

Queer Newark Oral History Project

Interviewee: Andrea Hayward

Interviewer: Kristyn Scorsone

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Kristyn Scorsone: Today is February 7th, 2023. My name is Kristyn Scorsone, and I'm interviewing Andrea Hayward over Zoom, for the Queer Newark Oral History Project. Thank you again for doing this Drea. Is it Drea? Can I say Drea?

Andrea Hayward: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Totally.

Kristyn Scorsone: When and where were you born?

Andrea Hayward: I was born in St. Michael's hospital in Newark, August 9th, 1965.

Kristyn Scorsone: Who raised you?

Andrea Hayward: My mom raised me. She was a single parent, and then obviously she raised me, primarily, and then a significant support network of my cousins and aunts helped raise me as well.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome. What did she do for a living?

Andrea Hayward: My mom, she worked for a construction company most of her life. She was a project engineer, so she managed the projects that were going on out in the field, dealt with the builders, dealt with all the vendors to ensure the projects met their deadline per se.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome. Did you grow up in the same household the whole time, or did you move around a lot?

Andrea Hayward: We moved around a lot. Actually, when I was first born, to give you some context, obviously my mom was a—my parents met in college in Howard, and whatever it didn't work out. My mom is originally from Ohio. When I was first born, obviously I lived with my mom initially, but my first five years of life were not living with my mom. It was living in Ohio with my great grandparents and my aunt.

The premise was for my mom to come stay in New Jersey, and to get a foundation under her, so that I could then come and live with her, and she could support me, but it was early on being a young 21-year-old single mother trying to get on her feet, so my family took the stance of, we will raise her for the first five years.

When it's time to go to kindergarten, she will come and live with you, and you'll give you five years to get yourself together to get on your feet. My first recollection of obviously of being with my mom, is like when I was five, and I went Chancellor Avenue School. That was my five-year-old, but all of my younger pictures and growing up were in Ohio, being around my great-grandfather and my aunts there.

Kristyn Scorsone: Was it hard for you to move away from your grandparents then?

Andrea Hayward: My great-grandparents? I don't think so. It's funny though because when I look back, I look at when you're young, you look at your happy years, and I see pictures of those of my happiest years when I was a kid, and then I remember, being five, 'cause I just looked at a picture of my kindergarten picture, of being a school, and I looked being sad. I only attribute it to the transition from where I was with the support network, people around every day, all day. Now I get moved to New Jersey, and I'm in school, and I am now, what do you call it? Transitioning to a new world per se.

Kristyn Scorsone: What's your earliest memory of Newark?

Andrea Hayward: My earliest Newark is, like I said, I remember when I was five years old going to Chancellor Avenue School, I remember the cycle of being a, not wanna say a latchkey kid of being on a routine per se, because my cousin went to, I think it was Weequahic high school, which was next door to Chancellor Avenue School.

When he got out of school, I had to wait for him, five years old, and walk down to his house, their house, I stayed there until my mom got off work. She picked me up, and then we would go to our house. That's my earliest of routines when I was young, is being in a routine. Remember I came from a small town in Ohio, even though I was born in Newark, but my primary years were in a small town, now I come into this mega bustling, energized city. Totally different for me.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. What kind of kid were you? What were you like, were you like a quiet kid or gregarious or?

Andrea Hayward: I think I was, growing up, I was always busy. I was always busy, busy. I was obviously gregarious. I was always around my family. That was huge because, even though I went to school in Newark and I stayed with my family, we lived in Elizabeth, but my

everyday activity was in Newark, 'cause I went to school there. My after school was Newark, our relatives were in Newark, so I was always there. Busy, always playing with my cousins, kinda thing, 'cause I was the only child at the time. I was the only the child until I was 12 years old, until I got a sister. For a good portion of my life, I was by myself.

Kristyn Scorsone: Was it weird to become a sibling all of a sudden?

Andrea Hayward: Yeah, it was weird. It's interesting 'cause it's like you always tell people, and my sister says it too, because there's such a big age difference with us, we feel like we're still only children, because by the time I was 17, my sister was five years old. Period I was out of the house, so she was by herself. I was always like, you still felt like you were the only child for a long time. It's not like we ever shared anything, because she was too young to share anything. The biggest treat with her was on Saturdays coming in my room to watch cartoons.

Kristyn Scorsone: Were there any challenges you faced in your childhood, and if so, how did you manage those challenges?

Andrea Hayward: Challenges? Interesting. I think that the biggest challenge for me were two challenges. Even though I had a lot of relatives, cousins wise, for me growing up with a single mom, and my mother's family, her whole family was from Ohio, so I spent a lot of summers in Ohio. The day I got out of school, I went to Ohio and stayed with my relatives in Ohio for the entire summer. The day it was time to go back to school, like a week before, I would come back and be with my mom again.

I had a lot of, I wanna say back and forth, but it was rooted in a lot of love though, if it makes sense, because my mom didn't have a lot of money to pay for afterschool programs, so it was cheaper for me just to go on a flight, go to Ohio, be there with the whole summer. I would be with my grandmother. I had one other cousin that was eight months older than me, we would play, and I had friends there, 'cause they knew I was coming every summer.

I would obviously go to another town, and spend two weeks out of the summer with my great-grandfather, who helped raise me in the beginning, and my grandmother's sister who always lived with him as well. That was probably one of, when you say challenge, I don't know if it was a challenge, it was just different, but that was life. It was a space of, you just got into that, that was the routine of it all. I think the other—the only other I think that I could say was a

challenge, was when my mom got married, when I was like 10 or 11 years old, before my sister was born.

Now I'm introduced to a world of another person in our household, that's traditionally not there, that was different for me. That was very different for me, 'cause I was used to only interacting with quote unquote, my family. My family, and my mother, going to school, but my network was very tight. Now we get introduced to another person in my household, and at the time, not a good person. Obviously they broke up, but it was a very turbulent, we didn't have a lot of ruckus in our house, so when my stepfather came in, it became a very, very combative, very aggressive household, and that was different.

It really turned my world upside down. That went on for several years, and then obviously my mom moved herself, us away from that. It's interesting like I think back on, how small pockets in your life can be almost life changing, but other than that, I think back to, we had a healthy life. I always tribute to that my mom was single, she did the best she could with the tools that she had at the time.

The critical part for me, and I think that's why I'm so close with my family is that, they were such ralliers around us, or each other as a support, so hence like when you get to later in the parties and stuff, those gatherings were probably one of like, when you talk about like, happy times, because those family gatherings were huge, because it was a time to come together to be very communal, dance, and it was just the weight of the week was off your shoulders, because now you had this weekend around people that you generally loved. hopefully that makes sense.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. That's really cool. That's awesome. The family gatherings, would it be like the Ohio family and the New Jersey family coming together?

Andrea Hayward: Yeah. Well, it's interesting. It was different like in New Jersey, my cousins that lived in a Weequahic section on Wainwright Street, it was by tradition like, I don't know if it was once a month, or every couple of weeks, like on a Friday or Saturday. I think it was on like a Friday. I don't remember what it was. Maybe it was on a Saturday, but after the week was done, like everyone would get over, come over to my aunt's house. My aunt, my mom and my aunt's friends, they would be cooking, whether it was like fish, whatever the dish was, they would be cooking.

I remember me being in the living room and off to the side, it'd be like my cousins and I, my younger cousins. We had a record player on the long console, where the records were on the side, and the player on the other end. We would be in there. It was funny, it was before karaoke was even thought of. You had some fake mike or brush in your hand, and you were doing routines. I remember that was like a part. In another room, it'd be like my other older cousins with their friends, and my aunt's husband, my uncle, they would be playing cards, spades, poker.

It'd be like a serious event going on, and of course, there will also be other music in the house. I remember like those events, different pockets of things happening in the same house, but one event, but it was something for everybody to enjoy. Once the food was done, we all had this communal thing. The table out, going to get your food, eating, I'll be back with my cousins laughing and joking, then the alcohol came out. Of course I remember the men smoking Winstons and Newports, all that stuff.

