

**Marianne Cutler**

**2020-07-30**

LIZ BRADBURY: Okay. So, it's on and that's on. Yes. So, with this project Bradbury-Sullivan LGBT Community Center and the Trexler Library at Muhlenberg College will collaborate on forty years of public health experiences in the Lehigh Valley LGBT community collecting and curating local LGBT health experiences from HIV/AIDS to COVID-19. My name is Liz Bradbury and I'm here with Marianne Cutler to talk to her about her experiences in the Lehigh Valley LGBT community during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic as part of the Lehigh Valley LGBT community archive. We are meeting on Zoom today and it is July 30th. Is that right?

MARIANNE CUTLER: Yes. It's hard to keep track.

LB: It is. That's something that everyone needs to know with regard to archive stuff. So yeah July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2020. And, thank you so much for your willingness to speak with us today. To start can you please state [00:02:00] your full name and spell it for me.

MC: Sure. My name is Marianne Cutler. M-A-R-I-A-N-N-E  
C-U-T-L-E-R.

LB: Okey-doke. And will you please share your birthdate?

MC: December 23rd, 1961. I am fifty-eight and a half years old.

LB: Okay. Well that's good. So what town are you in?

MC: Bethlehem.

LB: Okay.

MC: Bethlehem City. Not Township. Bethlehem City not Township.

LB: City. City. Okay. So, and this keeps reminding me to be sure it's recording, so yes it is. So this is the consent part. Do you consent to this interview today?

MC: I do.

LB: Do you consent to having this interview being transcribed, digitized, and made publicly available online in searchable formats?

MC: I do.

LB: Do you consent to the LGBT archive [00:03:00] using your interview for educational purposes in other formats including films, articles, websites, presentations, and other formats we may not even know about today.

MC: Now you're going too far. No, I'm just kidding. I do.

LB: Do you understand that you will have 30 days after the electronic delivery of the transcript to review your interview and identify any parts you'd like to delete and/or withdraw your interview from the project?

MC: I understand.

LB: Okay. What is your zip code?

MC: 18018.

LB: Okay. Did you say you were thirty-nine and a half, cause that's the next question?

MC: Fifty-eight and a half.

LB: Oh, Fifty-eight and a half. Why did I -- I misheard you.

MC: Wow, thirty-nine and a half.

LB: That's cool.

MC: That's a long time ago.

LB: [Inaudible] For a long time after I turned forty, I still thought I was thirty-eight. I just kept thinking I was thirty-eight and then I'd go, "wait, no, I'm really not thirty-eight." How do you identify yourself within the LGBT community?

MC: I would describe myself as a [00:04:00] masculine of center lesbian?

LB: Okay. And cisgender?

MC: Cisgender, yes.

LB: So, there's lots of things we can talk about. You can talk about anything you want, but, and in fact we were starting out talking about, let's just go back into this since we were already in that. We were talking about where we go to shop. Where we've been going out. So go ahead and talk about that.

MC: Well, I'm going out as little as possible, just like lots of other people. And I'm, when I am out, I am

hyper-conscious of where other people are in relation to me.

LB: Yeah.

MC: So when I'm in the supermarket, when I'm at Wegmans, or, at Lowes, I'm very conscious of not only where other people in relation to me, but also whether other people seem to be [00:05:00] conscious of where they are in relation to other people. You know? As [far as?] the ones who are just blithely moving along. I'm very sort of conscious of that. But in terms of the actual places, I mean literally Wegmans, Lowes, for home improvement related things. Couple of trips to CVS. And -- Oh and the post office I think twice.

LB: Yeah.

MC: Now, I have to leave the house for some other reasons. I've been having some medical issues that require trips to various doctors, but anything I can do via, you know sort of the tele thing, therapy and all that, that sort of stuff I'm doing this way. [00:06:00] My daughter, I have a fourteen-year-old daughter, who plays field hockey, and she's a goalkeeper, it's awesome!

LB: Cool.

MC: But, she is hoping to make the high school team. She'll be going into high school at the end of August. And she's

hoping to make their team, because as of right now they're still -- the declared intention of the Board that governs high school athletics, is that there will be a fall sports season. At this moment, that's the route they're taking. So, they're having optional workouts right now. The team. And she's doing those, so I take her to and from them. They're wearing masks. They're doing social distancing. I'm keeping my fingers crossed that all of that is happening the way it should. You know. Just, it's like, you know you lay everything out and you think what's the [00:07:00] relative benefit versus the relative risk here. And then, you know my partner and I both have been really pretty hyper-vigilant about things. But we're at that point where we need to start making some decisions that might push that a little bit.

LB: Yeah.

MC: And in terms of relative benefit and risk, the benefit of Kai participating in this, we decided outweighs the potential risks of it. So, Kai is my daughter, [obviously?]. I also, last May, we have -- we call them, "The Guys." A male couple who, one of whom I have known since I was eighteen. We were on the same floor of our dorm together. Actually, he was our donor for Kai. And he and his partner, of you know, [multi --?], probably approaching

[00:08:00] thirty years at this point. They are very involved with Kai's life. They live in Boston. They're very much involved with Kai's life as family members. Not as Dad or anything like that. But, we made the decision, because they're hyper-vigilant because one of them is quite, he is actually fairly high risk due to age, that we would join our bubbles. We did that in May, actually. They came down here for Kai's birthday. Right, and everything was fine. They have a place in Provincetown.

LB: Yeah. I saw that you were in Provincetown. I was wondering [inaudible]. .

MC: So, Kai and I actually just came from ten days in Provincetown. Well about a week ago we got back. So, you know, we went there, but the drive there, we went eight hours without using the bathroom. (laughter)

LB: Oh, I know. You know, we go to Florida and it's fourteen hours and I said, "we have to get Sheweese." And Trish --

MC: Yeah, definitely, I'm the same. [00:09:00] I was going to get them.

LB: She said, "I'm not doing that," and I said, "then we can't go because I can't." She really can't do that stuff. I'm like, "ah, [go?], look I'll go behind the trees." But she really just will [inaudible] - [But?] I've never known her to do that. And I said, "I don't see how". That's the one

thing. Cause we have a place there, we can get down there and we can -- But people in Florida are horrible. P-town I think you would....

MC: Oh my God.

LB: Yeah.

MC: People are insane.

LB: [Oh my God?] It's just horrible. And the numbers are just unbelievably dangerous.

MC: They really are.

LB: But, did you find Provincetown, that people in Provincetown were much more, or enough of them were okay? Or, what did you think?

MC: You know what, you know, it was a very -- I go every summer at least once. And I love it. I love the --

LB: -- Yeah, I love it too.

MC: -- you know, just the spectacle of it. (laughter) [I really do.] It totally recharges my queer. I just love it.

LB: [Sure?].

MC: [00:10:00] It's my happy place. But, it was not the same P-town that I've visited so many times before. I was there during what would have been Bear Week, and I don't know if you've ever been there during Bear Week, but --

LB: I've seen pictures. It wouldn't be something to do.

MC: It's usually jam-packed [during Bear Week?].

LB: Yeah, got it.

MC: It's got to be one of their most, you know, one of their busiest theme weeks.

LB: Sure. Yeah.

MC: And it wasn't. It wasn't packed. But, again I, you know, they're requiring masks in the main drag of Commercial Street. And they have people kind of situated at each end who are mask ambassadors. They've got, you know, the sash saying "Mask Ambassador."

LB: Of course. It's so brilliant. See that --

MC: [inaudible] P-town!

LB: -- I could totally handle that.

MC: But, I went a little bit in like just a couple blocks in because there [00:11:00] was one place I needed to go to buy something that I can't buy in Pennsylvania, but, and I will just leave it at that. (laughter) But, but it seemed like most the people who were walking around were wearing masks.

LB: Yeah.

MC: The beach was, we did go to the beach. And it was comparatively empty.

LB: Yeah.

MC: So distancing wasn't an issue.

LB: Yeah.



MC: Yeah, so I mean I felt comfortable there. But not comfortable enough to just -- Like normally I would be hanging out on Commercial Street just watching --

LB: Sure, I know. I've done it. (laughter)

MC: You know. And maybe doing some -- You know I like a good old fashioned now and again. (laughter) I like a good bourbon now and again.

LB: Yeah.

MC: So doing some, you know, visiting certain spots along Commercial Street that [have become?] my favorites. So there was none of that this time. But we had a wonderful time despite that. So. Now Sandy is actually not here. [00:12:00] Because Sandy's happy place is, I don't know if you're familiar with this, but there's a place in Chester County called, oh gosh. I just call it Kimberton. It's Camphill Kimberton. It is a community. I don't even know how large the land area is. A community for adults with intellectual disabilities. And it's kind of founded on the sort of the Steiner sort of philosophy, [kind of the Waldorf philosophy [of?]?] [inaudible] various things. So people live in small houses. There's usually four villagers. One or two -- Usually I guess two what are called "co-workers." They're people who work in the community. Lots of little houses and lots of you know, they

have a dairy and a weavery. [00:13:00] And you know, a CSA off their property as well. Huge. You know, garden. All of that. Herb garden.

LB: Yeah.

MC: Mosaics. A bakery. They sell their goods. There's a Kimberton Whole Foods that sells their baked goods and all of that as well. So it's this completely kind of insular bubble unto itself. And Sandy's brother, who is profoundly autistic, lives in a very comparable kind of community in New Zealand, which is where she's from. And so when she discovered this place, she thought, "I want to do some volunteer work there." And so every summer, she usually goes just for a couple of weeks. But this summer, obviously it's an unusual summer. So, in order for her to go, and actually Kai does as well. [00:14:00] I bring them supplies and I know people there, and I visit, but I don't have the right temperament for volunteering there. I'm not that good a human being, I guess. (laughter)

LB: I understand. I really understand. [Don't be hard on yourself?]

MC: But I contribute to the community in other ways. But anyway. (laughter) So, so this year, Sandy and Kai went, and they had to go into quarantine there for two weeks before they were -- in their own sort of little private

living space. So, and then they were allowed to move into the house where they usually volunteer and live as like co-workers basically. So they were quarantining there for two weeks and I was home alone for those two weeks. But then, they were in the house for another two weeks. So I was actually home alone for a whole month. That was, between being home all the time and hardly going out, that was a little scary sometimes. (laughter)

LB: Yeah. (inaudible) - bathroom!

