor: It's possible, yeah. It's possible. I don't know.

Whitney Strub: Derek visited him regularly?

Debra Carter: Absolutely, he visited when he was dying, yeah.

Richard Proctor: Oh yeah. Actually, I really think that Derek and Ray were friends even before I became involved in Core. I remember there was a party in South Orange that Derek's house or family's house or somebody. That Raymond brought me to Derek's. They had been friends probably before CORE. I don't know. I'm not sure about that though. Maybe that's where they met. I just don't know.

Whitney Strub: I've got one more document I wanted to pass around that I found. I wonder then, I guess I'm assuming, but maybe you can clarify. This is the copy of Raymond's obituary that I found in the Newark People With AIDS Coalition records. I'll pass it around. It's got there are a couple of noteworthy things about it but one is this handwritten note on the bottom, "during the services, members of the family asked that in lieu of flowers, or money, or contributions to the family, the donations instead be made to the Newark Community Project for People with AIDS." I was wondering if you had a memory of that.

Kevin Proctor: This almost looks like his handwriting!

Debra Carter: [Laughter]

Kevin Proctor: Doesn't it?

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

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Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Richard Proctor: No.

Debra Carter: Not really.

Richard Proctor: His handwriting—

Debra Carter: A little bit. A little bit like that family, right there that word.

Richard Proctor: His handwriting is much worse than—

Kevin Proctor: Look at the P for project.

Debra Carter: Yeah, the P for project. That's true. Who wrote that?

Richard Proctor: No, it's not—

Debra Carter: It's not his handwriting, but of course. It's not. I know what Kevin's saying.

Richard Proctor: His handwriting is much worse than that.

Debra Carter: This is his handwriting right now.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Ray had nice handwriting!

Debra Carter: He had nice handwriting, Daddy!

Richard Proctor: He don't have no good handwriting.

Debra Carter: Daddy, you have the bad handwriting! *[Laughter]* Daddy has the bad handwriting.

Angela Proctor Weaver: *[Howls]*

Richard Proctor: I won't argue with that.

Debra Carter: Anyway.

Richard Proctor: A lot of times I can't—

Debra Carter: You can't read that? Oh my God.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

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Richard Proctor: - understand his handwriting.

Debra Carter: Holy potato chips.

Whitney Strub: Oh wow. I didn't even notice.

Debra Carter: It just started, yeah.

Whitney Strub: Wow, that is—

[Cross-talk 01:43:56]

Richard Proctor: Can I get my piece of pie? *[Chuckles]*

Debra Carter: I'll get it for you, Daddy.

Richard Proctor: You will?

Debra Carter: Yes, I will.

Richard Proctor: Thank you.

Debra Carter: I'm gonna get it right now. Wait. To your question here—

Whitney Strub: Yeah, two more questions. Then I can—

Mary Rizzo: We can take a break. We take a break.

Whitney Strub: Yeah, we can totally take a break, or I was just wondering if people remembered—

Richard Proctor: That's good.

Whitney Strub: - the People with AIDS—

Richard Proctor: Yeah, I was involved with it.

Whitney Strub: - community project.

Richard Proctor: No community with AIDS project. That's the one that Derek was running, right?

Queer Newark Oral History Project

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Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Whitney Strub: Yeah.

Richard Proctor: Yeah, I was with that project.

Whitney Strub: Could you talk about that a little?

Richard Proctor: The thing that I remember about it, which is not a good thing, [*Chuckles*] I was pretty active. We had a guy. I know his name. It's got something to do with drum. Some kind of drum, I'm almost sure. Anyway, he was a significant role model in the organization. He also had a serious alcohol problem. Derek asked me and another guy to interview him. To make a recommendation on whether he should continue in his role, whatever his role was. His role was keeping him from doing it. His alcoholic problem was keeping him from doing his job.

Derek wanted to be fair to him. He and another—Derek asked me and another guy to check it out and get back to him, which we did. I think the guy was—he needed help. That was the answer to that question. That's one thing that I remember about that organization. The other thing I remember is—what is her name? There was a woman who used to be on the Newark City Council. Cross? Crook? Something like that?

Whitney Strub: Not Mildred Crump?

Richard Proctor: Yeah, Crump. Crump. I think that was her name. What's her first name?

Whitney Strub: Mildred?

Richard Proctor: Mildred Crump. That's right! Mildred Crump. Mildred Crump. She was a member also.

Whitney Strub: Oh really?