Drinking, and just people being themselves without the pressures of work, the pressures of the outside world, where they could just be themselves and commune, and enjoy themselves, and then the day was over, the night would be over, I don't know at what ungodly hour. Then we would go home, and that was the day. You felt like, you just had so much fun, and it was just a sense of security, to be with people that you trusted in.

People that came over, and it was about love. It was all love, and just being a part of something, and enjoying the communal effect. I don't even think my mind even knew like a nightclub or going to a bar, 'cause I was young. My first thinking of what a party or club atmosphere was like, that was a house party for me, because that's what we went to.

Kristyn Scorsone: How young were you when they started, that you remember the parties?

Andrea Hayward: I remember I was young as like six, five or six years old, and that took place throughout probably till my teen years.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's cool. What music would you play?

Andrea Hayward: Oh, it was like Motown, whatever was out like, it was no DJ. The DJ was like, when a record was done playing the 45, you put another record on. Whatever record was out, the Temptations, Gladys Knight & The Pips, whatever soulful music was happening.

Marvin Gaye, Tammi Terrell, whatever was on at that point, it was nothing for us to like just play the whole album. Put it on and the whole thing, and we would just be grooving to it. Running around, playing Tic-Tac-Toe. Like I said, it was a night full of, I think back, it was love.

It was just about love. It was communal love. People getting together. Hey cousin, I hadn't seen you in a long time, or somebody who didn't come over the last time, catching up on just family gossip, whatever. A record came on, the ladies would come out, and they'd come to the living room and start dancing, and they'd go back and start cooking, or when food was done. It was one of those classic environments of being able to be with your family and enjoy one another without any pressures of anything going on outside the world, outside those walls.

Now, of course, Monday morning you're putting your armor on, to take on the world, 'cause you never know what forces of evil are coming at you. I just remember it was either always Friday night or Saturday night, and then obviously Sunday, when I was growing up was relegating for church, and we went to church and then boom. You started your day off on Monday.

Kristyn Scorsone: What kind of church did you grow up in?

Andrea Hayward: I grew up in an AME church, but my mom grew up in a Baptist church, but when we came to New Jersey, when she came to New Jersey, I don't know why, I grew up in an AME church, and I've been AME ever since then. Obviously as I've gotten older, I moved around, came away from my church that I grew up with in Elizabeth, and started to find my own church home, and that took me to, St. James at the time of Reverend Watley, in Newark. By that time, I had moved back to Newark, so I had wandered around to different churches to find where I felt at home, and that was the church that I felt at home.

Kristyn Scorsone: Did you ever go to Liberation and Truth?

Andrea Hayward: I did a couple of times. I did a couple of times when it first came out, when it first was there, and a very dear friend of mine, now she's at Bishop at Reverend Rose Hardy, it was the dear friend of mine who married me. I think she was a part of that church. I remember when she had declared that she was gonna go into ministry, we were having that conversation with her, but yeah, no, I went a few times, and not that I didn't like it or anything like that, and not that I didn't feel at home. I had already had a church home

that I felt very comfortable with, and that was the church that Reverend Watley, St. James.

Kristyn Scorsone: I watched recently somebody donated some VHS, I think maybe they were from James Credle. I watched sermon at Liberation and Truth that's on VHS, and I'm pretty sure this was a couple months ago that I watched it, but I think it was Rose Hardy was speaking, and she was just awesome. Was she at Stonewall?

Andrea Hayward: I think she might have been at Stonewall. She's like everywhere. She's everywhere. All I can tell you about Rose, not all I can tell 'cause I can tell you a lot. She's one of my dearest friends, and like I said, I knew her before she went into the ministry, and I've been with her along this journey of being in the ministry, and I think she's a phenomenal minister, servant of God, just an awesome human being.

Kristyn Scorsone: I would love to, if she would wanna be interviewed, I'd love to interview her.

Andrea Hayward: Oh yeah, for sure. She just lost her mom, so she's burying her mum, but it's funny, I have something to mail out to her, but I definitely will text her and reach out. Let her know. I'll send an email to connect together.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah, that would be great. Thank you. I'm pretty sure it was her, and she was like really cool. I really liked her. Did you go to high school in Newark too?

Andrea Hayward: Yep, I went to St. Vincent Academy.

Kristyn Scorsone: What were you like in high school?

Andrea Hayward: Busy. It's funny, busy, I had a core group of friends that I hung with, and that was like my crew. That was it. It was like, these are my girls, we're hanging, 'cause it was all girls school. These are my girls hanging, and that was it. For me, I think back on that like man. I knew people in high school, but like my two friends were like, those were my ride die back then. Well, we just hung together. We ate lunch together. We were just cool, and it's interesting how time's gone by and we're still cool.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome.

Andrea Hayward: Even though we're on different—one of them is on a different continent, in Africa. One's still in Jersey, I'm here in Atlanta, but we still talking. I mentioned at one of them yesterday—I text one

of them yesterday to say, "Hey, the school is looking for your address, for our 40-year class reunion." I laughed 'cause I was like, "Hey, you better come, don't leave me there by myself." I was like, Desiree's not coming from Africa, so you are there in Jersey, you better come girl.

I was like, don't leave me there by myself. The great thing about life and evolving technology and everything is that, social media. I've connected with people from high school that I was like, man, like, oh my Gosh. It's been years, and now here we are connecting people with each other's lives, and obviously through moving around throughout my life, I actually ordered my high school yearbook. They had an extra one.

Kristyn Scorsone: Oh, you didn't have one before?

Andrea Hayward: Yeah, I had one, but I travel around, I was like, I probably chucked it, who knows, or lost it along the way. It was one of those reminiscent moments, so I got it again, and I was like, man, look how young, like what would I tell my younger self now?

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah.

Andrea Hayward: Obviously a lot of bumps and bruises on the way to being here, but if I wouldn't have those bumps and bruises, I wouldn't be here, and I'm pretty pleased with my progress.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome. Were you out in high school? Like how do you identify?

Andrea Hayward: I love today's environment. I really do. I love today's youth because I think, and maybe it's just society and the struggles that we all went through back then to get to people now, because today I feel like, I look at my nephew. I look at today's younger people, how open they are. Like oh, you're gay. Oh, okay, cool. No biggie. Whereas back then it was such like, it was a big deal, and to be out was a huge deal. I remember, I think seven years old is like the first time that I felt like I remember being attracted to a woman.

Thinking like a woman was like, my Gosh, she's beautiful. I remember being in church, this woman to this day. Now, when I was in high school obviously, I think I had my first girlfriend in high school. I guess we were out to each other. I don't know if we were out to everyone else, but I felt connected, but I also feel like one of the pluses of being in New Jersey a little bit is, being so close to New York, and the word the village was like, almost like a

safe place for you where you could just be you, without feeling like you're gonna run into somebody and stuff like that.

I remember being in high school and being young and running, won't say running, but going to the village a lot, and seeing people and identifying, and being able to say, there's nothing wrong with me because look at those people, they look great. They're functioning, they're not crazy, blah, blah, blah. I remember coming out to my family, I don't even know if I came out to them, or like it is what it is.

This is who I am, and they just figured it out and just said it. I remember like my aunt, I was home in Ohio one day, one Christmas holiday, and one of my aunts said to me, it was like the first time someone verbally asked you, 'cause it's funny how your family, at least a black family, they know about it, but they don't want a confirmation. I remember my aunt just flat out asking me, and I said, yes.

Kristyn Scorson: Were you a teenager?

Andrea Hayward: Yeah, I was a teenager. For a moment I was like, oh wow. I said that, but I love my family because they were like, okay. Ever since then, I can bring whoever I wanted home, it was understood like, this is my girl, and it was not an issue of like, oh my God, Andrea's gay. Now, if they were doing all that chomping, they weren't doing it in front of me, and I never felt any negative vibe about it.

