

Leather Archives & Museum



Oral History Interview of Chuck Renslow (Fireside Chat)
by Doug O'Keeffe

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Chicago, IL
At the Leather Archives & Museum
As part of the Fireside Chat program

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Scope: Chuck Renslow is interviewed before a live studio audience as the second of an ongoing "Inside Leather History," a Fireside chat series produced by the Leather Archives and Museum and the Leather Archives Museum Roadshow. In this interview, Mr. Renslow discusses his family, his relationship with Dom Orejudos, the history of the Gold Coast and other leather bars around the city of Chicago, politics, and how he built and created the Leather Archives and Museum. At the end of the interview the audience has a Q&A with Mr. Renslow. The interview is approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes. (START TAPE)

Doug O'Keeffe: (Give everybody a second to get comfortable) Well good evening everyone and welcome to Inside Leather History, a Fireside chat. Tonight's chat is the second in an ongoing series produced by the Leather Archives and Museum, and the Leather Archives and Museum Roadshow. In January Mr. Marcus inaugurated our program. In June next year Mama Sandy Reinhardt (sp?) will be joining us on the stage, and I hope that you'll be able to come and see her. But before I begin I would like to thank all of the volunteers that made this evening possible, I am indebtedly grateful. I'm also very grateful to all the people whose generosity enabled me to thoroughly research our guest, and put on a good program for you. I am very grateful for all of your help. We are video taping the chat, but the audience will not be videotaped. We ask that you please don't personally videotape or audio tape the chats so that we can respect everyone's privacy. Um, following the formal presentation, we will be opening up the floor for audience questions. But we're going to have a mic available probably right here, and the cord is not long enough to take it out

into the crowd, so we're going to ask if you have a question to please come to the mic. And again, you will not be videotaped. So.

Tonight's guest is very special. He's an accomplished businessman, political activist and a family man. I would like for all of you to join the Leather Archives and Museum, the Leather Archives and Museum Roadshow, and me, in welcoming to the stage Mr. Chuck Renslow.

(Applause)

Chuck Renslow: Not sure what to expect, but there I am.

(Laughter)

Doug O'Keeffe: Well as part of my research for this chat I did speak with the Reverend Troy Perry, and he told me that you're not afraid to talk about anything so I hope he's right.

(Laughter)

CR: Well some things I don't dare talk about.

(Laughter)

DO: At the 30th IML keynote address you challenged the crowd to make history in the current election by either electing a woman or a black man to be the next president. And Obama won. What are your thoughts on that?

CR: Well, anything I could say would just be repetition. It's making history there's no question about it. I can't think of anybody more qualified to be president of the United States [than] Barack Obama. And if you want to throw a little bit of humor in it, um, what was it the other night? Uh, the radio commentator, um. No, no, no. (an audience member says Bill Maher) CR: Bill Maher (Meyer? sp?) Yeah. He said nothing is changed. He said we're sending a black man into the White House to clean up the white man's mess.

(Laughter)

DO: Oh my.

(Laughter)

DO: Well. (Laughter) Let's...(laughter) Yeah, where am I supposed to go with that? You know?

(Laughter and clapping)

DO: Said he wasn't afraid to talk about anything, I, I think I have my hands full. I'd like to go back in time a bit. Tell us a little bit about your coming out.

CR: I don't know, uh. (Pause) I can't really pinpoint a time when I came out. I was always interested in guys. Oh, it's true when I was in high school I dated women, and had a few and did different things...(mumble) Um, when I was in high school I joined a club called the Mask in Sheer (sp?) which is a dramatic club and um I was in the play Arsenic and Old Lace. And um I (haven't forgot?) Dr. Witherspoon in there...I don't believe what our...I played several parts. But there was a guy in a cast one day and after the show we were backstage and uh, he went down on me. Flash, flash everything went off!

(Laughter)

Life changed.

DO: Phenomenal. I read that you had a little bit of trouble hiding that in high school.

CR: Yeah, but not that much, you know. Just kept to myself.

DO: Phenomenal. Tell us a little bit about your family. How did you begin the Renslow family?

CR: Well, just because your gay don't...I do not believe you cannot have a family. And that's been my motto ever since I met Dom [Dom Orejudos aka Etienne]. I think, maybe the instigating thing of doing a family's when I met Dom. And uh, I met his family and his mother. And she was so open then and wonderful and uh agreeing. Let me give you an example: when my mother died, she was with me at the funeral. She reached over, grabbed my hand, and said, "now you only have one mother." And that was family. And to this day I believe that anybody who comes in, if you ask me who is family? I'd have to say that would be up to the individual.

DO: How many people do you consider family at the current moment?

CR: Close family? Five or six.

DO: Ok.

CR: Uh, extended family? A couple hundred.

(Laughter)

I consider everybody in this room my family. Let's put it that way.

DO: That's wonderful. How many children have you raised?

CR: I don't know.

(Laughter)

Partially? Wholly? Gilbert was here, partially raised him. Johnny over there, I'd say six or seven, eight.

DO: I heard you're very hands-on in taking care of children. How do you manage that?

CR: What do you mean by hands-on? I (mumble) hands off, there out of line I slap them. (Laughter) What are you talking about?