MC: It's just so weird. Thank goodness for the dog. That's all I can say. [00:15:00]

LB: (inaudible) [That's brutal?].

MC: But Sandy is still there. Kai, I fetched. We went to Provincetown. We're here. So that's a very long answer to the question about going out. But I haven't done [anything socially?] -- (inaudible)

LB: I think that's a great answer. (inaudible)

MC: -- At all, except via Zoom.

LB: Of all the people that I've spoken to, and as I said this is 30 interviews that I've done, you are the -- I realize that I'm trying to make a lot of different demographic, broader demographics and it's a little harder to do that when you're talking about people who lived through the 80s and 90s within the LGBT community in the Lehigh Valley

working on the AIDS issues. And it was all white people. It was different types of people and a little bit different ages, but there all about the same age or they're about my age.

MC: Right. Sure.

LB: And everybody was white. So I made a big effort in the first ten people that I interviewed for COVID to make sure that it was people of color. And I was able to do that. [00:16:00] But I realized that none of the people, and then I've done a bunch of other interviews, I don't think anyone else I've interviewed has a kid.

MC: Really?

LB: I realize that I've [picked?] sort of a foolish demographic with regard to that.

MC: Really? Cause that really changes the equation in lots of ways.

LB: Oh it certainly does, and so. I have interviewed a few people who are caring for kids like Roberta Meek -- I don't know if you know her but she's a professor and as a good friend of mine and she's a professor at Muhlenberg. And she's just in the retirement phase, and she's about my age. And she has, her daughter -- her son and daughter-in-law have four kids and two of them are really little, so she's been taking care of them. And her whole family is in one

bubble so that she's not cross-(inaudible), there's no danger of that as well.

MC: Right.

LB: So she's been taking care of little kids, but nobody that was really talking about, and then, let's see, I've talked to -- I don't think I've talked to anybody else. Because all the [00:17:00] AIDS people they're all old, you know, so -- And in fact, most of them, they're pretty established in their careers, a lot of them are retired with pensions and stuff. So there's really no financial circumstance that they had to -- Most of those people -- because I talked about COVID with everybody, too. But then the first -- so making the decision to talk to the people of color in the first ten COVID things. The first person I spoke to -- so of all those first people, those ten people, nobody really knew anybody that was sick, one guy -- Nobody really knew anybody that was sick and nobody knew anybody that was close to them who had died. And the first person I interviewed, who was somebody I'd known for a long, long time, but, for the COVID thing said, "yeah. Eight family members have had it and three of them have died." It was the first thing he said.

MC: [Wow?]

LB: So I have people in my extended family who have been very, very sick. But I'm finding that a lot of [00:18:00] people at least think they don't know anybody that's had the disease. So how about you for that? Do you know people that have been sick?

MC: I have only known people who have, that I'm aware of, who have been tested because they had hospital exposure. And I know people who have family members --

LB: Right.

MC: -- who know people who have been sick and who have died. But my direct relationships with people, no. Now Sandy's whole side of the family, they're all in New Zealand, and New Zealand handled this [really well?]

LB: I know. I know. [They're brilliant?] I know, I've read all about it. They're just, it's [incredible?] [It's right?].

MC: I have leader envy any time I hear anything about New Zealand. [00:19:00] You know they just designated a whole chunk of money to the arts. To like support the arts during this time. It's like, you know.

LB: Well the only one thing they've got is there's no tourism because you can't [live in New Zealand?]. We're all a bunch of idiots and we've ruined.

MC: That's true. And that's a big hit because that's one of their main money-makers. But they're not backing down on

it. You know, if you come in, you quarantine for two weeks, period. Which is why... Sandy wants to actually go back to visit, but by the time she's done with the two-week quarantine, she'd have to turn around and come home again. Come here again.

LB: What does she do?

MC: She's a professor at Moravian College. She does medieval history.

LB: Oh. Cool. Cool. Great. So it's really tricky. I mean, I think that. But, I think another thing is that one of the reasons they had me do these interviews is because doing thirty in-person interviews in about six weeks --

[00:20:00] Not very many people can -- And they have to be part of the queer community. It's hard to get people to be able to pull that off. Most of our interns, our employees are too young. They don't know all these people. So they made me do this gig. So as and I said, "Okay, but I just want you to know that the Lehigh Archive's Oral History, it took them two years to do ten people.

MC: Crazy.

LB: And you want me to do... And they had ten... And well maybe a year. But still. There's a reason for that. It's much easier to do interviews on Zoom. They were doing them with cameras before COVID. And you have to schedule it and it's

much harder. But it's much easier to do these on Zoom. But the truth is, I know a lot of queer people, and yet the people --

MC: I would hope so in your position.

LB: It's part of my... but people that I know, I mean I don't know a lot of people that are very, very cavalier about this. [00:21:00] So that's one of the reasons that a lot of the people that I'm interviewing don't know people who are very sick. Because like I was talking to Steve Libby and Gary Gaugler yesterday, they run *Gay Journal Magazine* and stuff. And they said, "We've been absurdly, I mean. We're still washing everything when it comes into the house. And nobody else we know is like this." And I said, "Well, actually everybody that you and I know together," I said to these guys, "are acting this way. Because you just aren't aware of it because you're not communicating with everybody around here." So, truthfully people are being very careful. Drive around at... We had to go to the doctor at rush hour the other day, just for a checkup thing, but we had to go to. And there was nobody on... You know, it was like, we're driving through Whitehall on 145, because we had to go to Laurys Station. We're coming back. It was, you know, four thirty in the afternoon, five o'clock in the afternoon on 145. [00:22:00] We're going past the malls and everything.



And it looked like it was Sunday morning, you know. There was hardly anybody on the street in comparison to what it normally would be.

MC: Right.

LB: And I'm thinking everybody's really back to work.

Everybody's on this green thing and they're all out doing -- It's not really true. It just sort of seems that way when you look at social media.

MC: Like I've made the decision that tomorrow I'm getting a haircut. This is four months' growth. This is literally. Because I got a haircut right before we went into lockdown just because it was convenient. It turned out that way. This is four months' growth and I, you know. But I had this long exchange with the woman who cuts my hair, you know, about what their protocols were (laughter). You know, I'm not just like -- I didn't just call up to make an appointment. I was just, "How are you doing with this? And how are you doing with..." -- and the whole thing.

LB: It's really [reassuring?]....

MC: I felt assured that, that while I can't say there's going to be no risk, [00:23:00] there will be only very little risk. And again, it's the risk benefit thing.

LB: I talked to a person who, it was Alanna Berger who she was one of the interviews, Alanna Berger and Blaise Liffick.

And they're the Silent Witness people with the big rainbow umbrellas at Pride Festival. They have a transgender daughter, who they said in their interview, they said that they went, that she went to the dentist and the dentist walked in the room with no mask on.

MC: See, that's -- How can a dentist do that?

LB: I know. And then she, a week later she was sick, and she went to the doctor and the doctor wasn't sure, and thought that maybe she had a -- You know, they weren't sure about stuff. And then, and she [00:24:00] thought she might have an embolism because she's on estrogen and that can be a [thing?] -- And people have had strokes from this and then they said sort of said, "Well we think it's, we just think it's coronavirus," and then they dealt with her. And later, they think that she's had a stroke. And the only place that she's been is to the dentist. So I mean.

MC: The dentist (inaudible) -

LB: And they're supposed to... I mean, frankly the medical people have been incredibly careful. You know? We felt comfortable at the medical places.

MC: Right. Absolutely, I've felt the same way. [I've had experiences there?]

LB: You know. We also are feeling like we go to the doctor all the time because that's the only place we've gone. So we've

gone out like four times. Or three. I think I've gone about three times. Yeah, we've gone out three times. And it's all been to like medical appointments. So it seems like that's all we do.

MC: Well right before, again, right before we kind of went into sort of this serious [00:25:00] isolation. In March, I had had a series of medical tests and all these follow-ups that they wanted me to do. "Okay, we want you to do this test, that test, have this done, et cetera." And then everything stopped.

LB: Yeah.

MC: So I spent like more than two months basically in limbo.

LB: Oh God.

MC: Basically, because they were all I'm not sure what the right word to use is -- The level of urgency for the tests, they weren't like sort of life-or-death kind of tests. So, they're like, "We're putting this off. We're just dealing with the things that have to be dealt with, et cetera." But you know that included the biopsy, thyroid biopsy. All those different things. And I'm spending like two and a half months just in limbo. Which was part of the stress of the whole situation. [00:26:00] But once I was starting, once I was able to go back to do the follow-up, I've been

impressed with every interaction I've had with the medical setting.

LB: Well they are scientists, you know, there's that --

MC: Well, so apparently is the new face of the COVID front lines. (laughter)

LB: Have you seen that meme where the person, said there's a young woman, and she's sort of looking out the window and it's -- (laughter) (inaudible) "Are you affected by -- are you depressed about sleeping with demons?" -- or something like that. Yeah that was a [loud one?] (inaudible)

MC: "(inaudible) might be for you!" (laughter) Have you seen the one, it's a medieval painting basically. There's a woman lying in bed. And there's a demon sort of walking away, right?. [00:27:00] And it's like, you know, "That face when your demon lover has to go meet with the Lizard people." (laughter)

LB: I mean there are people who are still falling for this stuff. I mean, for Heaven's sake!

MC: I don't...

LB: I actually had someone contact me directly from Texas, who used to live here and she said, "you know I have family members that believe this stuff." And I said, "Why are you in Texas?" (laughter)

MC: Yeah, that's the pre-existing condition I guess. (laughter)  
Well, actually one of the disappointments that I've experienced. Well, I mean this is all related to COVID, obviously. It's not some of the direct questions that you sent me.

LB: Oh that's okay. Everybody else has answered that.