For me, I didn't have the struggles of coming out like some people have, and the family backlash and things like that. It was about love. Don't get me wrong, some members of my family, I remember my aunt, in my older years was like, I said something even before being married was legal, I said something about marrying, and my aunt was very adamant like, "Hey, I love you, I support you, but that's not what I agree with." I'm okay with people taking a stance from a place of love. Now, fast forward years later, when I got married, she was front and center.

Front and center, and my whole family came from Ohio to my wedding in Newark. They showed up, my cousins showed up, and it's funny 'cause the list can go on and on, and I finally was like, hey, I can't have this massive shindig, I had to cut the list off, but no, I didn't feel that from them I felt love, I felt acceptance. We didn't always agree, and they let me know, 'cause it wasn't like they were tippy toeing around me.

They were letting me know how they felt about certain things, but then I also like anything else, what I love about them, even though they can be extremely opinionated, they evolved. They evolved. Even today, like when we talk about, there's not a time that my mom doesn't say, how's Irene? How's my wife? We were at my aunt's funeral last November, my mother's sister, and it's so cute though. It's interesting because like my mom, she's what, 79? She'll be 79 this year, and it was another relative of mine.

Instead of saying like, these are my two daughters, and this is her wife, I think it's cute, she'll go, my sister and I was there, my wife was there, and she was introducing us to a cousin that I didn't know. She's like, oh, these are my girls. These are my girls. I was like, okay, all right. Whatever. These are my girls. Here's my thing, I'm okay with that, because that's still accepting, and that's her way of still embracing, these are my girls. It is what it is. Now she doesn't say, she didn't say to her, but this is my daughter's wife. She's accepted like, hey, this is all of it, which is cool.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome. At seven you're like, okay, this woman is like—I feel like I might be gay—you probably can't—

Andrea Hayward: You can't process it. You just know who you were attracted to. I couldn't process it. I knew what I was attracted to, I thought she was like the most beautiful thing I had ever seen in my life. You know what I mean? Kinda thing. That's like where I was.

Kristyn Scorsone: Do you remember when you first became aware of someone that is gay, like a gay person, like someone who identified like that, you knew this to be an identity, I guess? Was there anybody in your family or friends?

Andrea Hayward: No, no one in my family that I know of, and it's so funny 'cause my wife always says to me like, my gaydar is like all jacked up, 'cause I'll see someone, like I have a cousin. I seriously have a cousin. Oh my God, I was in my twenties, and he came from Ohio to live with me in New York, and we were like roommates, with myself, my girlfriend, him, and it was so wild because we were living on Columbus in 83rd Street.

We're going downtown to hang out at the Duchess, the old Duchess, and he was going to like, I don't know, and we get out and he was like, oh, I'm gonna go over here. Kristyn I kid you not, I was like, Jeff, that's gay bar? He's like, I know. I walked away like, I didn't know he was gay. My whole freaking life. I'm telling

you, and that's me. That's a me thing, because you are so into like what you're into.

At least for me, I'm so into like, if I'm into this, and I'm working, I don't have time for like all the other peripheral stuff, and I'm telling you that shoot right over my head, and I laughed 'cause years later he goes, "Andrea, you remember at Christmas time, I was walking around with my long fur coat on?" I was like, yeah, but I just thought it was cold outside that's why you bought a fur, not thinking like, what grown man wears a fur coat, duh.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome.

Andrea Hayward: No, other than him, we probably got some other closet ones in our family. I just don't know of more. I just didn't know. I think for me, the introduction to seeing other gay people was like I told you, during my high school years, being able to like, thank God for the path train, \$1. \$1 gets you from Newark Penn Station to Ninth Street, and being able to come out of the ground on Ninth Street or 14th Street, for me it was a whole new world that opened up. Like, oh my Gosh, it was a whole new world, and that was the world that I loved to live in.

I saw other gay people, 'cause now I was more astute in my high school years, I could see them. I was not intrigued, but I was loving the way people in New York were living their authentic life and self with no cares in the world. Men and women. I think 'cause I used to hang out in Washington Square Park, and I would just sit there, and just be like in high school in my little freakin' Catholic school uniform, before I had to get home, and I was amazed at what I saw.

I wasn't amazed in a negative way. Just amazed at not just gay people, but life period. Like how people obviously at that time didn't even click to me that you had NYU down there, you had a lot of college, you had that level of academic expression of freedom.

Things just going on all in one place, and people coming through there, and it was just bustling with, I just saw it as a place of bustling with energy, a bustling culture. People that were, a take me as I am kind of place, and you saw it all. You saw a chess player; you saw people roller skating. I think this was way before they even had the dog park in there. It was just a whole vibe down there, and that fed my soul.

Kristyn Scorsone: This was like, so you're a teen? Is this the eighties?

Andrea Hayward: Yeah, the eighties.

Kristyn Scorsone: I felt the same way as a teen sitting in Washington Square Park. You're a teen, it's the eighties, and you're going to the village with your two best friends?

Andrea Hayward: Sometimes I would, yeah. Well, Kim didn't really go, 'cause she always had to go home, but Desiree would go with me, or I would just go hang by myself. Like I said, a dollar would get you far. You only needed like 10. A dollar to get there, and a dollar to get back, and a couple bucks, get a slice of pizza. You were good.

Kristyn Scorsone: Were you out to your friends?

Andrea Hayward: Yeah. My core group, I was out to them, and that was safe for me.

Kristyn Scorsone: Not to make assumptions, but so you would say you were a lesbian, right?

Andrea Hayward: Yeah. I don't even know if we even said it back then that you were lesbian. I think it was just like, oh, I'm gay, somebody's gay. I don't even think we used the word lesbian back then.

Kristyn Scorsone: How do you describe your gender identity?

Andrea Hayward: Oh, I don't even know how to describe it. I just think I'm a lesbian. I didn't think about it.

Kristyn Scorsone: Did people go by like butch-femme dichotomy then, or no?

Andrea Hayward: I think back then, yeah. People were doing that, or aggressive. They would say like, oh, she's aggressive. I think that's how people would say it. Well, I love how they would change it up. They'd be aggressive, soft aggressive, hard, words like that.

Kristyn Scorsone: What's soft aggressive?

Andrea Hayward: I think soft was like, you were not completely feminine, but you were more aggressive, but you weren't completely like all in on being aggressive, I guess, per se.

Kristyn Scorsone: You dress more feminine, but be like personality aggressive, or dress masculine with a softer personality?

Andrea Hayward: I think it could be a combination of both. Yeah, I think could be a combination of both.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome. Besides Washington Square Park, did you go to any bars or clubs then?

Andrea Hayward: I didn't go out to—believe it or not, even though like I said, that was my high school, I didn't go to my first club until I was 16. My mom was still like tight, and keeping me like close to the house and stuff like that. Pretty strict. My first club was going to - with a friend of hers daughter. She allowed her to take me, to, of all places, my first nightclub was the Paradise Garage at 16 years old.

That was like my awakening of music and nightlife. I went at 16 years old, and I was like, floored, floored. It was like Washington Square Park on steroids with music on it. With music because it was the first time that I had heard like that dance music, it was the first time I saw, people go there with like one set of clothes, and change it to another set of clothes and just dance. They're like dancing for hours, just hours.

Kristyn Scorsone: Were they coming in with more, I guess like work a day clothes and then changing, or was it like trans folks like coming in?

Andrea Hayward: It was everything. It was everything. It was straight people, it was gay people, but it was so cool because it was a vibe where, it didn't matter whether you were straight or gay. It was all about the music. It was all about the vibe. It was all about the environment, and people just did their thing. I never knew about putting baby powder on the floor, and dancing around so that you could spin, it was a whole new world for me. That was my first introduction to a nightclub, was going to Paradise Garage, 16 years old.