(Audience laughter and clapping)

If you mean sexually I'm not interested in kids, I'm not a priest.

(Laughter)

DO: So, I, I've seen footage and I've heard that you have very massive and involved holiday dinners. How many people do you include in a holiday dinner at your home?

CR: Well, outside of close family of course, I sort of put an invitation out that anybody we know in my businesses or anything else that have no place to go on Christmas or Thanksgiving are invited to my house for dinner. We've had up to seventy people.

DO: My gosh. My gosh. Well, I also read that your family observes a holiday tradition and that you see something in particular every year. What do you go to see as a family?

CR: You got me on that one.

DO: Oh jeez. (Laughter) The, the, um, the stage plays that you go to see.

CR: Oh, well I don't know if that's so much a tradition because the kids got bored with it, I used to go to see the Nutcracker.

DO: There you go.

CR: And uh, very much so. In the early years I saw the Nutcracker quite a bit, but not so much as a family tradition but Dom, my lover at the time, was a dancer in it.

DO: I see.

CR: And uh, he was the uh Oriental, remember the Oriental dancers? And that's why I went heavily. But yes I do like to take the kids now, after they've seen it five or six times, they're bored with it.

(Laughter)

DO: I'd like to change gears a little bit, and look at some other aspects here. I read in some interviews here in the archives that your grandmother was a witch.

CR: Was what?

DO: A witch. And that she...

CR: She practiced the occult, yes.

DO: And, well, I read that she had, in old German, um, the sixth and seventh books of Moses

CR: That is correct.

DO: What did she teach you?

CR: (Sigh) Well, I can't say too much because once again when she was trying to teach, you gotta remember that I mean I was just a youngster, 18-19, and I was like any other guy, I wanted to get outta there I didn't wanna listen to all this stuff, you know. So I can't say I learned an awful lot except of kind of a way of life, um, which was "do unto others" and that sort of thing, you know. But I think the thing that she really gave me, and I don't know if it was from that so much is a strong sense of discipline, self-discipline. And I believe I still have that to this day. You know, she was extremely strict, um, I always tell the story about the dinners, you know. We could sit...I could go to dinner, I could sit down, and I didn't have to eat. She didn't care. But if I took food I had to eat it. And one day I took a pork chop and left it lay. Next day she went out of her way, and I mean went out of her way to cook every single thing I liked including baking. And I sat down to dinner and the pork chop came out.

(Laughter)

Now in fairness to her I took about two bites and she said to my mother in German "Ich ach lernen (sp?)," that means "he learned." Then ate the dinner. But I'm just...that's how strict she was. I think what I got from her. More than anything else. A strong sense of self-discipline and a business acumen. She owned the Kimball Trust and Savings Bank, and she lost that in '29 when I was born.

DO: Phenomenal. My research tells me that you practice magic in various forms. What does that mean to you?

CR: (Laughter) Well, it's a study of the occult and, um, I think we can define it (mumble) down into ritual. Um, I believe, and I know I'm not alone Crowley (sp?) was with me, that uh, anything in magic is what somebody does in their own life. But what we do in spells and incantations and all this stuff is mainly ritual or something to put our mind in the right way of doing things. The Bible says, you know, with enough faith you can move a mountain. Well, people move mountains, instead of having bulldozers, cause they don't have the faith. But if you have the faith it works. And I believe that's what magic is. And I have practiced it. And sometimes it works, and sometimes it don't. DO: Phenomenal. In switching gears a little bit again, you're a Mason, and that encompasses many aspects. Would you please educate us a little bit about the Masons, being a Mason. What does that mean?

CR: All right. A Mason is a brotherhood, uh, it's based on brotherly love, relief, and truth. Any man can become a Mason, but not all men should be Masons, well not all men want to be Masons, you can't...I as a Mason cannot ask any other man to become a Mason, they must ask me. The emphasis of Masonry is to make good men better, and that's basically what it does. And we say the true Masonic ordinance, brotherly love, relief, and truth. And I think that sums up Masonry really in a nutshell. There's a political side of it and everything else too, you know, uh, I'll give you an interesting thing. Uh, I was named district deputy grand master, what it is there's seven hundred and some lodges in Illinois, the grand master can't possibly see all of them. So he divides the state up and then he appoints his deputy, well (mumble) appointed me his deputy. And I thought, wait a minute, (laughter) I'm openly gay. And I don't know if this is a good idea. So I traveled to Springfield to see him. And I went into his office and I said uh, Grand Master I have to tell you something, and John Loudon (sp?), and he said "what?" and I said well I'm openly homosexual. "Well tell me something I don't know!"

(Laughter)

That was a wasted trip.

(Laughter)

DO: Well I'm told that you live your life as a Mason encompassing, um, faith, hope, and charity as a way of life. How do you employ those tenants in your everyday life?

CR: I guess it's back to the same thing, do unto others as you have others do unto you. Uh, I believe that's the basic thing. But maybe the other thing is if I see a bum on the street, or a beggar, or somebody ask for a hand out, if I have it, a dollar, they will get it. And I don't care what they want it for, I don't

believe that's my business. People say, "oh don't give it to them they're just gonna go and get drugs!" That's their business not mine. Charity begins at home in my own heart, and if I give them their dollar, (mumble) then I can't remember in a few cases where I've ever turned anybody down.