MC: Favorite restaurant in East Stroudsburg. When I'm able to get out of the office to like go out for lunch or after work to like have a beer with friends or whatever, is, I don't know if you head up to East Stroudsburg very often, [00:28:00] but there's this wonderful place called the Beer House Cafe. Right on the, I think it's called Crystal Street. The main sort of street of East Stroudsburg. Fantastic food with sort of North African, the main chef is, you know, she's got one of her parents is from I can't remember where, Egypt. North African. Other is South American. Really interesting food and flavors. I just loved this place. And I love her. You know, she's wonderful. We always chat when I'm there. Because I'm a chatty person, in case you haven't noticed, sorry. But she's like talking about you know the conspiracy to keep -- how's it, I'm going to say it wrong -- Hydroxychloroquine -- The conspiracy to keep it out of our hands basically. [00:29:00] And it's like. And then she started going off on

the vaccine conspiracies and autism and I had no idea, that this part of you existed. You know? And she's not open to hearing other perspectives. And if it weren't for COVID, I wouldn't have known all this about her. (laughter)

LB: Yeah, that's one of the things about when you go away on vacation. You don't want to learn about politics sometimes of other places where you don't - like people would say to us, "Would you live in Florida?" And we've made an effort to be in a place that had racial diversity, and had stuff that was a little less scary than just every single place is very narrow and every person is white. [00:30:00] But what's happening there is so ridiculous that it makes it hard to imagine not feeling that when we went back. Because, literally people were wearing masks, young people who were wearing masks, like teenagers, are being attacked by people. And people are shouting at them for wearing a mask.

MC: I know.

LB: And one young woman, she was, I know the person. She told me this. I actually know this person, and she said, "I am very at risk. I'm very at risk. And my granddaughter, who's fourteen and wants to be with her friend who is fourteen. So they social distance -- So they go for a walk outside. They social distance, and they wear a mask. And they were

walking down the street." She told me right where they were and everything. And she said this pickup truck stopped and people yelled at them and they spit on them, just because they were wearing a mask. [00:31:00] And she said, "You know, my granddaughter, if she got sick she'd probably be okay. But she could really make me sick." And she's just trying to do, I mean we want people who are that age, to be sympathetic and to be not selfish. You try to teach people to not be selfish. And she said -- and this is why where we got all the time and stuff, and you know, you can get away with it if you don't know. But once you know this stuff, it's very (inaudible) uncomfortable and -- Yeah, I mean, I think that - I don't know. I mean...

MC: And there's no reasoning.

LB: No, there's no reasoning. You really think you could just say, "Well you know, here's all these things that are very easy to understand." I read a thing that said [00:32:00] "to be really proactive you should join this group," and it was a pro -- of the kind of the people that we would be supportive in terms of their political leanings. And they said, "Don't just post memes and don't just do this. We have to do work," and I said, "Yeah except for that memes are what's changing people's minds." I mean I need to see like a picture of Joe Biden and his policy and a picture of

Trump and the counter-policy where he supports the demon lady. And just say like, you know, "Here's a guy who supports these things that are for his strategy, and [here's the thing]..." And I know actually, I provided voter information to people for years. And that's how you get people to vote. You get people to look at that and they go, "Well I saw this thing." They don't want to read something.

MC: Right. When I post an article I know that some of the people that, you know, whose feeds that it shows up on will read it. Or at least -- But I know that [00:33:00] other people will, they'll just see the headline. Like, if I, and for me if the headline captures something important, [I?] post it. [Even for?] People who won't read it, they'll see the headline and maybe something will click. You know?  
(laughter)

LB: You have to do it that way. But I also think that people need to be -- I feel, I have long talks with Trish about this, but I think that people need to be posting more -- People just tend to post negative things all the time because that's all we're seeing. And they need to post like parts of Biden's platform so that whether you like this guy or not, his platform, if you compare that to Trump's platform, there's no challenge. I mean it's like. "Do you



believe in science?" "No, I don't believe in science." You know, like, you know, yes, here's how we could have avoided this thing. That's exactly the opposite of what Trump did. So this guy wouldn't have done it. This guy would have. And I think that that's problem. [00:34:00] We're not getting that kind of message and while lots of thinking people will read all this stuff. And they'll be very familiar with it. And they'll know about court cases [and all that?]. That's not the people you have to sway. That's the problem.

MC: Right. That's true.

LB: The "sway people" who saw on YouTube something that doesn't, like, it's true. It's on the Internet. I actually had somebody say that to me in front of Planned Parenthood one time. They were protesting against Planned Parenthood. And they were trying to stop someone from going in. And they said, "Planned Parenthood is trying to make you have babies so they can kill the babies. So they give you birth control that doesn't work." And I said, "Where did you get that idea?"

MC: What an insane idea.

LB: How insane is that? And she said, "I know it's true because it's on the Internet." And I said, "This is not something [00:35:00] I can argue with." "I know it's true because it's in writing." You know, it doesn't mean anything. And I

remember this person saying this. And then I started to walk away and then I realized why the person was saying this and she was saying this because she had somehow taken her birth control wrong, become pregnant, had to have an abortion and then felt guilty about it so she wanted somebody to blame. So it was that kind of a thing. I sort of said, like I'm thinking, "why would somebody say this?" And it doesn't really have [anything?]. I think that there are a lot of people who are trying to justify their vote for Trump which has put the entire world in a terrible circumstance solely because he was elected. I mean, things would be totally different. Or be very different, let's put it that way.

MC: They'd be very different. We'd still have coronavirus. We'd still be having to deal with that. But it would be very different.

LB: We would've had rapid testing. We would have had all sorts of (inaudible) a leadership [00:36:00] that explained things more clearly and then why, didn't say you can inject your body with Clorox. You know.

MC: Have you seen -- (laughs) I'm sure you have. You've seen the signs that Amy Zanelli had made? The Biden, they're Biden signs but they don't say "Biden 2020." They say "Biden - He won't inject you with bleach." or something.

LB: I actually think that's kind of a thing to say. Like I saw a meme that said, you know, it was a picture of Biden and it said, "Let me read you parts of my platform." And at the bottom it said, "You had me at 'let me read.'" I mean, and really how can you justify the craziness of this circumstance. And so -- But I do think that in some ways it has to be distilled into a much simpler message because the people that are saying this kind of stuff, they still have to be inundated with [them?] saying, "Well okay, this is not true. You're wrong, and here's why we know that" sound bite. [00:37:00] You know, because they're not going to spend a lot of time reading. You know. And they want to justify the fact that they have done this very foolish, unthoughtful thing. And what folks said were going to happen. Who would have even thought that it would have gone this far?

MC: I never thought it wouldn't.

LB: That the economy's the worst it's ever been. You know, and you can't say, "Well, it's not his fault." How could you say that? Well of course it's his fault. He's the leader. It's not true in New Zealand. It's not the worst economy they've ever had. In fact, their people are looking at them going, "Good job." You know. They're the leaders of the correct steps to take.

MC: Well I'm just hoping that -- I mean obviously, you know, I have my preferences, but whoever Biden announces as his running mate, [00:38:00] okay, is fine. (laughter) It's fine. Let's get you elected.

LB: What I'm hoping for is he announces that he has chosen everyone to be on his team.

MC: Right.

LB: Chosen, you know, has taken all those people that were a good group of people.

MC: All those smart people.

LB: All these smart people, and they're going to be the Secretary of State and they're going to be the Secretary of Education. Elizabeth Warren is the Secretary of Education. You know? If he doesn't pick Kamala Harris for vice president, then he picked her for Attorney General. You know, just to say that everybody could say that, "Well, I wanted this person, and now they're going to be part of that." Because under the Obama administration some of the best minds -- a lot of the stuff that happened was because he picked these really smart people. And if you can -- if we can appease all of the [00:39:00] people on this side of the aisle by saying, "This is a guy who picks smart people and then listens to them."

MC: Right.

LB: Let's just do that. And he can say, "I'll keep Fauci." He's a perfectly good guy, too. "And I'll listen to him. I'm not going to tell him to say something else because I don't like it."

MC: "I'll listen to him even if he is more popular than I am!"  
(laughter)

LB: No kidding. That's true. So yeah, and I have said. I publicly posted that I would crawl over glass to vote for Joe Biden. And certainly, I had other people that I thought would have been much more fun to have as president. But who cares? I mean we need to live.

MC: I was all about Elizabeth Warren. That's who I wanted.

LB: Yeah, I loved her, too. And I would love to -- But if she's in the administration, it would be a wonderful thing. Because we'll hear her all the time. You know, throw out Betsy DeVos and have Elizabeth Warren. [00:40:00] How would that change our lives? You know, every moment of the reality of that and I hope that Joe Biden is smart enough to do that. And I hope the campaign and all of these people are willing to do that and, you know, have Bernie Sanders be somebody who is a major advisor, part of the cabinet, angrily disagreeing, fine, you know. (laughter) Fine with that. I'm fine with that. He's not really my guy, but I'm fine with that. He's got some really good policies, and

some people really, and with good reason, think that his, lot of his economic circumstances are, you know what he's talking about is really important. And it's what we need. And so then people say, "Oh I don't want this guy, he's too much of a communist." Well he's not going to be president. So he's not going to be vice president. So shut up. You know?

MC: Right. And it's not like they actually understand what communist or socialist mean [or what they're saying?]. Right, that's another one. It's another dog whistle. "Socialist." (laughter)

LB: [00:41:00] "If socialists get into the government, they might take away my social security." (laughter)

MC: Yeah. Exactly.

LB: But, anyway.

MC: "They might take away my health care."

LB: I know. Oh God. So anyway. Yeah.

MC: Anyway, so back to the [interview?].

LB: No, all these questions I think we're hitting on them anyway so I think that's kind of the thing. But talk about a little bit about what you do, because you're coming into the next phase of the school year and so, the college year. So talk about what you do. And how that's been for you, because I know you had to -- to suddenly teach online.

MC: Right. We had to very suddenly move from in-person teaching, classroom teaching to online platforms. And like a lot of my colleagues, I'd never taught online before. I never had any interest in teaching online before.

[00:42:00] I'm very much a -- I just work best face-to-face. I think with students. I'm, for whatever reason, I'm generally pretty good at establishing rapport. I get to know them all by name and a little bit about them just through casual conversations as people are coming in and out of class. I tend to have a good record I think when it comes to class participation. Lots of students participate, even in large lecture classes. Because I'm, it's just over the years, I've developed certain skills that help set that tone. I don't think it's anything, any special thing I was born with or whatever, but I've developed skills. (inaudible) Sorry?