Richard Proctor: Yeah, Mildred was a member. You might wanna talk to her. I don't know.

Whitney Strub: Oh yeah. No, I don't think I realized that. What happened with the community project for people with—

Queer Newark Oral History Project

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Richard Proctor: I don't know. As I recall, it just kinda organization's don't live forever. Work Against Hunger, I call it my organization, wasn't mine. I mean, well I—

Debra Carter: It was yours.

Richard Proctor: I came up with the idea. It lasted for 14 years. Organizations don't last forever. There's millions of organizations. They come and they go. They come and they go. To answer your question, I don't know.

Whitney Strub: What about city response to—

Richard Proctor: Thank you, Connie.

[Cross-talk 01:46:56]

Richard Proctor: I'm sorry.

Whitney Strub: In Newark, this is so—at this point, Sharpe James is mayor. How is the city responding to the AIDS crisis? Do you have a sense of that? Just of local politics and whether the city was hands on, or whether it was negligent?

Debra Carter: I'm gonna guess. Well, I don't know. It was Newark, I guess you were asking about. Because were in East Orange for Raymond's medical care. I feel like there was really little help and support in terms of the needs that these patients had, you know? I mean, we were taking care of Raymond. If he hadn't had us, there was no help. There was no help for getting medications, for getting to doctor's appointments. No support groups. It was early in the AIDS crisis, but it didn't feel supported at all. It felt like there was much more—

Richard Proctor: Well, too bad Derek is gone, because he could've answered that question better than me. He helped get Ray. He helped get Ray some kind of VA help. He got his VA. Some kind of VA pension or something. He got for him. One or two other things he did. Social services type things. He did. He looked into it. Got for him. As a matter of fact, the pension—it wasn't hardly much of a pension. I remember a check came after he died. I took it down to the VA on Washington Street, 20 Washington Street. Because I

Queer Newark Oral History Project

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Date: August 6, 2016

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said I don't want him to be asking me for no money. *[Chuckles]* I turned a check into him.

Anyway, Derek helped get benefits for Ray. He would know. He was the head of the group. He would know more about they said his response—I can't really answer that. Maybe Crump could.

Whitney Strub: Yeah, no, we'll definitely chat. She's around.

Richard Proctor: She was a councilwoman. I think she was a councilwoman after this. She was a very active community leader.

Debra Carter: This actually says that Raymond—

Richard Proctor: I worked on a couple of her campaigns. What?

Debra Carter: This says Raymond was an instructor for the past six years at Essex County College. That wasn't right. I mean, he hadn't been in Essex County in years when he died. I'm just saying.

Whitney Strub: Yeah. I was gonna ask about the obituary, actually.

Debra Carter: That's definitely not correct.

Whitney Strub: One thing that stood out to me is that it doesn't actually list a cause of death. I just wondered if that was something that you discussed at the time, or if the family preferred it that way, or if that troubled you, or?

Richard Proctor: I don't know who put that in. I don't know anything about it.

Kevin Proctor: What paper was this?

Whitney Strub: I think this is the Star Ledger. It's just an unidentified clipping in their file.

Debra Carter: Let me see if the copy I have is the same one.

[Cross-talk 01:50:10]

Debra Carter: Oh, that's the plaque from Essex County.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

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Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Whitney Strub: Oh, that's great.

[Pause 01:50:21 – 01:50:26]

Whitney Strub: Oh wow. That's a terrific shot. We'll definitely take a picture of this.

Kevin Proctor: Well, you don't wanna block that audio, right?

Mary Rizzo: Perfect.

Richard Proctor: They have that plaque on the wall in the sociology department. We took a picture of it.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Wanted Raymond to be here!

Kevin Proctor: Trying to put it somewhere where it doesn't block the audio.

Debra Carter: Yeah, that's the same obit that I have here. I don't know what the story is with that obit, why that information isn't correct! Daddy, I don't know that we—I think Daddy, I think you wrote the obit.

Richard Proctor: No, I didn't.

Debra Carter: You don't think you wrote it, huh?

Richard Proctor: Huh-uh.

Debra Carter: Who would have submitted that to the paper?

Richard Proctor: I don't know. I don't know.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Theresa?

Debra Carter: *[Laughter]* Theresa wouldn't have done it! *[Laughter]*

Angela Proctor Weaver: You sure?

Debra Carter: *[Laughter]* Yes!

Angela Proctor Weaver: That's not impossible.