DO: Phenomenal.

CR: As a matter of fact at Man's Country sometimes they kid about these kids coming out, "oh there's Chuck's five dollar line."

(Laughter)

DO: I read that you do something every other Thursday at the Hesperia Lodge or Eleven, what do you do every other Thursday for them?

CR: Go to a meeting. And cook.

(Laughter)

DO: And cook. (Laughter) What do you cook for them?

CR: Well, anything. Nah, I wouldn't say anything. I go to Restaurant Supply Depot and to be honest with you what's on sale in there is what they get to eat in the lodge that night. (Laughter) Which sometimes can be great, you know. We were in their one time and they had prime rib half price because it was getting where it had to be moved, you know

DO: Ok.

CR: And, uh, the lodge had prime rib that night.

DO: My god. What's your favorite thing to make?

CR: My what?

DO: My, your favorite thing to make for them? If anything...

CR: I don't think I have a favorite really. Probably roasts. Cause I like the taste of 'em and I like rare beef, and so. That's my own taste, you know. What I like to make for people. I guess I like to make people what they want. I have a habit on somebody's birthday of saying I'll cook anything you want.

DO: My gosh.

CR: It's gotten me in trouble a few times.

(Laughter)

DO: What are some of the things you've made for birthdays?

CR: Uh, what is it? Um, Beef Wellington somebody asked for and I said, my god I've never made that what do you do? Get the recipe book out and said oh my god this is complicated. But it was delicious. In fact a friend of mine whose here tonight gets asking me to make it again.

DO: It must have been pretty good.

(Laughter)

In changing direction a little bit again, I'd like to talk about Dom, the artist Etienne. How did you meet Dom?

CR: Well, I went to Oak Street Beach and uh, I don't know why it was that time that Division Street and uh Rush was the gay mecca. It was a restaurant there called State and Division we called it suck and duck.

(Laughter)

And uh, anyway I went to the beach and I'm not a beach person, why I went, walked to the beach that day I don't know. And I saw this little Filipino Italian boy laying on his stomach with a pair of blue trunks, that little butt sticking up in the air, and sirens went off, whistles went off and I said (cut off -want to?). There was another friend of mine there Jim Klaja who I saw go up and talk to him and I said, Introduce me! Introduce me! Uh, and he did. And um, he said, "oh hi I'm Dom" and that was it and I thought oh ok. So went to the background and oh about a half hour later I came back up the way and Dom was getting ready to leave. And I says how are ya getting home? And he says, "well I take the bus" and I says well come on I'll drive you home! Well, on the way home I said, can I pick you up tonight and take you to a show? And he says, "no." I said pick you up tomorrow night? And he says, "no." And I said when can I? He says, "alright tomorrow night." (Laughter) And that started it. Dom was not interested at first. In fact, after I asked him to go with me he was sixteen and I was twenty. He said to me, "but you're so old." (Laughter)

DO: Oh my. How did you get around that issue? (Laughter)

CR: In one interview where somebody asked Dom that, I think he gave the best answer. He said if you start at zero and absolutely love is ten, he says I started at ten, but he had to go one, two, three, four, five.

DO: Oh. Phenomenal. Dom was an accomplished dancer, choreographer. But he has a very interesting footnote in Chicago broadcast history. Tell us a little bit about that.

CR: I don't know what you mean by Chicago broadcast history.

DO: It dealt with a television program that...

CR: Oh, yeah, well he was a choreographer and he was a dancer, uh. Some of the things was absolutely amazing and uh, the artist work here all his work here you see. But that wasn't his main love. He was very good at his main love was absolutely dance. I mean he just loved to dance -he danced for the Illinois ballet company. I took several thousand photographs of him dancing -

DO: My gosh

CR: And they're at the Newberry Library now, under the Renslow dance collection. Something interesting about him, he's also a musician. And when my grandmother died, uh, she had a zither. It's a German thing like a harp, and I brought it home and said here this is my grandmother's, and he says "what is it?" and I said it's a zither. And he "oh," and he start tightening up the strings and stroked it a few times. And played the bacchanal from Tales of Hoffman, the melody (laughter)

DO: My gosh.

CR: Which he knows is my favorite.

DO: Phenomenal.

CR: He'd never seen the instrument before.

DO: Phenomenal. Together you and Dom established Kris Studios, how did you do that?

CR: Well, I was at a photography studio on Clark Street where I was taking portrait photography, and I also did some female nudes and was selling them through the mail [while at?] Century Studios which you know very well. Uh, I think Johnny Oderofsky (sp?) is here and he was up at that studio with me. And um, a friend of mine Harry Mikelson came in and said you're a very good photographer. And I said, yeah but I don't like it. Uh, I didn't like it because these heavy-set fat women would come in and say, "make me beautiful" and I felt like (laughter) I felt like saying I'm not a plastic surgeon. But I didn't want to get that...it was just...(laughter)...they never liked it. It was difficult. So this friend of mine (mumble) says "why don't you take beefcake?" So I started taking some beefcake. Dom, who I'd just met, was very, very muscular. So I asked Dom if he would take some beefcake. And he said yes. And I took some photographs of him and I never sold them. I still have them, they're in the files. They were never published. But that's how I started. Um. I'm not sure how the name -I know how the name came about -I'm not sure when because Harry and I started the studio, and it's sort of lost in history where the name (mumble). But the name Kris came from the fact we were trying to figure out a name for the studio and I had a knife on my desk, and it was this wavy type

knife. That's called a Kris. And Dom said, "What's that?" I said it's a Kris. He said that's a good name. And that's how the name Kris Studios started.