LB: You learn how to do it.

MC: Exactly. And you know, being in the classroom and face-to-face with students plays to my skill set. It really does. Being online doesn't. [00:43:00] And we had to make this transition very quickly. We had a week off for spring break and then spring break was extended by a week. You know, so we had two weeks basically to get everything organized. And I did and you know, there were some

difficult decisions to make. One of the decisions I made was to make everything asynchronous because I really didn't have confidence in -- I just felt too uncertain about whether my students would have, you know, time-specific access to the Internet, etc. We have, I mean ESU, I have a lot of -- and also maybe sociology I think is a subject you know, -- I have a lot of not just racial and ethnic diversity in my classes but I have a lot of socioeconomic diversity in my classes. You know, so having students who are [00:44:00] going to be home with limited access, uncertain broadband capacity, all that. The only way for me to do this is to go asynchronous. Put everything up there for people to do it as they're able. And then have discussion boards again that people could kind of go into as they were able depending on what their resources were. And you know, and it worked. It worked, I think largely because students, my students, were patient with me, because they already had rapport. So they were patient with me as I, I'm not a very tech-savvy person. So as I was learning the software, you know, it was a steep learning curve. I put something up and then they couldn't access it and I had to figure out why they couldn't access and all that kind of stuff f. But they were patient with me about it, [00:45:00] and good-humored basically about it. As I



skidded by on the seat of my pants basically. But starting in the fall, starting out online, it's not going to be the same situation. I don't have rapport with those students already. Now my skills are more developed than they were. I took an online course, an online course about teaching online. But it was all mechanics. It was not about, how do you establish, really establish rapport. Connect with -- Because nobody knows that stuff. Sorry?

LB: You'll be able to do it.

MC: I'll try.

LB: You'll be able. I mean, you know, you will.

MC: Well, I'll figure it out and I'll make changes as I go. And I'll have it set up to go, but I'm sure I'll be making changes as I go, as I figure out, "Well this isn't working. I need to [try and do it a new way?] --"

LB: So, has ESU announced that they will not be opening as (inaudible)?

MC: Yeah. They're full online this fall with the exception of certain kinds [00:46:00] of courses that are kind of practicum based and things like athletic training or, you know, nursing or something where they have to do something. But otherwise, we're all online. So, I was personally hoping for a hybrid, and I'd already come up with some ideas about how I could do that. How I could meet with sort

of subsets of students at different times, and put other things online to be done asynchronously. I had sort of thought all that through. I mean I hadn't created the actual lesson plans yet and syllabi yet, but I had thought through the dynamics of making a hybrid model work. And then they said we're totally going online. So. It is what it is.

LB: Well, yeah. I actually think that all of the colleges will be that way. There are colleges that --

MC: Moravian has not declared that yet.

LB: It's ridiculous that they haven't. [00:47:00]

MC: Oh I know.

LB: Because it's making every(thing?) (inaudible) --

MC: Sandy at this point is expecting to be in the classroom still. I mean she's expecting it will probably change, but as of now she will be expected to be in the classroom.

LB: Well I talked to a number of people who have been working at various different colleges all over the country. I have friends, I have a friend in Illinois who is saying that, you know, the administration, the administration, this is at Illinois Wesleyan. The administration said, "Well, we're going to be opening." And the faculty said, "Yeah, no." Because they really have a high, a high level of danger. Let me put it that way. And what the faculty came back with

was, the faculty alliance said, "It's unethical to do it. It's unethical to do it to us and it's unethical to do it to the students. And if it's a financial problem, well, we'll have to work it out. But right now you can't put people at risk because we don't know what's going to happen. [00:48:00] It would be different if everybody had their masks on."

MC: Right, and one of the things -- Okay, so when ESU was still planning to go with the hybrid model. Yeah, you know, we had all these Zoom meetings with administrators and they showed us how they were going to be setting up the classrooms with their new COVID capacities and all this over stuff. And they were going to be issuing ESU logo face masks to everyone, to all the students and everything. We were told we had permission to tell a student they couldn't enter class without a face mask. So much about what we were supposed to do when the student says, "I've paid for this class. I'm coming in whether you are forbidding me too or not." [00:49:00] Those kinds of things weren't so well worked out. But the reality is that even if we could achieve the socially distanced classroom, you know, even if we could do that, and I have one class that's an upper level seminar basically, and all I have is ten students. We could do that. We could have a socially distanced

classroom. But, you can't have (inaudible), you're going to be able to have students doing social distancing in the dorms.

LB: Right. Exactly. That's the issue.

MC: Or in the frat houses. Things like that. I mean, so yeah, we believe it's the only responsible decision to make and I'm glad they made it.

LB: Well Roberta Meek, who is one of the interviews I did, and she's at Muhlenberg, and she said, "How do we tell students to not act the way they expected to be able to act when they came to college?" I mean, it's about interaction. It's about sharing space. It's [00:50:00] about you know conversations. It's about living in a new space with new people who are completely different than what you have ever been with before. And, she said, "No matter what we say -- I mean we tell people not to drink in their dorm rooms --"

MC: That's effective. (laughter)

LB: "We tell people, you know, they have to do certain things and we can't control these, you know, they're adults and they do all sorts of different things that you're really not supposed to do. And all it has to be is one person, and then you have to send them home." So, in our greater, our extended family, we had a group of people who are another family that their daughter came home from college and she

was perfectly fine. They sent her home. It was, the college is in New York State, and they sent everybody home. It was time for them to go home. And a few days later, she spiked. [00:51:00] And this is somebody very close to us. Who's like, the temperature and infected everyone in the family. Including the ninety-two-year-old grandmother. And some of them, it was quite a few people, some of them got very, very, very sick. Two of them had to go in the hospital. Had they not had certain kinds of ins with the medical community, they would have died. There's no question. What does that do to a college student, too? Somebody said to me, "How is this person?" And I said, "Well, as long as it doesn't injure her family, she'll be okay." I mean, she recovered, you know. And everybody recovered - they've recovered. But it was awful. It was just horrible.

MC: Oh yeah, just imagine the guilt.

LB: Oh gosh. Can you imagine? Can you imagine? And if that happens with this kid, because she didn't know she was sick. She didn't do anything like go to spring break or anything like that. She came home from college. [00:52:00] She didn't know anybody that was sick. So clearly there were other people that were going to other places that were infecting other people, too.

MC: And we just can't know. There's just no way to know. And one things, one of the downsides, I think, of, and again let me just preface this or just reiterate, that I think it's the only responsible decision to make is to put our entire curriculum online. But I worry about the young people. (laughter) I worry about the young queer people --

LB: No kidding.

MC: Who are potentially, you know, at home with families that are not supportive or who are, you know, in some cases not just unsupportive. Not just the absence of --

LB: That risk.

MC: But the presence of antagonism. [00:53:00]

LB: Yes, yes, [I know somebody like that, yeah, with that?] circumstance, and that person is seeking out an ability to stay at the college even though they won't take, a college in the community, well a lot of colleges in the community, and some colleges have large numbers of people on campus. I think Muhlenberg has a hundred kids on campus who can't go home. They just can't go home for whatever reason. There's no home. There's too much illness there. There's, they won't be accepted there because they're queer or something like that. And that's a responsibility of the college, too. So.

MC: We're -- You know, at ESU I haven't heard of any, I don't of know any specific cases. None of the students that I work with have -- are experiencing that, at least that they've shared with me. I know that Sandy has a student who's in that situation from Moravian. [00:54:00] And they just, you know they check in intermittently. Just, you know, just to (inaudible) report. Our dean of students, who you probably know. Gene Kelly.

LB: Sure.

MC: Gene Kelly. He was officially named dean of students probably about January or so, and he's a --

LB: Yeah, I've known Gene for years.

MC: Yeah. And so, you know, he's obviously, if there are students in that situation, he's kind of in charge of making decisions about who's going to be allowed to stay in the dorms. And, so I feel like if a student in that -- a queer student in that situation were to appeal to him, to be allowed to stay in the dorm that -- at least that student would have a very sympathetic ear.

LB: Yeah. And actually Robin Casey who is the diversity -- one of [00:55:00] or I guess the head of diversity of that kind of level diversity at Muhlenberg, I interviewed her, too. And she was saying that it's actually pretty comfortable because they get the pick of the dorm. They don't have to

stay in the crappy dorms. They get their own place and they each get their own restroom, and stuff like that. But pretty much all their classes, they just stay in their room (inaudible). There's no food service, you know. So they can pick up, but they're paying for that or their loans are going for that or something like that. But yeah, all summer they've had about one hundred students on campus. Hundred students on campus and some of them were in some programs that they sort of had to be there but, for the most part, it's the way you're describing it, you know. Internships and that kind of stuff. But it's really complicated. And yet, you know, there's no alternative right now. We just have to stop [00:56:00] hanging out with each other for a while. We just have to do it. And it's terrible for people that age. It's terrible for people my age because, or particularly for people Trish's age. Because she looks at this and she thinks, "I don't have that many years left to just waste waiting until it's better. And let's hope it's not another four years where we have to wait."

MC: Oh God. I can't even wrap my head around that. I'm not going to lie. (laughter)

LB: I know, but everybody's (inaudible) though. It's so depressing.

MC: I can't. I can't.



LB: But anyway. So, I think we covered everything. Let's see.  
We had no problem going over (inaudible) --

MC: There was one other thing that I wanted to mention.

LB: Okay, do.

MC: But if you want to look over your list and see if there's anything that you want to mention.

LB: No, I think we're hitting everything. Say whatever you want.

MC: Okay. One upside of all of this isolation and especially when Sandy and Kai were both gone and I had literally [00:57:00] no responsibilities except making sure the dog survives, right? (laughter) Because I wasn't teaching summer school or anything. One of the upsides is that normally, I don't watch very much television. Like very, very little. I had so much time on my hands that, that I watched so much Netflix. We only have Netflix and Amazon Prime. We don't have --

LB: Yeah. We do too. That's all we have.

MC: Okay. So, and I caught up on a lot of my Queer TV. Seriously. I watched all six seasons of *How to Get Away with Murder*.

LB: Okay.

MC: Which, have you watched that?