Queer Newark Oral History Project

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Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Debra Carter: I would say that—you know, I guess the obits usually do say the cause of death. I don't know if we had any consciousness of—I don't feel like we were concerned about people knowing that he had AIDS. I don't feel like that would have led us to leave that out of the obit. I'm not really sure. Whoever did it, I don't know. Maybe a friend of the family who was trying to help out. Again, it's not correct. Clearly, he'd not been at Essex County. He had not been there for years. *[Chuckles]* Yeah, no. As far as leaving a—

Richard Proctor: I can't read this. I can't see it. What does it say about the five years?

Debra Carter: It says that he was an instructor for the past five years at Essex County College in Newark.

Richard Proctor: No, that's incorrect.

Debra Carter: That's what I'm saying. Right. Yeah, so I don't know. It wasn't a conscious decision on this family's part to leave that out.

Whitney Strub: What about, Richard, your parents. I mean, by this point, I'm assuming—maybe I shouldn't assume. Did they at that point know that Raymond was gay? How did they deal with that?

Richard Proctor: I'm sorry?

Whitney Strub: Your parents.

Richard Proctor: My parents?

Whitney Strub: Yeah. Because it says they both survived him.

Richard Proctor: Well, my father didn't have any problem with it. I don't know if my—

Debra Carter: Huh?!

Angela Proctor Weaver: What?!

[Laughter]

Richard Proctor: Did he?

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

Interviewer: Whitney Strub and Mary Rizzo

Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Debra Carter: Yes! Your father?! Your father said to me, said to us, at Raymond's memorial service—well, actually he didn't say that he didn't approve of him being gay, but he did say that he—

Angela Proctor Weaver: Had no idea.

Debra Carter: He said he had no idea, but he also said that he cut—that he felt like Raymond was his most brilliant child, and that he squandered his intelligence. He said that, and he said and you said that you felt like he did that—that he felt that way about Raymond because of him being gay.

Angela Proctor Weaver: No, I don't think so. I think that he was upset. We talked about this a couple of times. He was upset because Raymond removed himself from corporate America, and all that.

Debra Carter: Well, he was upset about that.

Angela Proctor Weaver: He was disgusted with it.

Richard Proctor: He's saying he? Who you talking about?

Debra Carter: Your father.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Grandpa. Grandpa. Grandpa.

Richard Proctor: Grandpa? My father, okay.

Debra Carter: You don't think it had anything to do with him being gay? I think—

Angela Proctor Weaver: I'm sure—

Debra Carter: I don't think that's true. I think we've discussed that and said that it did have something to do with it.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I'm sure that that was a part of it, but I think it was also a big part that he felt angry with him, because he was not working the nine-to-five.

Richard Proctor: That's true. He didn't like the—

Queer Newark Oral History Project

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Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Debra Carter: He wasn't.

Richard Proctor: He didn't like the way Raymond handled his money.

Angela Proctor Weaver: He didn't like the way he lived his life that way. I also remember, when they used to have those garden parties in the summer, or even in holiday time. Raymond would bring a guy over, and he would be like—he was just like the life of the party.
[Laughter]

Debra Carter: Flitting in, yes. [Chuckles]

Angela Proctor Weaver: I think he did that to aggravate Grandpa. He did seem aggravated.

Kevin Proctor: I don't even remember all that.

Debra Carter: I remember that. I do.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I do.

Debra Carter: Absolutely, I don't have a story to pin it to, but I know that I heard that grandpa was not thrilled about Raymond being gay. He was especially not thrilled about his lifestyle in terms of not working, and not making money.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Right, that was a big deal.

Debra Carter: That was one of the things he really, really thought was important. I also think it was his lifestyle in terms of his—

Richard Proctor: The significant thing for you gentlemen, ladies, my father left him out of the will.

Debra Carter: That's right!

Richard Proctor: Not that he had that much money to leave, but he did leave him out of the will. He named me, and Resa, and Rita. The other two kids. The three of us were to get something if A, B, C, D, E happened. Ray wasn't gonna get anything.

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Debra Carter: Yeah, and what do you attribute that to, as you say he was okay with him?

Richard Proctor: Huh?

Debra Carter: What do you attribute that to?!

Richard Proctor: That doesn't mean that he was—no, it had to do with how he spent his money.

Debra Carter: That's all you feel?

Richard Proctor: He wasted his money.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I think it had more to do—I really believe it had more to do with how he spent his money, and how he didn't work a regular 9-to-5 daily, that he had a lot of lack of respect for him because of that, anger for him toward that.