DO: Phenomenal. Well I read that you were charged with distributing pornography through the US Mail. Tell us a little bit about that case if you would.

CR: Well, (clears throat). The post office moved against us uh, for sending pornography through the mail. Now at the time all we were selling were male nudes with posing straps. The post office said that we had excessive strap delineation, I don't know why just cause I soaked them in water first, but anyway.

(Laughter)

But we won the case. It was a hearing in, excuse me, it was a hearing in Washington and we won. The problem is the modus operandi of the post office was, that if you, if they lost, you see all they could do was prevent you from mailing. They couldn't do any more than that. But if you lost with their hearing, they called the local police department and had you raided, which they did. And the police department raided us and Dom and I, and uh, a model that we had at the time were all arrested. And the interesting thing was, when we got into court my attorney was starting to bring experts in and everything else, I thought this has been done for ages, and nobody's ever won. So I said no, I don't wanna do that. He said, "What do you wanna do?" I said I don't wanna do anything. And the attorney was an attorney from the American Civil Liberties Union and he really didn't care and he said okay. So we got on the stand and they asked me what these photographs were, the state's attorney or whatever it was. And I said, they're pictures. And he says, "of what?" And I says a man. And he says, "are they pornographic?" And I said that's for you to decide, I don't think so. Well we batted up and back for a little while and finally the judge, I'll never forget him his name was Judge Dan Ryan, uh, he said "let's see these pictures." And at that time they also had some nudes without pose straps that they had picked up in my studio. And, uh, they put them all on the judge's desk and he sat there and went through them. It was kinda interesting and he looked up and he says, "the human body is not obscene." And, uh, the state's attorney jumped up and asked for a continuance -well I don't, the judge - but he said to the state's attorney "I'm gonna rule against you." He had these kind of glasses that you look over and he looked over this way and the state's attorney says "I acted and a continuance (?)" And, uh the judge said, "Yes, I can't deny that." And state's attorney said something like a month away, and the judge says "I won't be on the bench." The state's attorney smiles. (laughter) You could see that irritated the judge. And he says, "You have all the right in the world to a continuance. Nine o'clock tomorrow morning." (laughter)

DO: My god.

CR: I walked into the courtroom and he said, "Oh the Renslow case," picked up the gavel and said, "Dismissed."

DO: My gosh. What was the interesting footnote with that? Where, where they couldn't determine that it was pornography but basically it was considered, they couldn't prove it was pornography but they couldn't say it was art. What exactly was the crux of that issue?

CR: Well, the point of it was at that time, there was no supreme court or any really legal definition of what was pornography. You were usually judged by the standards of the community where it was, you know. Probably nude males at that time in Chicago, this was what in the 60's, um, would be considered pornographic. A lot of people would consider that. Um, so you were judged by the -all that changed though, down the line when a court, case came to the Supreme Court, of um, I forgot the name of it...of the book. Forgot the name of the book but it was, uh, Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure. It was a story about a prostitute. And the, once again, uh, they put them into court and it went all the way up to the Supreme Court, and the Supreme Court said if something has a modicum of social value, it is not obscene. That was the one case, another case was the Manual case which was the gay case. And up to this point, um, what the post office would do they would stop you from mailing [and] you were out of business, you know. But Manual went into court and the Supreme Court ruled on it. They didn't rule whether or not the magazine manual, which was like the one I published of ours, was obscene or not obscene. But what they did rule was the post office had no right to deny you to mail it, only a court could do that. And, of course, that opened everything up. Those two decisions, that's why we got porno today. It's all based on that, those decisions.

DO: Phenomenal. In going back to Dom a little bit, we are seated in an auditorium named for Dom, the artist Etienne. How does it feel to be here with him honored in this manner?

CR: Well, (laughter), it feels fantastic every time I come in here I feel it, you get choked up with emotion, I just wish that he could be here to see it.

DO: Phenomenal. How did you raise the cash to buy this building?

CR: Well I had some of my own, I put that into it. The big thing came that was that we found the building, we had, uh, Tony DeBlase and I had started the museum and we had it over on Clark street in a storefront and we were scraping nickels and dimes to get it together. And, uh, a friend of mine called me up and told me about this building. I came and looked at it and said oh my god that's what we want. I don't remember the figures, I think we needed something like, um, I don't remember. Do you remember what it was John? Sixty thousand we needed? We needed sixty thousand dollars down payment. You know. I had a couple thousand. So at International Mr. Leather that year

we got on stage and I made a bid and I told them what were ?, I told them the building, we showed them pictures of it, and I said, uh, we need sixty thousand dollars to buy this building. I think we got something like fifty nine thousand dollars in bids and collections that night.