LB: We saw the beginning episodes.

MC: That is a perfect television show. Start to finish. All six seasons.

LB: I didn't care for it. Because I like, I like, I felt in the first season -- We watched it because Anita Lee, [00:58:00] who is the, who was the head of PFLAG in the East Stroudsburg area, her son Justin Lee was a writer on that show, so watched the show, and he was, well, [cool?] (inaudible) and everything. And we watch the show, and you know there's great acting and it's really interesting and the dialogue's great. But I thought, "I don't like any character in this show." And [I want to like somebody?] --

MC: And six seasons later, you still won't like any character on the show. (laughter)

LB: And I can't do that. I got to have --(inaudible)

MC: But they're all so complicated. And you don't know who to trust. (laughter)

LB: And, so desperate for that, you know, This is Miss Marple. And the bad guy who gets killed is bad anyway. I'm so --

MC: And Viola Davis is amazing. And her character...

LB: She is.

MC: And especially the last couple of seasons where she's completely falling apart. And Cicely Tyson plays her mother! (laughter) It's -- I seriously -- that is, as far as like a television viewing experience where you never

[00:59:00] really know what's going to happen, you're on the edge of your seat. You never know who to trust. All that. It's a perfect six seasons. I loved it. And the ending is perfect. Anyway, so. But I also, I got, I also watched *Pose*, I watched... Now of course I'm going to blank on everything. Oh! I actually signed up for one of those short-term free memberships of STARZ, so I could watch *Vida*. Right. It was fantastic. Have you watched it?

LB: No, I haven't seen that, well I --

MC: Get one of the seven-day free trials that you can then just unsubscribe from. Cause *Vida* is terrific. It's so good. I watched *Gentefied*, which has a, one of, like, it's an ensemble kind of cast. But one of the story lines is queer. One of the main characters.

LB: Is that on STARZ?

MC: Sorry?

LB: STARZ, or is it on -- [1:00:00]

MC: No, that's on Netflix. *Gentefied* is on Netflix.

LB: I haven't seen that. Okay.

MC: But these are both Latinx focused shows which there's not a lot of on TV. So they both were really good, but I watched *Atypical*, and that has a -- There's sort of, kind of exploring her sexuality and identity [stuff going on?]. I can't even remember things that I've watched.

LB: Did you watch *One Day at a Time*?

MC: I have not seen the last season because it's not on Netflix yet. But, yeah. *Schitt's Creek*.

LB: *Schitt's Creek*. Yeah we watch that.

MC: I haven't seen the last season of that either, because it's not on there. It's just, there's just so much queer TV than there ever used to be. Even on, there's a short series, that's only four episodes or something on Netflix called *Unorthodox*.

LB: Oh yeah. Adrian was talking. I've seen that. I've seen some stuff [about that?]. [01:01:00]

MC: It's really good. And even that has a queer element to it. I mean my goodness. When we were that -- when we were young people, you know.

LB: I know.

MC: I mean, I think *Personal Best* was the first movie I ever saw that was like...

LB: (laughter) Me too.

MC: Right? You know, and you go on looking for things and found stuff like, *The Killing of Sister George*.

LB: Yeah. Or, you know, actually [the first movie?] -- I always say this. The first movie I saw when I was a kid, when I was growing up in Connecticut. I could watch *The Million Dollar Movie* and they show the same movie every day for a

week in the afternoon. And if you were like sick and home from school you just like kept watching this movie and it was *The Children's Hour*, which--

MC: Oh my god! (laughter)

LB: And Shirley MacLaine is in this and she plays the gay character who turns out to be gay. So, they're accused of being gay. Of course Audrey Hepburn's in it too. [01:02:00] And at the end she confesses that she really is a lesbian and that she's interested in Audrey Hepburn and then she kills herself. But the reality is, and I talk about this all the time, I said, "When I saw that I went --, and I watched it every single day." And I absolutely have continued to fantasize about Shirley MacLaine ever since. I watched every single movie she was in. I saw every television show she was in. I just thought like this, and there's even -- And I even said this about *The Miracle Worker* where the incredibly hot Anne Bancroft is talking about how when she was in the orphanage, you know, there were women who went after young girls, and I'm like, "Yeah?" (laughter) Like that was my tune-in to that. It was like that that was so exciting that I could just hear somebody talking about queer people, you know? [01:03:00]

MC: I don't remember ever hearing anything on TV when I was growing up. But, we did have *Family*, so we had Kristy McNichol.

LB: [She was good on?] *Family*. That's true.

MC: I had Kristy McNichol when I was in high school. So there was that. (inaudible)

LB: That's true. And --

MC: Jo from *The Facts of Life*. So, you know, Nancy McKeon.  
(laughter)

LB: That's true, although, yeah, I know. And there were -- like the oldest daughter on *Eight is Enough*.

MC: Right. Right!

LB: And everybody. And like, when you get older, like one of the things. You probably know, Sandy Fluck who was the head of the education department.

MC: Oh, yeah. At, yeah, at Moravian.

LB: So she's (inaudible) and Bev Morgan are really great friends of ours for many, many years. They live in (inaudible) Rehoboth now. Sandy was talking about how when she first saw the movie, and this is a dyke thing, when she first saw *The Trouble with Angels* [01:04:00] the movie *The Trouble with Angels*, she wanted to be a nun. And if you universally, if you ask lesbians of that age, and Sandy's a little older than I am. So she's about seventy now. If you

ask people who, of that age if that, if lesbians, if that affected them that way. Some of them just became lesbians.

MC: Even the Jewish lesbians? (laughter)

MC: Yes.

LB: I mean Sandy was a Christian Scientist. She was as far from Catholic as could be. But it was just this whole thing of like, these women who were kind of hot and fun and they were having a great time.

MC: They were having a good time, yeah.

LB: And there's no men there. And they treat men like crap and they push them around. And Ros Russell is so brilliant in that part, you know? And she's got that, she's got that tough, big shoulder broad even in that nun's habit deal. So that had that enormous -- And the same with *The Sound of Music*. The nun part of *The Sound of Music*. [01:05:00] I mean really, really [influenced me?] (inaudible).

MC: That didn't happen for me. (laughter)

LB: No, I mean to see that there were these communities of women that were self-governed and tough. And that girls could go into these communities of women, and then stay there. Cause that's what happens [if you go to be in the...?]. And even the fact that *The Trouble with Angels*, which kind of a kitschier thing, Ros Russell was -- that

was the remake of it. That was shot, part of it was shot in Allentown, so.

MC: Oh really?

LB: It was at Dorney Park. Yeah it was really at Dorney Park. But that was, I was all fascinated by that because there's a part where the nun says that it's really hot. And it's Stella Stevens actually. And she pulls up her habit to expose her leg because she's so hot. And I just thought, [01:06:00] "(inaudible) This is so exciting." And just like the, that tiny little kernel of excitement there.

MC: Well do you remember the first time you saw *All About Eve*?

LB: Yeah. And then the ending, that incredible...

MC: The heat between the two of them. My God. (laughter)

LB: No kidding. And it's really the lesbian thing at the end. In the last scene. The other woman comes in and that's actually in Vito Russo's *Celluloid Closet* in his book where he talks...

MC: It's been so long since I've read it. I don't even remember [what he did?] anymore.

LB: Because the book is totally different than the documentary in a lot of ways. And so, it's so fascinating. No, no I mean. You know, all of that stuff. Any time there was that kind of a scene I was like -- I was just (inaudible)...



MC: Well, well my obsession when I could, when I was in like high school. And again, I wasn't out yet. (laughter) Any-- anything that was set in a women's prison. (laughter) So, okay so, I'm living in New Jersey. This is in the seventies. I'm living in New Jersey, and the PBS station, [01:07:00] once a week, would show an episode of *Prisoner: Cell Block H*. The Australian series. I was like, I watched it religiously. Not even knowing what compelled me -- (laughter) to do so.

LB: Are you *Voyager* fan? *Star Trek: Voyager*.

MC: No.

LB: Okay, you just need to watch that.

MC: Okay.

LB: Because it's run by women. And there's this huge subtext of this lesbian relationship in the second half of the series that they were writing to, [Xena-esque?], you know? And there's an enormous amount of fanfiction between the captain and this other character, who was played by Jeri Ryan, which, you know, people still -- cause that's been playing in other countries now, and when Kate Mulgrew -- Kate Mulgrew was of course also in *Orange is the New Black*. She was Red in *Orange is the New Black*. She will still do *Star Trek* [01:08:00] conventions and she'll go to like England or something and she'll go into a room and they're

be like a thousand people in there and every one of them is a lesbian. The one time I actually heard her [interview?], you know I heard an [excerpt?], she actually says like, "Is there anyone in this room who isn't gay?" And like one guy raises her hand. And she says, and these women are coming up and they're asking questions and stuff, and they're all saying like "What about the writing between you and Seven of Nine?" And she says, "Well, that was the best writing. It was really good writing," and such.

MC: I've heard of Seven of Nine. I've heard of that character.

LB: Yeah, so she's the character, and then, at one point, this woman gets up and she's wearing a T-shirt [that says?] -- since, you know, they've all got these sort of Geordie accents and they're all, you know, [those people?] and stuff. And she -- cause they just started to show that a couple years ago in England all the time. Or in the UK. And she says that, oh, and she looks at this woman's T-shirt and she says, [01:09:00] "So, 'I go commando.' What does that mean?" And the woman at the podium says, "I'll show you in a little while." (laughter) And the room erupts with hysterical laughter, that goes on and on. You know, it's just like that. And I think like Kate, does Kate, you know, like Kate Mulgrew -- So I ended up writing -- I wrote a couple of books and one of them was, has a character in it

that, well the character's, the love interest character is fashioned after Kate Mulgrew as the person in *Voyager*. Although it's nothing like her, but I just thought, "Oh! That's a good person to fashion this character after." And then she, Kate Mulgrew, wrote an autobiography and she did a reading in Philadelphia at the library in Philadelphia. So then we, at the end, you could have her sign the book. And I gave her one of the books that I wrote where she's the [01:10:00] character in [it?] and I have a picture of her in my office touching the book.

MC: (laughter) How cool.