Kristyn Scorsone: Wait, what is baby powder on the floor?

Andrea Hayward: Oh, so on a dance floor, sometimes it allows you, when you put baby powder floor, you're able to the glide, or your moves are much more smoother.

Kristyn Scorsone: Oh man, that's so cool. I never heard that before.

Andrea Hayward: Oh, yeah.

Kristyn Scorsone: Did you associate gay people in any particular location in Newark at this time or later?

Andrea Hayward: No. I think later as I got older, I came out in terms of like going out. I went down, I think it was First Choice, and other couple of bars. I never went to Zanzibar. but I went to like other clubs in New York, because by then I was older, and I had moved to New York. I did a lot of sediment production, their parties. I would go to different parties like Tracks. Then I started going to DC for parties 'cause I had met people there. I started to expand my network of friends, and then of where things were happening at in the cities.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's cool. What's sediment productions?

Andrea Hayward: Sediment Production was a party of two promoters in New York, two women that used to give parties for African-American women. They were really these nice upscale like events, they were parties, but people came dressed really nicely, and it was a safe haven for women to dance at and meet people.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's cool. What was the sec- you said? Oh, Tracks. Was that in New Jersey?

Andrea Hayward: No, the Tracks was a club in New York.

Kristyn Scorsone: I've heard of it, I think.

Andrea Hayward: They had one in DC.

Kristyn Scorsone: Were you friends with the women in Sediment, or just went to their parties?

Andrea Hayward: I knew one of them, 'cause a girl that I was going out with used to work with them at their parties. Haven't kept up with her now, but yeah, I knew one of the folks that promoted the party back then.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's cool. What was First Choice like?

Andrea Hayward: I thought it was—listen for me, when you're young, you're like, man. What a great vibe, great drinks, I just thought it was a great place to be, in Newark that you could just hang out at. I didn't go there often, but I went a few times.

Kristyn Scorsone: It was in the Ironbound, right?

Andrea Hayward: Yeah. In the Ironbound section.

Kristyn Scorsone: What did it look like inside?

Andrea Hayward: Oh man. You're making me go on the file cabinet of my brain.

Kristyn Scorsone: It's okay if you can't remember.

Andrea Hayward: Yeah, I can't totally remember. I remember it being dark, not a huge place, but it got pretty packed. It's interesting too, what's so sad back then, not always the case now? The places that we had to go to hang out and party, were not always in the most desirable neighborhoods.

Kristyn Scorsone: Did you feel unsafe coming out of there?

Andrea Hayward: When you're young, you don't feel unsafe coming out of anywhere, you're just going to hang out. Now you'll be like, oh my God, I can't believe I was down here hanging out. I was like, oh my Lord. Back then you're like, it's all about going to the party. It's all about the vibe. It's all about being there, hanging out with your friends, and then you come out and it's like, then you could come out at three or four o'clock in the morning, and it doesn't even phase you.

The worst case scenario is, you just hope nobody broke into your car, stole your car. That to me, was one of the most important things, but other than that, no, I didn't feel like that then, 'cause like of course when you're young, you think you're invincible. You get older, you're much more astute and aware of your surroundings, and you say to yourself, oh my God, I can't believe I was down here in the middle of the night.

Kristyn Scorsone: Did you ever go to Murphy's?

Andrea Hayward: Yes. Who didn't go to Murphy's? I went to Murphy's a few times, and you gotta remember, when I came out of high school, and finished school, going to college, I propelled myself. I moved to New York for a period of time, and then I moved back to Jersey. I went to Murphy's.

Kristyn Scorsone: It was more men?

Andrea Hayward: Yeah.

Kristyn Scorsone: Did you go to any other like LGBTQ bars or clubs at Newark at that time?

Andrea Hayward: Yeah. Later in my years, I would support different women through parties and stuff. It wasn't like we had like a designated club. It

would have to be like a promoter that found a place and then was like, under their name, you went to that bar and supported their event on that Thursday night, or whatever night it was. I did a lot of that as I got older, but of course, like I said, we never really owned anything of our own, to say this is our club. We ended up having to go to whoever was just promoting something for us.

Kristyn Scorsone: Did you go to like Miss Teresa's parties?

Andrea Hayward: Teresa and I went to high school together.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's cool.

Andrea Hayward: Listen, I would support Teresa's parties. Mostly when I moved away, I would come back in town, I would support her every once in a while, to her parties. Teresa catered to a younger crowd for me, so hence I wasn't into the younger set. She had great parties, ones that I went to, they're just a younger crowd that wasn't my set.

Kristyn Scorsone: Deneen also throws parties too. Do you ever go to Deneen Robinson? I think her last name is.

Andrea Hayward: I don't know her.

Kristyn Scorsone: Oh, okay. That might be more recent.

Andrea Hayward: Deborah Glenn used to throw parties, who else? June used to throw parties.

Kristyn Scorsone: Oh, cool.

Andrea Hayward: Go to her parties, stuff like that.

Kristyn Scorsone: After high school, you go to college in New York?

Andrea Hayward: No, I started at Seton Hall. I didn't stay there very long. I left. I went there for what, two years, and then I left, and then I was like trying to find myself, and muddled around tryna find myself. I got a job in New York on Wall Street, and then that was going well, and then I ended up just moving to New York. It's interesting how you move into the city, and it's just a whole new world. I stayed there for a few years, at the time the late eighties I think there was a crash, so you go to work one day there's no job.

I ended up having to come—I stayed in the city, exhausted my savings, and then I moved back to New Jersey living with my mom, trying to figure out which direction I'm gonna get my life

going in, and then I ended up with UPS. I thought I was gonna be there, just like a short period of time to get myself back on the Wall Street, and then 31 years later I stayed there, and just moved myself up the ranks, and then had the fortunate ability to continue to elevate my career, and then moved four times with UPS, and just made a career out of it.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's cool. That's awesome.

Andrea Hayward: Then obviously finished, went back to school, finished my undergrad, finished my graduate degree, all while working there.

Kristyn Scorsone: Did you like working with UPS?

Andrea Hayward: Yeah. Listen, I say sometimes that, it wasn't the career that I came out of college saying like, oh yeah, that's the company I wanna work for. I fell into it, 'cause I needed a job, and then I made a career out of the job, because by the time I got there I was 25 years old, and I saw what the company had to offer. In my mind I was like, I don't have time to waste figuring my life out. I'm 25 years old, I gotta get my life going. I need to get my building blocks up. I really put my head down, worked really hard, let people know what I wanted to do from a career standpoint, and I just continued to elevate there.

I won't say it's what I thought I wanted when I first got there, to what I ended up with exceeded my dreams, let's just say that. Exceeded my initial expectations, because I was able to work 30 years, and retire at 55 full pension. I know right? I had the opportunity to move, like I said, three or four times on the company, see different parts of the world, traveled. I made more money than I thought I ever would, in that I could still be retired and still live in my house and be comfortable.

The way I look at it, don't get me wrong, every company has their nuances just like UPS, and the way I equate it is like a marriage. There's good days in the marriage, and there's bad days in the marriage. That's the way I look at my career with UPS. There was some times there, of course there are days that I went in there and I was like, man, forget this company. I'm quitting today, but that was a bad day, and then I come back another day and I work, and I saw what we were doing was achieving another greater good, because it wasn't just about delivering packages, it was so much more to the company than that.

Even though that was the core business, but there was other things that I was involved in, and that I loved it. One of the reasons, I probably would've retired this year, but I had just moved back, moved from California to Atlanta, and companies do a restructuring and stuff all the time, and I remember them asking me to go back to California, and it was like, oh my Gosh. Not that California's a bad thing, but it was just that, we had just gotten our house here. We had just renovated the way we wanted to. We were only in it for not even two years.