DO: Phenomenal.

CR: We bought the building.

DO: Phenomenal.

CR: And another footnote to that was we had a five-year mortgage on it and that was completely paid off in five years. And that was the community. The community really supported, and it still is, you know. And we have some wonderful people running it, Jeff...really great.

DO: Absolutely. I'd like to take a moment if we could have the house lights for one moment please. What I'd like to do is look at all of the artwork that's decorating the auditorium. Can you tell us a little bit about this artwork, some of the history?

CR: Well, almost all of the artwork except for one painting, or no, I'm sorry. All of the artwork except for three paintings, four paintings, were part of the murals for the Gold Coast in one of its, uh, locations. I mean, it's been five different locations there's artwork here from all the locations. That one up there on the right, which shows a man holding, like, a star, that was done for a poster for IML.

DO: Ok.

CR: Also the one over here on that small one, that was also done for a poster for IML. The one in the very back, shows car wash there, kinda humorous, that was done by Dom for Man's Country bathhouse. The one over there in the corner was done for a disco I opened. And the name of the disco was, uh, 'Zolar's, It's magic,' is what our thing was. Well it caught on fire and burned.

(Laughter)

So we went on saying, Zolar's, it's tragic.

(Laughter)

DO: How did you save the artwork if the building burned?

CR: You know, I don't remember.

(Laughter)

No, the artwork was in back of the bar and over the bar.

DO: Oh.

CR: And, uh, that part really didn't, uh, didn't get that too much damage. The rest of the place was just completely undone. There was a shortage from the railroad tracks next door, the elevator, spark on the rope and then burned.

CR: We had no insurance or nothing.

DO: Oh. Oh no. Did Dom create all of this art?

CR: All of it. Yes.

DO: What was his motivation? Can you tell us a little bit about how he created these?

(Laughter)

CR: No. (laughter) Well, I can tell you I told him I wanted art for the basement of the Gold Coast, I wanted art for the Gold Coast, and he just took it from there. I mean, uh, he was extremely, I mean, I don't, he could really turn things into wonderful things. Like, for instance that one back there in the corner, that's supposed to be him and I. Well I told him, that don't look like me. And he says, "That's the way you look to me."

DO: Oh my gosh.

CR: And I still don't think it looks like me.

(Laughter)

DO: Well, uh, if we may bring the house lights down, thank you. I'd like to talk about the Gold Coast a little bit. And the bars that preceded it. Tell us a little bit about the Hideaway bar, where the leathermen began congregating in the 1950's.

CR: (mumble) Where was (?) Hideaway...

DO: There were numerous bars. I recall that that being one of them.

CR: Well, they weren't leather bars, they were just plain bars.

DO: Right, yeah.

CR: Ok, yeah. Well there was plain bars and the leather guys did go into those bars once in a while. But it was a rare occasion. In, uh, late 50's -'58, '57 -Dom

and I met Cliff Ingram who became a part of our family. And, uh, Cliff later became the tattoo artist with Raven. And Cliff said one day, "Well, we got to know five or six or seven leather people, why don't we all go to a bar and sit down and see if we can attract other people?" So we did. We went downtown to a new bar called Omar's. And, uh, that was downtown in the Loop at Madison and Clark. The daytime it was a restaurant and it closed up about 5 o'clock, opened up at 8 o'clock at night as a gay bar. Well we were there about two weeks and the management says, "Get outta here, you're scaring everybody."

(Laughter)

So then we went to another place called the Lane Hotel, across from Boathouse Square.

DO: Yes.

CR: It was going all right except that they tore the building down. So we had to get out of there. (Laughter) Then we moved to a bar on, um, Broadway. And that was called the Hi-Ho, that we had cards that Dom made of it. It's Hi-Ho Daddy-O, and he had a (?) of a guy on a motorcycle straddling a wheel. And we did very well there, we were there almost a year. And, uh, uh, by the way it's still there, the bar. It's now Friar Tuck's. And it's on Broadway. But, uh, the woman that owned the bar sold it, and the new owners didn't want us so somebody told us about a bar called the Gold Coast show lounge that was at Elm and Clark, and it was always empty. So we went in there and talked to the owner and he says "Sure , come on in!" you know. And we did. And we were there about three weeks and he said to me, "Why don't you run the place so I can go home." (Laughter) And I said alright, this was in '58. And, uh, '59 he died. And his son came and says, "You wanna buy the joint?" So we did and that's how the Gold Coast started. We dropped the show lounge part. (Laughter) It was just...(mumble). (Laughter)

DO: You had to move the Gold Coast a few times.

CR: Yes.

DO: If my, if my research tells me correctly.

CR: Yeah.

DO: What precipitated that?

CR: Uh, the first, the first bar we had was at Elm and Clark, and we were doing very, very well there. And, uh, we were, that was the one we moved into there. And, uh, we had very cheap rent. Yeah, that owner didn't do it very well so it was okay. But as they saw we were doing well they tripled the rent. And I mean the rent really went up and I thought this guy is gouging us, you know,

and I found out after a while he was a big syndicate guy, which I didn't know. Naïve. And, uh, so I said well, [we'll] move. So what we did, we went up the street and opened up another bar there. It was in a building owned by, uh, Tokyo Rose. And uh, she didn't care she rented us this store and we completely built the bar anonymously, secretly. And we were all ready, we had a license and everything, ready to open, we opened it up, and when somebody went to the old Gold Coast they found the lights on, the murals gone -not the murals gone -the call on the bartender there and [he] said, "We moved half a block up the street." (laughter) And that's what happened. One of the sad things about that bar, with the exception of one mural that's out being restored, is Dom had painted murals there too. But he had painted them right on the wall.