LB: I said to Trish, "I really like it that you've indulged this fantasy for me." So, it was pretty funny. But I think that there's a lot of interesting stuff. One of the things about *Voyager* was it was produced in the Clinton era, and so it's a much gentler show. And so was *The Next Generation*. Both of those were. And then there was a later show that was produced in the more negative era that was much more, that was in the Bush era, that was much more aggressive and fighting and stuff like that and blowing people up. But the *Voyager* thing has got scenes in it where you just go, "Whoa!" (laughter)

MC: Well, I'm going to have to, I'm going to have to check it out.

LB: [Only?] the second half, so I think there's seven seasons and it starts at the end of the third season of the new character and stuff like that. Plus there's, Scott Thompson is in it. One of the episodes. It's very, very funny.

[01:11:00] And, you know, it's not queer enough, but it has this woman captain. And they ran the whole series. They didn't say "Eh, they were tired of her." They really didn't. It's worth it. It's worth watching. Plus it's, it's something else.

MC: We're going to not be going out for a while, so I need more things to watch.

LB: I know, I -- we've totally run out of stuff. But I told you about *QI*. Did you -- have you watched *QI*?

MC: I have not watched it. No, I haven't. I haven't [gotten to it yet?]. (inaudible)

LB: [We've watched some?] episodes. But only the ones with Sandi Toksvig because she's a lesbian and she'll say it over and over again on the show, like somebody'll make a joke and she'll say, "Yeah I don't really --," you know, like some penis joke, and she'll say, "I have no experience with that." And people will laugh. I mean it's totally like...

MC: That's like, that's how I teach. (laughter) I do that in the lecture hall all the time.

LB: (inaudible) I do too. I'll say, "I don't really understand this, but some people say..." [01:12:00] You know? So, yeah. That's kind of the deal. Well, it's been a while. Let's see if I hit everything. So, you said that. Okay. (inaudible) So I don't have to ask you if you are out at home. So, you haven't been laid off.

MC: Only to my family. (laughter)

LB: That's true. And so what's your biggest frustration during all this stuff? I've asked everybody that.

MC: Frustration. Well I think the hardest thing is the isolation, honestly. I don't find it frustrating, although I find it... like I get sad sometimes. I get sad that I'm not able to spend time with, you know, I have a very, I mean, my family aside, my support network of friends is very strong, and a group of about five of us who get together regularly, and it hurts. I feel sad that we can only do things via Zoom. [01:13:00] That's the thing that's hardest. But I think the thing that's most frustrating is the stuff I read where people are you know, denying the science. And attacking people who are wearing masks or you know, people posting signs, you know, "No masks allowed in this store" or whatever. Things like that. Or when I am out, I mean most people are doing fine. But there are those people who are, if they're wearing a mask, they're wearing

it incorrectly. You know, their nose is out, or things like that, or it's on their chin or something.

LB: Yeah. Yeah.

MC: So that's the most frustrating because that is what is going to prolong the situation of isolation that makes me sad. So, I think that's [it?] (inaudible)

LB: Universally, that's what every single person that I've interviewed has said. That people [01:14:00] are not taking this seriously and they're not doing... You know as Gary and Steve, that I just, they were my last interview I did and they said, "We're doing everything right, but because people aren't doing things right we still have to stay inside. We still have to have all the same, you know, with job worries and all this kind of stuff because other people..." You know, and because we don't have the leadership to be able convince people to do the right thing. Which is really the job of the leader of the country, I mean the leader -- leaders can do those things. People like Franklin Roosevelt could talk people into doing the right thing.

MC: Right?

LB: You know, we could have (inaudible), make people comfortable. And then make people understand, "You have to do this."

MC: Can you, I mean imagine, you know, just think about World War II, right, and all the rationing that people were doing. Like, if people won't wear a fucking mask now, right... (laughter)

LB: Like how -- [01:15:00] It's just -- So the level of frustration for that is astounding.

MC: [I believe?], yeah, I mean... (inaudible)

LB: And I've talked to everybody about, you know, I mean we've talked a little bit about Black Lives Matter. We've talked, that's one of the things is all --

MC: That's one of the other frustrations, actually. But, I'm sorry for cutting you off, but...

LB: No, that's exactly right. Go ahead.

MC: Because of my anxiety about this and not, they're not unfounded [things?] these days, you know I am someone who typically attends protests and rallies and marches. I mean, that's where I run into you generally, at those things. Right?

LB: Right.

MC: And when, you know, when George Floyd was killed and you know, we started, a lot of people started organizing rallies, I felt unsafe going to them.

LB: I know.

MC: And so I didn't. You know, Kai, great kid. She's very, kind of plugged in to politics and everything. [01:16:00] Arguing with all of her friends over social media about, you know, things like Black Lives Matter. Things like income inequality. All those kinds of things. (laughter) I'd like to say, I'd like to take a little, you know, credit for some of that. But, anyway.

LB: Yeah.

MC: But, you know, she and I at one point we were like, because she likes to do that, too, [to go?], you know, she likes to be present. She likes to show up. And we were like, "We want to go but we're not going to go." And that's very hard. I mean, I've been doing other things. I've been giving money.

LB: Right.

MC: I've been, you know, and doing the things I can do at a distance. But it's been, it's been very hard not to participate actively.

LB: Everybody I know over fifty has said that. Everybody that I've interviewed. I mean, in interviewing people who have said -- Blaise and Alanna who were saying, you know, "We've been marching since the sixties. [01:73:00] And to not be able to do this..." And when the stuff happened in Allentown, Adrian actually texted me right from the first



march, which was -- and he texted me. It was late at night. And then the next day, they had another march and I said to Trish, "You know. This is right outside our house. I mean, it's like three blocks away." And I said, "I think I need to go to this." And she said, "Really?" Because, I mean, I'm at enough risk. But she's really, really at risk. She has lupus. She has lung issues. You know, stuff like that. So I said, "Well, let me look at the thing." And I looked at a video of the first march, so it was one, and the next night they had another march. And I was thinking about going the second night. And on the first night there's all these young people. And they're walking along. They all have masks on. And then I saw three people who were part of the group who didn't have masks. [01:18:00] And they're all there. And they're chatting, and they're shouting. And I'm thinking, "I know this is what, I mean I've done this. And I know that this is a risk. And I can't take this risk. I have to [do?] -- (inaudible)"

MC: It's so hard.

LB: It is. It is. (inaudible)

MC: You know. Cause it's, you know, I just, yeah. I mean it's just so hard.

LB: I can tell you this. I will risk my life to vote.

MC: Oh, hell yes. Have you voted in the primary? I voted by mail.

LB: Yeah. And we just signed up to vote by mail, too. But if there is any possibility not, I will, I will stand in line, with a plastic bag over my head!

MC: You will crawl over broken glass!

LB: I will. And I absolutely will do that. I absolutely will. I will, you know, but I'm not going to... That's it. And I think everybody feels that way who recognizes how it important that this is. So, you know, that's a good thing.

MC: Yeah, absolutely.

LB: What gives you -- Well, this is the last part. So then, what gives you hope now? Cause we need to end on a happy little note. And I would guess that part of it is you have a wonderful daughter. [01:19:00]

MC: Well, what I was going to say is that it's the young people. (laughter) And she is one of them. She has, you know, she's lost a lot. She lost the last quarter of her eighth grade year. You know, she lost her spring field hockey season and all of her summer camps. She's very into field hockey, you know, like I said, all of her -- usually she does multiple camps in the summer. You know, she's lost all of that. It's uncertain whether she's going to be going to school. I mean, right now yes. But. You know, she's had

so little -- I know. She's had a couple of contacts with friends where they've done the social, like you were describing, the socially distanced walk with the masks on. But, you know, she's lost a lot. [01:20:00] And still, she's, you know, and she cares about the future. You know, she's not wallowing in this moment of loss for her. And that [gives me hope?]. And when you talk about -- When I see people out who aren't wearing masks, it is largely people who are old enough to know better.

LB: Yeah.

MC: You know, it's not, at least at the supermarkets. Or at Lowe's. It's people in their thirties. Or forties. You know? So, it's the young people. It really is the young people who are, that [keep me going?]. (laughter)

LB: And they're the ones that are doing these really great marches. I mean they're really speaking out about this.

MC: Yes. They're feeling empowered. And, God, please all of them who are able to, go out to vote. (laughter) But, that's, that's the thing. I feel like they're dealing with all this a lot better than some of their parents are.

[01:21:00]

LB: Yeah. Yeah. Well, one of the things when I interviewed somebody who was twenty-two and had just graduated from Moravian, and he was saying that -- I mean, he was very

calm, and he was concerned about stuff. And he said the same thing. He was frustrated by people who didn't believe this, and who didn't wear masks and stuff. But he also was inherently calm. And one of the reasons that he was inherently calm was that he has his whole life in front of him. He doesn't have to think he's sucking up the last, you know like, "This is my last chance." I mean things will work out. Things will be okay. This person is being very careful. They're probably not going to get the disease. Because they're being very, very careful. They're not going to make that happen to themselves.

MC: And that's another thing. The smart -- Okay. This is going to sound terrible, probably. I don't know if I should say it. You know, when it's being recorded.

LB: Go ahead. Say it.

MC: But, if, you know, [01:22:00] survival of the fittest doesn't mean survival of the physically strongest necessarily. It means survival of the most adaptable.

LB: Right.

MC: Right? That's what survival of the fittest is really. And in this situation, adapting means wearing your mask and do your social distancing and you know, minimizing your risks. And that seems to be, it seems to be what most of the smartest people are doing. (laughter)

LB: I mean it's true, except for that, you know, the people in my family that got sick. They were absolutely in their own household.

MC: Right. Right. This isn't -- Right, exactly. But what I'm saying is it seems like, like if you look at the states that have really not handled this well, and where they rank educationally and all those kinds of things. While I'm not saying this is an absolute, because you know, as you were saying, the people in your family, perfect example, that there's so much we don't know. But it seems like those who are attracting the most risks to themselves. You know who are flagrantly doing [things?], aren't the sharpest tools in the shed. [01:23:00]

LB: No, I think that's really true.

MC: And that gives me hope for the future. (laughter)

LB: It does. I mean, it does because -- (inaudible)

MC: That's a really messed up thing to say, and an elitist thing to say, but...