You gotta remember my wife, I took her from New York, to Chicago, to California, little stint in Europe, back to California. She was like, I don't wanna move anymore. The whole thought of having to pack. Even though they pack you and do all that, the thought of like doing that, getting the dogs, getting the crate for the dogs, she was like, I don't wanna move. I was like, you think yourself, you're like, hey, I can do anything for 24 months, as long as there's an end in sight, but I also too, I had gotten to a place where I valued my family, and that my family had been on this journey with me for a long time.

For her to say, hey, I just don't wanna move again, and I don't wanna have a long distance relationship. I knew, 'cause we bought our house in Georgia, when we were moving to California, we had a house in California, so we had two houses. We knew to come from California to Georgia, is four and a half hours flat. That's the flight time. I made the decision of, hey, I'm already 55, I'm just gonna retire, and that's the crossroads we're at. I'm not mad at the company, 'cause the company didn't change.

The company needed me to do something. I decided today of out of 31 years, this is the day that I'm gonna just say, "Hey, I'm gonna put my family first and I'm gonna just go ahead and retire." It was one of the best decisions I've made for myself, because I had always put my career front and center. I said, hey, there's another life outside of UPS, and okay, I'm retired from here, but I could start something else new, and start doing something else. That's kinda like what I've done.

Kristyn Scorsone: How did you meet your wife?

Andrea Hayward: I met my wife, her sister has been a dear friend of mine for pre-UPS, before I even got to UPS many years ago. I remember meeting her years ago, when I was going to her sister's house. I was at her sister's house in Brooklyn. She came in with her young son, probably about like, I think John was like maybe like four or

five years old, and I met her then passing. Fast forward again, I'm at her sister's house in Brooklyn. I go there with some friends of mine, and my old girlfriend at the time, for her sister's birthday party.

She's there and I'm like, so I'm in her room talking to her sister chit chopping it up, blah blah, blah. She comes in and her sister says, Irene don't you remember Andrea, my friend? You know, thinking years ago. I'm like, that's your sister? Like from way back then with the little boy? Of course the little boy is like a grown man now, so that's how we reconnected again, and then, I don't know, it was weird. I saw her, I was like, wow. If there's a love at first sight, I don't know if it was love at first sight, but definitely captured my heart right then and there.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's really sweet.

Andrea Hayward: Yeah.

Kristyn Scorsone: Then you got married when?

Andrea Hayward: We were got together in 02, 06 we moved to Chicago, 'cause we were dating. I said to her then I was like, hey, the company is asking me to move to Illinois, and I'm gonna go out there on this interview, but it's understood once you go on the interview, it's like formality, you're not going there if you're not gonna take the job. It was interesting because she just said to me like, "Hey, you're not gonna leave New York without me." That was huge, like, whoa, okay. I think we got married in 08, we got married in 08.

Kristyn Scorsone: You said Rose Hardy married you?

Andrea Hayward: Yep. My friend dear friend Rose married us.

Kristyn Scorsone: What was that like?

Andrea Hayward: It was great. It was great because it was important for us, even though we were living in Chicago, it was important for us to come back to the East Coast to be married, because that's where our friends and family were. It was great because, I love Rose, because even though she knew me, she knew us, she made me go through the premarital questionnaire, and what do you call it? Premarital therapy per se, so that make sure that what we're talking about, what we're doing, we're on the right track of doing it, and it was good.

We went through, did the questionnaire, walked through it. It was a lot of planning from Illinois to Newark. It was important for me to have at Newark, because I was born in Newark. I went to school in Newark. A lot of my friends were in Newark, and it was easy for Irene's family from New York to come to Newark. Obviously, my family from Ohio drove whatever, from Ohio to Newark, 'cause that's what they did every holiday season, Thanksgiving particularly. It was just natural to be there.

Kristyn Scorsone: Where did you get married in Newark?

Andrea Hayward: The Presbyterian church. I think where they used to do I have, Gosh, look at that. Where they used to have the LGBT services at.

Kristyn Scorsone: Oh, where Liberation and Truth was?

Andrea Hayward: Yeah. Right on Broad Street.

Kristyn Scorsone: Oh, okay. Okay. That's really cool.

Andrea Hayward: I don't know what church they're at now, but were they used to, I guess, rent out the church there, that's where we had it at.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome. What year was that?

Andrea Hayward: Two thousand and eight. It's funny, we had a civil union in 2008, October 18, and then when it became legal, we got married again October 18th, but we went to the Justice of the Peace in Chicago.

Kristyn Scorsone: My anniversary is October 13th.

Andrea Hayward: Oh yeah, so October 18th is my anniversary.

Kristyn Scorsone: Or maybe October 25th. Sorry, 2013. I'm having brain aneurysm. Let's see, so you went from—so when were you throwing parties in Newark?

Andrea Hayward: I was throwing parties in Newark pre-Irene. I was with my old girlfriend prior to Irene. I was throwing parties, 'cause I was living there. I was throwing parties in the 2000s, and that was, we decided that we wanted to have a party. The theme of the party was, it was like my childhood. Like I told you, I had bought this house.

It's funny 'cause my first house was in Society Hill, and then I was like, I don't know what, maybe I was like, I wanna get another house. I find this house in Forest Hills, and I don't know what I

was thinking of Kristyn, but I just fell in love with the house. It was way too big for one person. Way, way too big for one person, but like, I was like, fuck it. I want it. I bought it.

Kristyn Scorsone: How big was it?

Andrea Hayward: Let's just say that it had six bedrooms on the second floor.

Kristyn Scorsone: Wow.

Andrea Hayward: I had a Greyhound dog. My dog had a bedroom. It's crazy.

Kristyn Scorsone: So cool.

Andrea Hayward: Yeah, it was crazy. Then I had like, what they could do like the servants quarters up on the third floor, so that was like another two bedroom, living room, kitchen quarter up there. I had the front, the main stairs in the back stairs for like service to come down, back in the 1920s, oh yeah. I had a full on basement. I'm telling you, it was insane.

Kristyn Scorsone: It's like you're like downtown Abbey.

Andrea Hayward: Yeah, totally, but I moved into it by myself. Oh God. That's why I laugh when June says like a mansion. I guess if you're thinking of that, but it was my house. I gutted this house out, renovated it, updated it and stuff, and my girlfriend at the time, she moved in with me, and I was like, we were gonna have a party. I don't even know how we arrived at the whole party thing, but I remember what I wanted to do. I wanted to recapture, like I told you, my happiest years as a young kid, family coming over.

Having a party where different things are going on at the same time. What I would do is, like my living room, I literally took all the furniture out of my living room, on the other side and put it in my office on the other side. I had a DJ room over there, and my living room was the dance floor. My sitting room walked to the side, was where people could go in. If you wanted to stop dancing, you go over there and sit.

My dining room, I moved the chairs back, 'cause I had some friends that were not alcoholic friends, so I had like a big punch bowl of non-alcoholic, and then a lot of desserts and stuff on the table. The basement, the family that I bought the house from was an Italian family, they had a full-on bar down in the basement. I had a full bar with two sinks in there. I had created like shelving

where you could put the bottles on, and then I had a room in the back that had a pool. I didn't put the pool table in there just yet.

One year I didn't put the pool table in. I opened that room and I created like folding tables in there. People went in there to play cards, Pokeno, chess, spades, whatever you wanted to play. On the other side we had booth seating, like restaurant booth seating. If you wanted to eat, you had there. The family room area had the TV there, so people were watching movies and stuff like that. When you came in the basement, there was the common area, and that's where I had an L-shaped table, and that's where it was a buffet of food at.

We had everything, like I used to buy 50 pound, literally 50 pounds of fish every year for that party, and we had like a huge thing outside, that we fried fish. I remember my mom, my friend Donna's mom, made me two pans of macaroni and cheese. My sister made two pans of steamings. I think we had Swedish meatball. We had like a full-on buffet of food, and it was free. The only two criteria. One, we had to invite you, so you had to be on the guest list to come, and number two, you had to bring something. You had to donate new, you had to donate clothing, or you had to donate canned goods. That was the criteria for the party.