DO: Oh.

CR: And, uh, we didn't want anybody else to get in there so we went in there at night one day and uh, with paint remover and smeared them all up.

DO: What was "Jamie's time" in relationship to the Gold Coast?

CR: Ok. Wow. In those days you paid off to the syndicate, you paid off the police. There were no gay bars, to my knowledge. Aleg's (sp?) Hut, which was out on Irving Park road I believe might not have been, but every other one was owned and run by the syndicate. When we opened up the Gold Coast I was just really kind of naïve, you know. They came in and told us that we had to buy this stuff and that and the jukebox had to be with the jukebox company, which we did. But one of the things, we had a two o'clock license and right across the street was a big syndicate bar called Jamie's that had no business. So when we closed we hollered, "Jamie's time!" and everybody went across the street. (Laughter) It was in good with the outfit. Two things were (mumble) with the outfit. That was one, and I won't mention names because those times are gone, but still, huge syndicate guy called the Hunk, was his name, came to see me. You know, cigar, says, "Chuck I need to talk to you." Oh, yeah, what? "My son is gay, what do I do?" (Laughter) Oh!

(Laughter)

DO: What did you tell him?

CR: No, I had a nice long conversation with him, he sent the kid to St. Louis, and bought him a bar.

DO: Oh my god!

(Laughter)

DO: What was your inspiration for the Mr. Gold Coast contest, that subsequently became IML?

CR: Well, when I had Kris Studio, we were always trying to get models. And uh, I worked out a gym and Dom worked out. And, uh, we went to all the physique contests, Mr. Illinois, Mr. Chicago. And the guy that was running the physique contests at the time -this was before IFBB and it was the Amateur Athletic Union that ran it -and that was the weight lifting part of the sport. They were heavy weight lifters. And the guy that was running it in Chicago was a weight lifter, and he didn't want anything to do with these damn physique stuff. So he asked myself and a guy called Cliff Addeger (sp?), who was also a photographer, uh, to handle that part of it. So we did, we handled the Mr. Chicago, the Mr. Illinois, Mr. Midwest, and we ran those contests. So that gave me the idea, wow, let's try a Mr. Gold Coast. So we did. Well the Mr. Gold Coast got so popular that, uh, we had speakers out in the street. (Laughter) The bar was so full. So Dom says, "Well, we gotta move it," so we said well ok, what are we gonna do? And, uh, I said to Dom I said, we can't put the Mr. Gold Coast somewhere else, so Dom says "No we can't, we gotta change the name." So we came up with Mr. World, Mr. this, and finally he came up with International Mr. Leather. I will say in the early years it was Mr. International Leather, International Mr. Leather, it switched every way around. But, uh, Dom was the one that came up with that name and it stuck.

DO: Phenomenal. What were your thoughts and feelings at the 30th anniversary?

CR: Wow, (Laughter) I think that would do it. How far it's gone, and what's happened, the dedicated people to it, the people that have done so much work without much (mumble...eration at all) to make it success. I mean, if you'd have told me 30 years ago that it would develop into this, I, I wouldn't have believed it. You know, it's, it's worldwide, it's known, it's had its ups, it's had its downs, it's had its problems, but it's always survived and I think it will survive.

DO: Absolutely.

(Clapping and laughing) You've been honored by many organizations, many people, but one in particular that caught my attention was when you were honored at Kinky College, in a covering ceremony in 2006, I had the privilege of attending that. And what I'd like to do is show a brief video of that, so I'm going to ask if I may move you over for just a little bit, we'll be able to look at that video, and I'd like your comments on that. I hope everyone can see. You can see all right.

(Pause)

(Start video)

Video: (Applause) Ladies and gentleman, Master Chuck Renslow. (Applause)

Renslow on video: Thank you. I don't know what to say. If I say too much I'll probably cry and I wouldn't want you to...(mumble) cry. The only thing I can say is that (muffled by clapping)...thank you, thank you, thank you.

(End video)

CR: That's all Howie's fault. (Laughter)

DO: What were your feelings on such an honor?

CR: I don't know, I think that, god, I guess flabbergasted would really be the word. I mean, I was surprised, you know, I've gotten honors, lots of them, you know, so...but this 'cause I was there, some was there (?), but this one I really felt it. This came from not necessarily a gay group, but a poly group that you know, heterosexual group and everything, and I considered that a great honor. I really did. Well, not so much a great honor, a very emotional thing. It was very emotional. I don't think I've ever cried at one but I almost did at that one.

DO: Phenomenal. (Laughter) What honors or bestowments have meant the most to you over the years?