LB: And I don't want to say something mean about that, but this is one of the realities of that is that it's a socioeconomic situation, too. And so like one of the people that I interviewed was saying that their daughter has a congenital heart problem. But her job is that she is seen as an essential worker.

MC: That's [so?] true.

LB: She's a waitress. I mean she's a waitperson. Like that's an essential worker. And this person who is working in Northampton County is working at a restaurant where they're not following the protocols that they're supposed to be, and she has complained about it because she's at very high risk. And they said, "If you have a problem just don't come in and we'll consider it your resignation," which means they won't pay her unemployment. And so, you know, it's, for those of us who can do it, [too?] -- (inaudible)

MC: You're right. You're right. I guess I'm being a little flip there, but you're absolutely right in what you're saying.

LB: I think that there's a reality to --

MC: I realize that I've got a lot of privilege when I say that. I know.

LB: I know. And the unfortunate thing is that like, I mean even with the flu -- I like to talk about this all the time because I'm obsessed with the flu epidemic of 1918 and that has to do with the fact that my area of expertise with regard to art history is around that time. In that section of the -- and how it affected people and it also affected me directly because my grandmother died in that flu epidemic. She was thirty-two years old when my father was four, and so it affected my life because my dad grew up

without a mother. I didn't have a second -- you know I didn't have two grandmothers. That kind of stuff.

[01:25:00] But the thing that, the most significant thing about that flu epidemic was that, well, there's several things, but one hundred million, fifty to one hundred million people died of that flu. One in three people in the world had it. But the most significant reason for that was that we were at war. Everybody was at war. It was a world war. And they all didn't want to talk about the fact that their country was having casualties from an illness, so there was actually sedition laws that you couldn't talk about the flu epidemic in 1918.

MC: Really? I wasn't aware of that.

LB: Oh, and that's why it's called the Spanish Flu. Because Spain was the only country that was not in World War I. They were neutral. And so they were reporting on all of the stuff that was happening. All these people were dying in Spain because they were dying everywhere.

MC: I didn't know that.

LB: So it was the headlines of the newspaper, but they wouldn't talk about it in England or Germany or the US, because they didn't want to tell anybody that we were all sick. It all happened in 1918. And interestingly, it was about a fifteen-month period and it was much more serious than

this. For one thing, it struck people between the ages of 20 to 40. That was the primary thing. People would die in one day. I mean, they'd show symptoms and be dead by the end of the day. [01:26:00] And you know, one month in New York City twenty-three thousand people died. And people in Allentown. There was a huge number of people in Allentown, huge number of people in Easton. But Bethlehem actually quarantined so they didn't have as many cases.

MC: Really?

LB: Yeah. They had like hundreds of cases instead of thousands of cases. But nobody was allowed to talk about it, so there's not a lot of information about it, and that's one of the reasons that we really -- so, there was a herd immunity there because so many people had it. Hilda Doolittle had it, among other things. She almost died from it. That's how she met Bryher, the lesbian that she stayed with for the rest of her life. She came and took care of her. [01:27:00] Also, women who were pregnant were much more likely to get it and seventy-two percent of the women who were pregnant who got it died. So I think my grandmother was pregnant (inaudible).

MC: I had no idea about this.

LB: And Hilda Doolittle was pregnant. She had a miscarriage and then, and she was so sick. She was rich, but she was



really, really sick. It was during World War II -- World War I. And Bryher came and said, "You're really sick. I need to take you some place and make you healthier." Bryher was the richest woman in the UK at that time. And she took her away to an island, actually, where they could quarantine so that she could get better and she did. But, it was a terrible, terrible illness. And yet we weren't allowed to talk about it. And that's kind of the way it is now. You know, we won't have as many cases if we just stop testing people.

MC: Right. (laughter)

LB: So [it's the same?] -- same mentality one hundred years later.

MC: What's... Yeah. I wonder if, okay so I'm sure you've heard that Herman Cain died. Right?

LB: Yeah. I just read that. Yeah.

MC: And I wonder if that will catch the attention of some people. [01:28:00] Like, "Well maybe this is real." You know, "One of ours died," or something [like that?].

(inaudible) (laughter)

LB: Yeah. Who was infected by Trump. I mean he was there, (inaudible) in Tulsa. And they were... (inaudible)

MC: Right. No, I know. It was in the Tulsa... Yeah, I know. But if, in addition to him, if one or two other sort of

high-profile Republicans were to die, maybe, not to...

(inaudible) I could make suggestions if you want, but you know. (laughter)

LB: What I was going to say was that, some people, and Trish will (inaudible) -- Trish is a medical professional and she said, "You know, until people know people who have been sick and died and they're--"

MC: I'm sorry I didn't get that.

LB: "Until people know people who have been sick and died, other -- they're just acting like it's not happening. Because they don't know anybody who has been sick or who has died. Particularly who has died." [01:29:00] And so, a crazy guy, some -- a repair guy came to one of the people that I was interviewing's [the?] house and he said, "You know, this is all a plot by Hillary to make people get sick so that would collapse --" Like Hillary would do this now. To collapse the economy so that Trump won't win. And this person said, "Yeah, well. Okay." You know, and he said, then he said to him, "You don't know anybody's who's been sick, do you?" And he goes, well, "I don't know anybody personally. I know some people who have been sick but not in my personal circle that have been sick. So see, nobody really has it." Well, they're going to wait until people really have it. You know, it's not enough to have five

hundred people die in Allentown. It has to be five hundred people in your own circle, people dying. So that in the really height -- and with the flu epidemic of 1918, it was the same situation. There was a lot of deaths, then it sort of ended. It didn't go. [01:30:00] Then there was this second wave that was just horrible. It was exactly the same configuration of the year that was just, where people would get like on a subway car to go to Coney Island. By the time they got off they collapsed and died. You know, it just happened when they were in areas like that. It's happened so easily. And so maybe that is not going to be the -- I mean, some people are thinking that's not going to be the case. It's not the same kind of thing. Some people are saying that little kids are less likely to get it. But as my friend who's a pediatrician said, you know, she said "I'm getting a lot of people saying, 'Do you think I can go ahead and send my kid to daycare?'" And she said, "So when you send your kids to daycare, do they ever get sick from any of the other kids there? They get everything there. If you do it, they will get it. They're going to get sick. Or they're going to get exposed. And then they're going to have it. Maybe they won't get really sick, but you'll have to look around your [01:31:00] circle of family and friends and see if there's anybody there that's really going to be

at risk." So, a lot of the people who I have interviewed who have been older have said that was the thing that really bothered them, that they couldn't see their grandkids because, you know, they're the ones at risk. And they don't want to do that to their grandkids, so, you know, it's real... really... (inaudible)

MC: That's got to be really hard.

LB: Yeah, I talked to one, I interviewed one guy who said his father was intubated for two weeks and was very close to, you know, had he not been intubated. He was in the hospital with intubation for two weeks. It's so horrible to have that, too. And people who I know who have had it who -- it's so awful that it's like a PTSD thing. I wanted to interview some people that have been sick and they couldn't talk about it, it was so awful. People don't understand how awful it is. It's really. If you get it bad, it's really not like anything else. It's not just like having the flu.

MC: It's not just like the sniffles [other than like?](inaudible). Right.

LB: No. No. [01:32:00] It's really not like even like having a bad flu. It's like having -- So I have a very close friend who had it and she said -- You know, she had a one hundred three temperature for two weeks. She said, she had to go to the -- she woke up every morning saying to herself, "Okay,

today I just have to not die." And she said, "If I had to go to the bathroom, I had to crawl there. I couldn't walk." And she luckily had other people around her who finally took her to the hospital. She was in contact with people and then they said, "You need to, it's too many days for you to have this high temperature." And she went into the hospital and then they did a bunch of stuff to her and she got better. But, she's still suffering from that, and other people that we know are still having symptoms of it. One person that I talked to said after months they had a close family member that had it. And after a month they were still just, couldn't do anything it was so. [01:33:00] So I think that, I think people don't understand how serious it is. And unfortunately, people may have to know somebody before they'll take this seriously. I think, you know, and there are some media problems with it, too. I don't think the media is making, is making it clear enough to people. Although, what, you know. I mean, if you tell somebody that one hundred fifty thousand American, people in America have died, and they say, "Yeah, but it's all a hoax." How do you, how do you fix that? I mean --

MC: I don't know. I don't know that you can.

LB: Yeah.

MC: Maybe like I said, unless maybe some high-profile people die.

LB: Sure.

MC: And, not just high-profile people. But, high-profile anti-mask people. [01:34:00]

LB: People who are deniers of it. Yeah. No certainly an example of that.

MC: Maybe that will shake people out of their complacency.

LB: Yeah. Well, it's pretty hard to say, you know, "Okay this is my group of people. You don't have to wear masks. Don't do that standing behind me." Then they find out that there's a, you know, a contamination there. An infection. And then one of the people, one of the ten people that's sitting there dies. I mean, how do you? But, you know, it's blinders. (laughter)

MC: Oh yeah.

LB: [I mean, why is it?] so hard? I don't know. And it's hard to know really how (inaudible) people -- I mean, do you get students in classes who will sometimes say things to you like you think, "How could you possibly think that that was true?"

MC: Oh yeah. Yeah. (laughter)

LB: And, and is it like...

MC: [Sometimes?] I just have to stop myself from laughing usually. Like, "Really, you think that that's true?"  
(laughter)

LB: Do you want to, do you want to say [something?] like, "Could you write a paper about that? So, I want you to research that and bring me some real citations that aren't just from, you know, some crazy... (inaudible) or something" [01:35:00]

MC: Yeah and it's -- But the thing is that, I don't know. I thought with my students that if I say something like, "You know, I get why you might think that that's how it is, right? But here's some other information. And I think you should just think about that." Like I don't tell them, I generally don't tell them that they're wrong.

LB: Yeah, no [that's exactly right?]

MC: Because that's [like?] (inaudible), but I just try to say like, you know, "Here's some other information that's verifiable. You can go and check, you know, check it out if you want to, but I just think this is something worth thinking about." And I just leave it with them. Because, what are you going to do, right?