Kristyn Scorsone:

Where would that go?

Andrea Hayward:

I used to donate it to the Goodwill every year in Newark. Like I said, we would send out the invitation, 'cause there was no like internet, total like internet, the way it is now, send out an invite. You would have to call an RSVP saying that you're coming with your guest name, and you could come to the party, and you couldn't just come any old kind of way. You had to be dressed presentable. It wasn't like you could come in like you know jerseys and all that stuff.

You had to come in, it was a grown-up swagger affair, and it would go on. We finally would have to cut the music off at like, I don't know, four o'clock in the morning, four or five, 'cause I had neighbors, so it was obscene. It was not obscene in a bad way, it was awesome. There was not one person, never had a fight, never had an argument, never had any ruckus. It was all about love. All about love.

People came and had a good time. Like I said, if you didn't feel like dancing anymore, you could go downstairs and play cards. If you wanted a beverage, we had a full bar. The only thing you had

to do was just tip the girls behind the bar. They had a glow glass jar of love. You put your little dollar in there, but the beer, the liquor, everything was free. The whole party was free.

Kristyn Scorsone: How often would you have the parties?

Andrea Hayward: Once a year. I did it the week before Thanksgiving, and the reason I did it then was two reasons. One, 'cause I was working at UPS. After Thanksgiving, got to be my busy season, couldn't do it, and I did it before Thanksgiving because I felt like, if I got the clothes and I got the goods, when would people need them the most? During the holidays.

Kristyn Scorsone: What year did it start or thereabouts?

Andrea Hayward: I don't know. I don't remember. It was maybe the late 90s into the 2000s.

Kristyn Scorsone: Like early 2000s?

Andrea Hayward: No, it was before, 'cause I don't think I was a division manager in 2002. I might've been manager by then. It was in late nineties. Late 90s, into the 2000s.

Kristyn Scorsone: How big was the guest list?

Andrea Hayward: Oh man. You know, it was funny, the guest list got crazy, because we would start out with like, I don't know, 'cause the first year we had it, it wasn't like super, super crowded. It was comfortable. I think I would say like, "oh Kristen, if you come you could be Kristen and plus one or plus two." Okay, well no big deal, and you would give us your guest names.

We were like, if you were on a list, because also too, we wanted to create an environment where people could be their authentic selves, without the drama of like someone, like your boss or somebody, whatever, coming in there seeing you doing something that, not that was inappropriate, but like you just felt uncomfortable in a setting. I think another year I think I changed it to like, oh you could bring Rodriguez, and that made it, because now, people wanted to come, 'cause people were like, oh, I need to [inaudible 1:34:05] everybody.

You're like, oh my God, okay. Then it became too tight, 'cause if you say, hey, you could bring three, that's you and three other people, that's four people, times, I don't know, a guest list of 75

people, that's a lot of people that could come. I think we killed it down to like one plus two kinda thing, to keep it manageable, and that was great. We still had like the outdoor, 'cause it wasn't totally cold enough that people couldn't, 'cause it was still hot inside. People used to go out on the back deck, chill. We had a fire pit going, smoke a cigar, smoke cigarettes, smoke whatever, and just chill and then come back inside. It was a good vibe.

Kristyn Scorsone: Well, do you remember the address? Like could I ask you the address?

Andrea Hayward: Yeah, 517 Clifton Avenue. That was my house.

Kristyn Scorsone: When you say, to allow people to be their authentic selves, like were people not out and they were going to the party, like not out in the sense of like, they could be outed, I guess, if somebody like their boss came, let's say.

Andrea Hayward: Yeah, I guess so. We were very like intentional about who we invited. We had to know you. It wasn't like you could just run up and like, hey Andrea, can I come to your party? I had to know who you were, and then I was like, hey, we're doing this affair. We were sending invitations out, it was a big mailing thing and all that, but we had to know who you were.

Kristyn Scorsone: It's like people feel safe to come, I guess, 'cause they're like, I know who's gonna be there.

Andrea Hayward: Right, exactly.

Kristyn Scorsone: Is it all women?

Andrea Hayward: No, and that was the nice thing about it. It wasn't all women, and it wasn't all gay people. Oh hell, my mother was at the parties. My mom came to the parties. My sister came to the parties, and she's not gay. My cousins would come, my ex-girlfriend Shelene, her mother, her brother and his girl. It wasn't like I only had gay friends, I had straight friends too. I would invite my straight friends to the party, and it was just, like I said, it wasn't about just being a gay party, it was a down home house party. A party that was at my house, that multicultural and who you love didn't matter at that event.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's cool. The girls, you said that would bartend, did you hire them, or were they like volunteers?

Andrea Hayward: Yeah, they were my friends. They were my friends. One of them was my dear friend, and like I said, the enticing part was, they're bartending, but I didn't pay them, but they had a tip jar. People, of course when they, think about it, you got like potentially 200 people in and out of an event. Everybody's getting a drink, a dollar here, \$2 there, blah, blah, blah, so they, they loved it. They loved it. I had a little bar. One of my cousins, I usually had one or two boys that just did nothing but the bar.

I had one kid that did nothing but the bar. His job was empty out the garbage, keep the girls stocked up with ice, and then I had another kid that picked the garbage up throughout the house, when people threw stuff away to keep—'cause you don't wanna be in an event the garbage cans are overflowing, keep the house tidy. It was very well orchestrated, very well. People at the door wore walkie-talkie, to make sure that there was nothing crazy going on. It was well orchestrated.

Kristyn Scorsone: What was I gonna ask? oh, I think, was it June that said that there were some like celebrities that would come too, or am I misremembering?

Andrea Hayward: Oh yeah. One year a friend of mine, Tammi Ham and her best friend is Queen Latifa, so she came, she was at the party one year.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's so cool. What music did you play?

Andrea Hayward: All house music. All underground house music.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome. I don't know if it's maybe hard to answer, but like what like conversations would be happening there?

Andrea Hayward: Some of them were my UPS friends, they would talk about work, other people would be just connecting. I'm sure there was just catching up with people that sometimes you hadn't seen in a long time. Other situations were, who knows? Who knows if people were networking, because that was the vibe. It was open. It was totally open.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's cool. What made you choose like—what made you think to do like, I'm gonna have people bring clothes and food, like canned goods?

Andrea Hayward: Because I wanted it to be purposeful. I didn't just say I wanted to throw a party just to be thrown a party. I wanted it to have some sense of a purpose. Whether people knew it or not, like I said to

you early on, my early childhood life was a struggle, my mom being a single parent. Not that we didn't, at least I didn't know that we were struggling younger, of course 'cause you're in it. It's like being in a matrix. You don't know you're in a matrix till you get out the matrix, but I came from a very working family.

I remember something as simple as in, I might be aging myself here. I remember something as simple as, I think the store was A&P, the Can Can sale [Shop-Rite has an annual "Can Can Sale"]. How we would go there, and my mom would be like stocking up on canned goods for freaking days. We had cart full of canned goods, and it clicked in me that, we stocked on canned goods because we needed that food, we couldn't buy fresh. We couldn't afford to be fresh. We had to be canned goods.

Of course the sodium and all that. That didn't matter when your budget is this, but you still have to eat, and you have these things to do. I realize the importance early on, how something so small you take for granted matters to other people. Matters to those that don't have. When you have, you don't think about it, because it's just every day for you, but when you don't have it, those things matter. I remember that mattered.

I didn't eat salmon, fresh salmon till I was an adult. I thought salmon came out of the can, 'cause that's how we had salmon, if we could afford to buy a can of salmon. To me, that's what made me decide that, how could I give back? That was a perfect way. If I'm gonna have an event, you wanna come to this event, I'm gonna supply all the food, I'm gonna supply all the alcohol, I'm gonna supply the venue.