CR: I don't know, I, I'll tell you something I would answer about any question you want but that's one I don't think I would answer. I'll tell you why. If I say this was better than this (?) is gonna get mad, if I say George is the best one than Harry's gonna get mad. You know. All of them are wonderful, all of 'em I thought just great. Some of them I think were connive (?), but so what, that's life (laughter)

DO: In, in changing gears a little bit again, moving on to a couple of lighter topics, I read that at one point you moved away from Chicago for a short time to San Francisco.

CR: Yep.

DO: You opened a pet store. And you used an animal and a parking meter (Laughter) for some sort of publicity...

CR: Where did you ever find that out? (Laughter)

DO: Would you tell us a little bit about that, please?

CR: Well, we had a pet shop there; it was doing very, very successfully. Dom and I did. And, um, we had a, not a kangaroo but it was like a kangaroo, I forgot what...

DO: A wallaby (Laughter)

CR: A wallaby. Thank you. And, uh, he was friendly, nice little thing, so I took him downtown on Market Street, and I tied him to a parking meter. And I put money in the parking meter, and then I called the police that there was a parking meter there (?) and then I called the Tribune saying that the police were arresting a wallaby. (Laughter) And the next day the paper carried the article, and I just walked up and said, I got my money in the meter! (Laughter) And the cop went like this, and we went off, but we did get it in the paper.

(Laughter)

DO: How, how long were you there with your, with your pet store?

CR: About three months. We did not like living in San Francisco. It was one of those cities that Dom and I went to visit and had a wonderful time. We thought, this is a great place! We wanted to move there but we didn't burn any bridges back here. And, uh, we just didn't like living there. I don't, and I can't tell you why, I think maybe 'cause we were homesick for here, I just don't know. But Chicago is my city, and, uh, we tried to move once more another time too. We tried to move to New Orleans. A friend of mine was in New Orleans and we went down there for Mardi Gras and god, what a wonderful city. So we, a friend of mine was living down there, and we visited him, and said well we're thinking of moving down here for a while, you know. So he said, come down here in July and August before you decide that. (Laughter) Well this was before mosquito abatement, and we went down there in July, in the end, at, toward the beginning of August, and we were supposed to stay two weeks. We stayed about five days. (Laughter)

DO: Oh my.

CR: Hot. Mosquitoes, bugs, no way.

DO: You've met many famous people over the years. Please tell us how you met former Chicago Mayor Jane Byrne. What she did for you.

CR: Uh, (clears throat) ok I tried to get an interview with Jane Byrne through the regular diplomatic channels which were set up (?) and never even got a reply, you know. She was sort of like Mayor Washington, you know, too many people around screaming (it?). And, uh, so I got the idea and called her husband up. Jay. And I said Jay McMullen, and I said Jay I'd like to take you to lunch. He says, "Who are you?" I said I'm a publisher at GayLife newspaper. He says, "Why you wanna take me to lunch?" This was on the phone. I says, I wanna get to your wife. (Laughter) He laughed and said, "Whose paying for the lunch?" (Laughter) And I said I'll pay and he said okay. We went to a restaurant across from city hall, I don't believe it's there anymore, it's called Mayor's Row. And, uh, we sat down and had lunch. He, uh, I paid, by the way. He insisted on paying and I didn't say okay but after lunch he says, "Come on, let's go across the street." We went across the street, walked upstairs, walked right into her

office, he introduced me to her and said, "He'd like to have an interview with you." And, uh, she said, "Okay, when?" I said how about next week? She said, "Okay." Gave me the date, time, told her secretary, I came there with one of my reporters, uh, from GayLife, and we had an interview. The thing about the interview was that this was in May, end of May. And during the interview, he, the reporter was doing it, uh, Coolicky (sp?), and I interrupted and I said would you sign the executive order banning discrimination in city employment? She looked at me and said, "Yes." Well, I was floored. You know, you talk to a politician you expect well, we'll take that into consideration; it's a good idea. But I didn't get that, she said yes. So I said, when? She said, "Next month is gay pride isn't it?" I said yes. She said, "I'll do it for that." I have the original order she signed in my office here.

DO: Phenomenal.

(Clapping)

CR: Just a side note on that, a lot of people don't realize that myself, Bill Kelly, and other people were very instrumental in closing the city hall and the city, and the city departments into the idea of civil rights for gays. I mean, when they finally acted there was a few people that got most of the credit, but they were just pulling the plug. It was an awful lot of work done before it. Just to give you an example, maybe I shouldn't go on it, but...

DO: Please.

CR: Old Mayor Daley. I was a precinct captain. Now what he had before, uh, any election, he had what he called his precinct captain meetings. He'd take each ward and each table at a precinct, and he'd walk around give everybody a pep talk. Well, I used to walk up to him and say, Chuck right...Chuck Renslow, gay rights. At first he didn't pay any attention to me. Finally, oh I don't know, about a year before he died, he said, "Yeah, yeah I know, Chuck Renslow, gay rights." (Laughter) About 3-4 months before he died I was in city hall with Alderman Clifford Kelly. And we were standing there talking, and the Mayor came out of his office, or no, it was by the uh, council meeting. He came out of that, he had a special passageway, and he saw me and he broke ranks and came up to Clifford and I. And he says, "You know Chuck, you're time is coming." And walked on. So there was an astute politician. He knew that gay rights was going to be passed eventually, and Clifford Kelly was there. And Clifford Kelly, by the way, was a black Alderman on the south side who had no reason to support gay rights. But every year he put that bill in the city council.