LB: Yeah. Yeah. I was, there was, there's a woman who posts a lot of very, very interesting, particularly feminist things and lesbian things on the Internet for a long time. And I

have quite a relationship with her and I was working with her on some projects and stuff. [01:36:00] And she started to post stuff that was particularly TERFy. It was just really, really major TERF stuff. And she posted some --

MC: Oh damn, you started... (laughter)

LB: And she posted a thing that said that ten thousand people in the UK who had transitioned through this one clinic were detransitioning. And I looked it up. I actually know this person. She's a famous playwright in the lesbian community. And I looked it up. And she said, "Well, this is, this is the information." And I was -- this was a Facebook exchange. And I said, "I looked this up, and this is absolutely not true. And you're retweeting something. If you read the article, that's not even what the article says. And if you read it, that's not what it says." She says, "Well it's in the *Guardian*." And I said, "No it isn't. [01:37:00] You didn't even read the article. What it says is that tens of thousands of people went to this clinic in the UK because it's the only national health clinic that does transgender surgery for free, in effect, for the national health. That if you live in Wales you have to go to that clinic. You have to travel a long way, but you get free really good health care and you get free transition surgery. It doesn't say anything about them



detransitioning. It doesn't say anything about that at all." And she said, "Well, but, but there's a lot -- I know people who detransitioned." I said, "But you posted something that's absolutely not true, and you can't do that. You can't put this thing up and cause divisiveness between our community. And then with phony information." I said, "I can't pretend this doesn't matter to me."

MC: Yeah. Good on you. Good on you.

LB: Because I, even though I really, I had a lot of admiration for this person. [01:38:00] I was beginning to think like, you know, "It's not, where are you, where are you getting this?" "Well, I researched this." I said, "But you, that's not what you posted. You posted something that wasn't true." That's not [good?] So, anyway. Yeah, that's not what we need right now either.

MC: No it is not.

LB: I think it's really hard because you hear about all these crazies all the time. And it's very depressing. And it's hard for any of us to say, "I think Joe Biden is going to win." Because we already got kicked in the head four years ago when we really thought Hillary was going to win. And so none of us is complacent or comfortable. We're just too on edge.

MC: It's probably the single greatest source of anxiety that I have, [actually?]. Yeah.

LB: No kidding. No kidding. I [also?]...

MC: [I'm just so scared?] that it will be, that it will be stolen. That it will be, you know, it will... [01:39:00]

LB: Yeah. And there was a, I sent a message to somebody who was here and he's moved to Lisbon, Portugal. And I needed to tell him about something, and he said, "You sent this to me at one o'clock in the morning or two o'clock in the morning. You're up in the middle of the night." And I said, "Yeah, I haven't slept since the election. Since the last presidential election. Actually six months before that."

MC: (laughter) Yeah.

LB: You know? And I guess one of the frustrations and angers I have is that I don't know how, if I'm ever going to feel not this way. Even if things go better. I'm never going to feel the way I felt during the Obama administration again. Cause I'm just too aware of stupidity and... That's another thing, too. I just don't think like and I know other people have said that they've developed a level of agoraphobia. That they --

MC: A whataphobia?

LB: Agoraphobia.

MC: Oh, right.

LB: They just don't feel comfortable going out. [01:40:00] You know, and Adrian has talked about opening the center. And I'm like, immediately I'm going like, "I'm going to --", like, I just said that. And then I said, "I'm not going to do it." And he said, "Well, just, it's a long way off. Don't worry about it now." And I think that's a good thing for him to say, but...

MC: Right. But I think you're right. I think it's, you know, it's going to be hard to venture back into the world again. There's going, they're going to be a lot of baby steps involved.

LB: And yet, and yet they did it after the flu epidemic of 1918, and you don't really hear about that. I mean it was -- but that was one of the reasons why I think the roaring twenties was as roaring as they were. There was a lot of reasons for that. But that was another reason. A lot of people, they did quarantine. And there were parts, like people would go to Philadelphia, there was no one on the street. Middle of the day. And it was a ghost town.

[01:41:00] So, I don't know. There's going to be... It will be interesting to see. Well thank you...

MC: Well the good thing there is we hope -- I'm sorry, just...

LB: I want you to, I want you to say whatever you want to say, go ahead.

MC: This hour-long interview's been two hours now, but...

LB: One hour and forty-one minutes.

MC: Oh, okay. It's fine with me. It's fine with me.

LB: Yeah.

MC: Then another thing that gives me hope is, you know, I do watch the political news pretty closely and seeing, you know, people like Ritchie Torres, you know, winning his -- I don't think it's been officially declared yet, but it's a done deal. You know. Jamaal Bowman winning his primary. Mondaire Jones. Yeah. I mean, of course, AOC. Seeing, seeing, [01:42:00] again it's the young people, you know, who are just giving me hope. They're getting, you know, more and more -- It's going to be a slow process. But I keep thinking about what's happening now in the Trump administration, and I don't even like saying his name to be perfectly honest. It makes me throw up a little in my mouth. But, (laughter) but I feel like, I hope, I tell myself that we're watching like the death cries of white, you know, of unrepentant white supremacy. Of unrepentant male supremacy. That it's in its death throes now and this is its sort of last surge of... I'm telling myself that. I need to believe that. You know? And I take a lot of hope from seeing, like I was just saying, you know, some of the folks, you know, seeing Katie Porter taking people down.

You know. She's a badass, right? [01:43:00] I mean, just, you know, there are more and more people that are entering, you know, positions of power who can make a difference. And I got to take hope from that. I've got to.

LB: Good. Yeah. Well, that's the secret. I mean, you know, at Muhlenberg, in, when Adrian was a student at Muhlenberg and it was the Obama election, there was -- I often give this, I talk about dynamic people and reasons to do things, and GSA had been just about forty-five kids and then -- forty-five college students -- and when Adrian was there it was seven hundred college students. And then when he left it was forty-five again. And he organized for those students to go vote. [01:44:00] And I really think that Obama's win was because of students, of college students. Which I don't think Hillary Clinton was able to ignite, at all. And I think [that was [her?] mistake?] --

MC: Nor is Joe Biden's, and I hope that whoever he -  
(inaudible)

LB: But I think that, I think that other things are igniting college students now. And I --

MC: True.

LB: And I think that's one of the things. I mean sometimes you have to look at the other side and say, "Okay, there is a difference." You know, and people are all saying that. So

that if Joe Biden says, and he is saying publicly, you know, the financial circumstances of taking care of students', students' college loans, which of course is not coming out of the Trump administration. But, to be able to compare those things and that students need to say, "Okay, this is how we can, we can engage this group. We cannot engage this group. And so, if [01:45:00] this, these people are running the government, we can engage them. We can demand change. We can't demand any change from Trump. We can demand it but nothing's going to happen." And so I think the young people that are, I'm hoping that people will recognize -- And the reason I feel this way is we're seeing this happen in elections, that people are standing in line for eight hours, at risk for COVID, but they're still doing it, just to be able to vote in a primary, when they've never done that before. Well, that's a big deal. You know, we've had so many [vast?] numbers here. I just read, and I don't know if this is true, but, that a million people, a million Democrats, have registered to vote by mail in Florida. Well, that's a lot of people, already, to be doing. And that's a very significant thing. So that's what I want. We just got money to encourage people to [01:46:00] vote by mail and we just got a grant to be working on that and that's going to be something [I could

be?] working on. But, I think that that kind of stuff, I mean, just more votes is more good votes and I mean, that's going to happen. That's absolutely true.

MC: I agree.

LB: And so those things have been different, too. So, you know, I'm knocking on wood.

MC: It gives me hope. Yeah. [They give me hope?]

LB: Definitely not complacent. And I also said to Trish, "If it doesn't work this way, I mean we're going to see major upheavals and major organizing, and maybe, you know, scarier circumstances. But if that happens, you know, we'll have to roll with that, too." So, you know, but it's...

MC: Right. Survival of the most adaptable.

LB: That's, I think that's a brilliant thing to say. I really think that's true. And I say to people - And, you know, when people say things like, will say like, "I can't do this. I can't do this." I say like, "Yeah. Change is hard but we have to change." [01:47:00] (inaudible) Everything about us. Everything about the queer community is about change. So, if you're uncomfortable about this, get over it, for Christ's sake. I mean, for Heaven's, we've been doing this for -- We've had to change people's minds all along.

MC: Oh, absolutely.

LB: From forever. So, that's how we thrive. We can't just go like, "Okay, everything's fine now." You know? Cause it's never going to be that way. So. So, did I already ask you this? That if you want to say -- I guess maybe I have. To say something to somebody in the future if they're looking at this archive and you can make a little soundbite for them and say, you know --. I know it's a lot of responsibility. [But they can't -- ?]

MC: Well, yeah. (laughter) Was that on the list you sent me? I don't remember that one.

LB: [No I didn't... ?] For me, I mean, one of the things I want to, I say to people is that like, the people in the future know what happened. They know who won the election. [01:48:00] They know what happened with COVID. They know what it's like for them thirty years from now. But they don't know exactly what it's like for individuals now. And that's why we're making these videos.

MC: I guess, I mean what I'm going to say is so trite, really, I think. [And it's been?] said before, there's nothing original about it. But, first of all I would have to say thank you for watching these. Thank you for going into this archive to learn about this. Because honestly if we don't learn about history we are going to repeat it. And it's not going to be pretty and it's not going to be fun. And we're,



you know, our testimonies are testimonies to the fact that it's not pretty and it's not fun. So, so yeah. [01:49:00] Learn history and spread it, to those, others will know too. Otherwise, you'll end up potentially in a situation just like this. Where you're the ones making the archives. So again, nothing original in that but I think that's probably what I would say.

LB: Well, I really appreciate this so much and thank you for letting me talk to you for so long. I've been [jawing?] way too much. I'm supposed to not say anything.

MC: That's, no, I've, I really approached this as a conversation more than...

LB: I like it as that and not as [structured?] (inaudible)

MC: And I've really enjoyed this conversation.

LB: Good. Good.

MC: So, thank you for making it happen.

LB: And I'm all set to come and fix your house as soon as COVID's --

MC: Awesome, excellent.

LB: I have tons of -- I'm going to turn off the recording now. So thank you again so much.

MC: Yep. Thank you.

END OF VIDEO FILE