I don't want your money. I want what you can do for someone else, and to me, I thought that was a better way of giving back to the community, and serving people who need, one without making them feel guilty. They don't have to ask, and here's a resource, here's something for you just because.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome. That's really awesome. Were you involved in any other activism like that, or more like throwing the parties was your form of activism?

Andrea Hayward: No, I'm not, and, and it's not in a negative way, because you don't always have to be on the front line to be in, you can still be a supporter. To me, that was my way of supporting, all right. I could tell you like, I'm big on mentorship. I'm big on mentorship, 'cause somebody mentored me. Somebody whispered in my ear, and kept

me on the right path, because the Lord knows, let me tell you, I've veered off the path. It's something for someone to say, hey, get back over here.

In my career at UPS and even now outside of it, I've continued to mentor, particularly young people going into corporate America, 'cause there's no blue book how to survive in Corporate America. There's no blue book to tell you like, "Hey, when you go to this meeting, don't talk. When you go into this meeting, just listen. Understand the dynamics of the room, understand the players that are in the room." No one tells you that.

I find that when you grow up in the inner city, and you don't grow up with not worrying about day-to-day items that we have to worry about, you get a home mentorship at the kitchen table of how to interact, but when you're growing up in the inner city, you don't get that. What I've tried to do outside of, when you say activism, I've tried to mentor and speak to young people, that when you get into these arenas, this is the roadmap. This is, you need a mentor. The importance of a sponsor in corporate America.

Someone that's in the room that's gonna say, oh yeah, this young lady brings value to our organization and this is why, because if you are not in a room saying your own name, you need somebody in that room saying it for you, for you to get elevated. Those are the ways that I have for me, that I'm comfortable with in doing my contribution of pressing us forward, and reminding people that, okay, her being gay, does that make you uncomfortable, or is it about the work that she brings to the table, or he brings to the table, because sometimes you have to level set people and remind them of their own implicit biases.

Kristyn Scorsone: A hundred percent.

Andrea Hayward: Not to get on the soapbox, but that's just my theory.

Kristyn Scorsone: No, I a hundred percent agree. That's awesome. Do you have like any favorite memories from the parties?

Andrea Hayward: I can't say one over another. My favorite memories are that one, how people would call us early to say, when are we having it? Get on the list, and I remember how good it made people feel. How really good it made people feel to be able to come, and there was never a person that came and said that they had a bad time. Never. Never once said they had a bad time, and I feel a lot of joy, 'cause like I said, you don't always embrace it when you're in it, but when

I hear people say to me even years later, man, Andrea, I remember your parties.

I wish you still had the party. Then I think back, I'm like, man, those were pretty cool parties. They were pretty cool, but those things bring me joy. I think, I'm in a phase with my life, Kristyn, where I'm reflecting. I'm not the young Andrea anymore in my twenties, my teens, my twenties, and my thirties, I'm 50. I was telling like, all right, not that life is over. Let me just make that clear. Life is not over. Andrea's still trying to live it to the fullest. I was like, I'm gonna ride this till the wheels fall off, okay?

I also understand that like, when I look back, I look at my journey, and there were some rough days. There were some rough roads on my journey, but I look at where I am, 'cause it's not the destination, 'cause the journey just keeps going on and on and on. I look at where I am right now in my journey, and I'm very pleased with everything that I've ever gone through.

What I was able to learn out of it, and those parties made me feel a sense my soul was fulfilled, because like I told you, my earliest happy days of my childhood, was those family nights, that we had as a family, of being able to go over there on Friday after work or whatever, the cooking. The fresh fish, the fresh chicken, the soul food of that, and then whatever record came out for that week, we were playing *it*.

Playing, drawing, and toys, and the card games, and going in the kitchen, I see my mom and my aunt and them in there, then I see my other cousins and them playing cards. Just the activities of all that going on in one household, but it was all love. All love, and to be able to now recreate that environment in my own home, made me feel good. The fact that people look forward to it, made me feel good as well.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's so cool. I love that. That's awesome. I just wanna like picture it like, so like say I'm like I'm on the list, and I come through, and I have a couple friends, whatever. I get to the front door, would I like give my name? Would somebody be there?

Andrea Hayward: Oh yeah. We had a check-in desk. First off, you would call me to give me your names. You would call me to give me your guest names. By the time the party started, we had a full like printout of every guest, the main guest and the subsequent guest. You would come and say, hey, Kristyn Scorsone, blah blah, of course we

would probably know you. We'd be like, hey Kristyn? You got your plus two? You got a wristband, and you went into the party.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's so cool.

Andrea Hayward: We had a coat check and everything. It wasn't like back in the day, throwing your coat all over, having to look for it. You went upstairs, so would tell you where the coat check was, 'cause I hired a guy to bring us racks of coats. Every time there was a service, you had to give a look. My niece and another friend of ours, were the coat check girls. It's so funny though. True story. The coat check girl, you ever watched this show, sisters?

Kristyn Scorsone: No.

Andrea Hayward: There's this show on television now called Sisters. There's an actress called Novi Brown. Novi Brown is a dear friend of mine. Her mom is a dear friend of mine. She was my coat check girl.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome.

Andrea Hayward: No, it's funny because you would come to the party, you would announce yourself. We'd give you the band, you would go upstairs, hang up your coat, keep your tag, and of course the girls would have like a little jar there, you'd give them a little dollar or whatever, they were young. You'd give them a little love offering, and then you would come down, and you just do your thing. You get your food, play cards, you drink, you dance, you had the vine. That was it. When it was over, it was no going around looking for your coat. You just went upstairs handing them your ticket, cool. You're on your way.

Kristyn Scorsone: Did any of the women ever meet a new girlfriend there or anything like that?

Andrea Hayward: Listen, I am sure there were some love connections that were during that time. I don't know. I can't incriminate anybody, but I'm sure there was some love connections that were made.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's so cool. I wish I could have been there. I think I'm jealous. Also what baller you are like, that's so cool that you could do that. That's so awesome.

Andrea Hayward: Well, like I said, life has a lot of crooks and turns, and I'm just grateful that I was fortunate enough. I had a career at the time that I could afford to do that.

Kristyn Scorsone: Was that when you worked on Wall Street?

Andrea Hayward: No, I was at UPS by then.

Kristyn Scorsone: UPS Okay, awesome.

Andrea Hayward: Yes, and was just able to do that, and I loved it. I loved it, and don't get me wrong. When you grow up with a single person, a single parent or anybody, budgeting is big deal. It's not like I just went out in November, like bought everything. Of course, I would like look at the liquor sales, I would go to the liquor store, and I might spend, it's funny as you think about it back then I was like, man. When I say these numbers like whatever, but I think to myself, man.

There was nothing, I would go to the liquor store and be like, I spent three grand on liquor, but I would be like, [makes card swiping noises] and I get all this liquor. Of course, I had some leftover, 'cause back in the day like then, hypnotic was big. I was buying these bottles of hypnotic, and then you had to put, I forgot what they were called, but they would go with something else. You bought a lot of beer and different things. I had to have God knows how much ice on hand. I remember a day or two before the party, going to the fish market and I would order 50 pounds of fish. Of course they would clean it, but then you'd have to go home and re-clean it, season it, and it wasn't like somebody came over, that was like me out there with the big vac, with the propane tank on my patio, freaking dunking fish, the day of the party. The day of and before the party started dunking fish. I would get the food brought over, 'cause I would designate. I would buy all of them. Like here, make the macaroni and cheese for me. My mom, my sister would make the collard greens, and different people would make stuff, and I would have to go get it, sternal racks, get it all out there, but it was great though. I didn't view it as like work.