Kevin Proctor: I don't know why. He wasn't paying any of Ray's bills.

Angela Proctor Weaver: You gotta remember though, Grandpa was—he was uneducated. He was a hard worker, hard saver. He was a big money person. He felt like Raymond was brilliant, and he could do so much and make so much, and he didn't. He didn't see the importance of money like he did.

Debra Carter: I just have to say again at the memorial service though, my grandfather was there crying, saying because after everyone spoke and he said, "I had no idea." Because so many people spoke about the difference Raymond made in their lives. Then my grandfather was like, shocked.

Richard Proctor: "I didn't know. I didn't know."

Debra Carter: "I didn't know. I had no idea." He kept saying that.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yeah, that's what he kept saying.

Debra Carter: We weren't really happy with him.

Richard Proctor: "I didn't know."

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Proctor Family (Richard Proctor, Angela Proctor Weaver, Debra Carter, Kevin Proctor)

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Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Debra Carter: [Laughter] We were—

Richard Proctor: The thing that made my mother mad—

Debra Carter: Was she at the memorial service? She wasn't there, right?

Richard Proctor: Yeah, she was.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yeah, she was.

Debra Carter: Oh yes! Matching shoes. That's right! I forgot. I forgot. [Laughter]

Angela Proctor Weaver: Her shoes matched her dress. The fabric from her dress was on her shoes.

Debra Carter: She was a seamstress.

Richard Proctor: My mother, it seemed as though somebody, maybe one of you remembers some of this. Connie remembers something about it. It seems as though somebody congratulated

Angela Proctor Weaver: Geneva?

Richard Proctor: Yeah.

Debra Carter: I don't remember.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Gave their sympathies, you mean?

Richard Proctor: Huh?

Angela Proctor Weaver: You mean congratulated her?

Richard Proctor: Congratulated Miss Geneva.

Debra Carter: You mean gave their sympathy?

Richard Proctor: Yeah. Well—

Debra Carter: Oh, congratulated on how wonderful Raymond was?

Queer Newark Oral History Project

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Date: August 6, 2016

Location: Hillsborough, New Jersey

Richard Proctor: Both of us. How wonderful she had brought up these boys.

Debra Carter: I see. I see. Right. That's my grandfather's second wife.

Richard Proctor: Right. She got credit for bringing us up, which she never brought us up. *[Laughter]*

Debra Carter: Right. Marguerite. Let's see. Was Marguerite? I don't think she had a—your mother, had a problem with Raymond in being gay. Was that an issue between them?

Richard Proctor: Well, I hadn't gotten to that yet. I said about Dad. Y'all disagreed. I didn't think he had a big issue with that at all. He had a big issue with the money thing.

Debra Carter: Okay, maybe a bigger—

Richard Proctor: That's what he had.

Debra Carter: A bigger issue with the money. I think he had. I still seem to remember the energy if he needed to be—

Angela Proctor Weaver: Me too. When Raymond would bring his friends over.

Debra Carter: Right. He wasn't crazy about Raymond's lifestyle.

Richard Proctor: Maybe so.

Angela Proctor Weaver: I don't think he liked it.

Richard Proctor: I had the issue with Raymond when there was an event, he would never acknowledge he was coming or anything. He would wait 'til half the thing was over and make his grand entrance.

[Laughter]

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yep.

Debra Carter: Well, you know, that was just—that was his style.

Angela Proctor Weaver: Yep, yep, yep.

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Richard Proctor: He always had to make the grand entrance.

Kevin Proctor: I think that's the way you perceived it. I don't necessarily think he was doing that—

Debra Carter: It was intentional.

Kevin Proctor: - necessarily. He was always late coming from someplace else—

Debra Carter: He's always trying to—

Kevin Proctor: - you know what I mean?

Debra Carter: - fit everything in. He was trying to fit. He always had a plan B. I understand these things!

Angela Proctor Weaver: I know you will.

[Laughter]

Debra Carter: I got that from Raymond! *[Laughter]*

Richard Proctor: Let's get to my mother. What did she feel about the gay thing? I do not recall us ever discussing it at all. I don't recall us ever discussing it. I really don't.

Debra Carter: I can't speak on her.

Richard Proctor: I don't remember us ever discussing it. It was like actually, I shouldn't be saying though. I don't want this on the tape. I don't want this on the tape.

Whitney Strub: Here, I'll—

Debra Carter: Ooh, this might be good.

[End of audio]