I viewed it as like, man, the house was ready, getting the furniture moved, getting the DJ area set up. Like I said, the party was over like around four, so of course, I had some friends that would stay and hang out. We eat breakfast in the morning, but my cleaning lady, six o'clock in the morning, she was knocking on the door. By eight o'clock my house was back together. She would come in, her husband and her daughter, they would come and clean the house, put the furniture back, Sunday, my house was back in order.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's amazing. That is a lot of work though. I guess that's like a labor of love. Like that's really, really—

Andrea Hayward: It's a system. You gotta have a system, like project management. Like party ended here. I would tell her, I was like, hey. She would show up at six o'clock in the morning, and they would start cleaning, clean the house, move the living room furniture out of my office, back into the living room, put the rug back down tables. By the time I got up by eight or nine o'clock, the house was back in order.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's amazing.

Andrea Hayward: I think we would set up, Goodwill would come by because we had so much, and they would just come by a couple days later, and pick the stuff off the porch. Like the clothes would be on one side, canned good and stuff would be on any other.

Kristyn Scorsone: Would it go to Goodwill in Newark?

Andrea Hayward: Yep. Goodwill in Newark.

Kristyn Scorsone: Amazing.

Andrea Hayward: Kept the evolution of, doing something in a city, and supporting the city you live in.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. Totally. Do you miss it? Do you think you would ever throw parties like that again?

Andrea Hayward: I've been asked. I've been asked to do that. I don't know. I don't know if it would, I don't know. I don't know. I've thought about it, people mention it to me, but I don't live there anymore, I live in Georgia. I can't say no, but I also think that, in life you have to constantly reinvent yourself, and, you have to constantly evolve, and I did that once. Not saying that I won't do it again. I think I evolved into doing other things. I think that's where I've evolved toward the mentorship thing. That's where I've evolved into now.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. I think it's so important too, 'cause you don't know how to comport yourself in corporate America, if you don't have that growing up. I guess I'm curious too, because you said sometimes like these parties, and even when you're younger, the parties too, it's a respite from like having to be in like a hostile world at times and things like that. Did you experience any hardship or discrimination, for your sexuality or gender or your race or combo?

Andrea Hayward:

Yeah. I'll give you an example. I'll never forget. I was in high school. We were living in Orange, I was in high school, but I lived on the Orange - West Orange borderline on Park Avenue right there. I remember walking to the grocery store from Orange into West Orange, and I remember, I'll never forget, there was these young boys like sitting on the wall, and this is not the south, this is right there in New Jersey. I'll never forget them cursing. They didn't even know me. They didn't even know who I was. I'm just walking into the store, and here they are cursing at me, and calling me the N word.

Life changing, because you're thinking, oh my God, that's not like in a Martin Luther King video clip that they're showing. That's not like a sixties. This is right here in the eighties, 20 years removed. Have I dealt in corporate America? Absolutely. Corporate America can be just as cutthroat, if not worse than the streets, because the beauty of it, or the un-beauty of it is they're cutting you, they're hindering you from moving forward and progressing with the talent, all because they have biases of who you are, who you love, versus the assets that you bring to the table.

It's not beauty, it's shameful quite honestly, so that's why I said to you like mentorship. I know I elevated in UPS because I had mentors. I know I elevated in UPS because I had sponsors. There were people in the room saying, "Hey, what about Andrea?" I also know I elevated in UPS, because I was good at what I did. There were others that were good at what they did, but they didn't have some of the other things. Sometimes, people don't know that they need a mentor.

They don't know they need a sponsor, because shit I didn't know I needed one until someone freaking tapped me on the shoulder and was like, "Hey, don't do that." Then I started running things past them, and then more and more obviously the relationship developed. Now I've had several throughout my career, but there's no doubt, there's no question in my mind, that there had probably been promotions that I could have had earlier, but didn't get them because of who I loved.

But I also got to a point too Kristyn, that I got to a point that who I loved was not going to, I was not gonna allow you to hold me back from getting to the finish line. That you were just a roadblock, but I was gonna get around you somehow. Those are just corporate life skills you develop, just like you develop life skills to navigate in any environment.

When I moved away, just so you know, like when I moved away from New Jersey, and like I said, I created a safe environment where people could come and not feel like their secretary's gonna be there or whatever, and even if they were, it was an environment where people could let their hair down and not feel like, whatever I did today was gonna be office news tomorrow.

When I moved to Illinois, I met people that, some of them worked for me, but I was able to be around certain people that I felt really comfortable with, that I could go there and hang out with them, and hang out with different folks, and then when we went back to the office on Monday, the conversation was about work, not about Andrea and Irene being out somewhere, letting her hair down, kind of vibe.

They're some of my dearest friends today in Illinois, because they allowed me to be me without the title of vice president or whatever my title was at the time. They allowed me to be me, and that was the premise of what I wanted when I gave the parties in Newark. I wanted people to be able to come, and enjoy themselves and let their hair down, and not be so and so, and have to worry about someone else, but they could just be able to be at an event, be comfortable, get drunk if you wanted to, and enjoy themselves.

Kristyn Scorsone: Was anybody closeted at that time?

Andrea Hayward: I'm sure people are. Listen, people are closeted. You don't even know they're closeted. They might be open to you, closeted to somebody else. I'm sure there were, I'm sure there were, but I wasn't diving into it like that, you know what I mean? I wasn't into it that way. I was into, this is a party, this is a safe place, it's all about love, and if you wanna come to this party, one, I gotta know you, my girlfriend's gotta know you, and the admission is old or new clothing and canned goods.

Kristyn Scorsone: Was it mostly like young professional women that would come, or like people doing all kinds of different jobs?

Andrea Hayward: All kinds of things. There was no elitist group of like, you had to be this. You had executives and you had frigging people that were the secretary of whatever.

Kristyn Scorsone: I love that. Is there any other spaces in Newark that you associate with LGBTQ people?

Andrea Hayward: Not that I can think of, and I'm sad to say that, because like I said, I've been gone for so long. When I come back, I'm not going to a space. I'm going to meet someone for dinner or for drinks that I haven't seen in a long time. I think I went to one space not too long ago, and a dear friend of mine owned it True Lounge, but I heard it's not up and running anymore.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah, I think I know what you're talking about. Did you ever go to Newark Pride?

Andrea Hayward: No. When I left Pride, they didn't have Newark Pride before I left, so--

Kristyn Scorsone: That's when it started, right? or was it 05, or 06? 'Cause Sakia Gunn was killed in 2003, I think it was a couple years later. You would've been gone. It's really fun though.

Andrea Hayward: Of course, I've been to my share of New York Pride, but I haven't had a chance to go to Newark Pride, but I did hear about the young lady that got killed. That was terrible.

Kristyn Scorsone: I'm trying to think if there's anything else I wanted to ask you. Is there anything I haven't asked you that you wish I had, or that I didn't bring up that you wanted to talk about?

Andrea Hayward: No, I think you covered a lot of bases. You covered the reasoning for the party, the party, and you covered my growing up a little bit, and why I did what I did.

Kristyn Scorsone: That's awesome.

Andrea Hayward: I didn't think it was a big deal. It's so funny though how when you do things at the time you don't think it's a big deal, and years later it's like, oh my Gosh. How it really affected other people's lives.

Kristyn Scorsone: It's definitely. It's so part of history, because especially I think for like queer women, we don't own a lot of places, you know what I mean? There isn't as many lesbian clubs ever as there are gay club-like gay male clubs. For like Miss Teresa to throw parties, and for you to throw parties, and other women and like First Choice, that's all so fascinating and historic. Is such a piece of our queer history.

Andrea Hayward: The great part and unfortunate part I just didn't have, the parties were like I said, they were guest lists only. It wasn't like anybody could just come up, you had to be invited, and I think that was a

good part of it too. There was an exclusivity of it, which made it another place of safe and enjoyment for people.

Kristyn Scorsone: Yeah. It's a sanctuary for sure.

Andrea Hayward: Yeah.

Kristyn Scorsone: Cool. Okay, I'll stop recording, but I'm not gonna hang up. Thank you.

[End of Audio]