DO: Phenomenal.

CR: He's, I believe he does a talk show on, uh, TV, on WBON or something now. Extremely pro-gay, and no reason to be.

DO: Incredible.

CR: Yeah, it just shows you that there's a lot of people out there on our side no matter what and we don't realize that.

DO: True. That sort of got the ball rolling, because on January 1st, 2006, Illinois became the 14th state to prohibit discrimination against gays and lesbians in housing, employment, public accommodation. You were part of that. How did that come, how did that come about?

CR: Well, I can't say that I was...I was a part of it, yes, but I have to emphasize that I was just a part of it, there was so many other people that were, uh, uh, that were doing that. I mean they, I can't remember his name now. Our state representative, whose first openly gay recommend...(Audience says name), Larry, uh, Larry McKeon, you know, good friend of mine. In fact he was a customer of ours, a leatherman. And uh, he really fought for it. And it was...you can never say, or shouldn't say, not never say, that any one person was a key to it. They weren't. It was a real team effort, I mean, there were many, many people working on it. And I think that you had to lay the groundwork. You're not going to go into, uh, city council or to the state legislature and say we want gay rights, here's the bill! They're not gonna pass it. It takes background work and background work. It's, recently they put in, uh, the bill for gay marriage, and they said well don't call it for a vote it won't pass. We said I know it won't pass, we don't want it to pass. But we bring in civil rights mixture, some of these people that voted against it we can say hey, wait a minute. Now, you didn't want this. How about this? Maybe that'll pass, I don't know. But I'm just saying, I'm just trying to show you how you gotta balance all that politics in so many people have to be a part of it, no one person can do it. Some may claim they can but they're not.

DO: Tell us about the Orange Ball.

(Laughter)

CR: Ok. Uh, the Orange -the um, what was the name?

DO: Anita Bryant

CR: Anita Bryant, yeah, I forget, you gotta remind me. Anita Bryant was having this initiative down in Florida, you know the anti-gay, and very extremely, so everybody was trying to raise money to defeat her. And I had the idea of throwing something called the Orange Ball. And, uh, we threw it at um, the auditorium, where were we? (the audience answers). The Aragon, thank you. The Aragon. And, um, a lot of things happened. One, the night it was gonna happen, I forgot what, I think it was a Sunday night, but I don't remember. And, uh, I said uh, well let me take a drink...

(Pause)

I called up, I think it was one of the other bars, and I said, I want you to close on Sunday 'cause we're having the Orange Ball. And they said

(END OF SIDE A)

(SIDE B)

CR: ...entertainer, and, uh, Whalen Flowers and Madam, I don't know if people knew 'em, but he was really a dichotomy. He was two people. Madam was one person and he was another.

(laughter)

CR: But he, backstage, and, I don't know if I'm gonna go on. "Because I can't be seen at these big gay events. You know, I'm I'm I'm on my way up the ladder, I gotta be successful." I said, just do your show. "I'm not gonna mention anything gay." I said, ok ok, Whalen! Please go on! He walks on stage and you know the first thing Madam said? "Whose this bitch Anita Bryant in our lives?" (Laughter)

DO: Did you actually meet Anita Bryant?

CR: No. Well, yes and no. I saw her (cough) um, down the (?) right after that, uh, she came to speak at Medina Temple. And uh, we had a protest outside, you know. And, uh, we got a call, and they came with me to it, and said that uh, told us where Anita Bryant was landing, what plane, and she'd be in a limousine, and what entrance she would come in to, uh, Medina Temple. And so I went up to where their offices were, and talked to their people there, and I said I gotta talk to you about Anita Bryant security, and they said, "We don't need you." I said, well, I said, we don't want anything to happen because it would look bad for us. I says, but she's landing on United flight so-and-so, she's picking up this (?) limousine is bringing her here, and it's coming here. "How did you know?" (Laughter) I said, we're everywhere.

(Laughter and clapping)

And what it was the limousine driver called me. Or called somebody else who told me.

DO: Oh my gosh. Phenomenal. Tell us a little bit about former President Jimmy Carter visiting your home.

CR: Well, I went to a lot of his fundraisers and everything, and I can't say that I knew very much, I, uh, was invited to the White House, uh, for a dinner. Uh, his birthday party. And that was very interesting. I was a heavy supporter of

his. Uh, but once again, I'm very active with Democratic circles, and I think that was all, I mean I didn't know him personally or anything like that. I was just a supporter though. A strong supporter. Of course I am of Barack too.

DO: Yes.

CR: I'll give you another side note on Barack. A friend of mine, um, Michael Bower, uh, is on his, uh, team, he's a fundraiser for him, and advisor on uh, gay items or gay...

DO: Issues

CR: Gay issues, and uh Michael Bower, Ron and I were driving down to Spring...on the way back or on the way up? (Asks audience member) We were on the way back from Springfield and we stopped at uh Shake and Steak to have a dinner. We were sitting there in the booth and Michael's, uh, telephone goes off and he answered, "Yes, yes, yes, uh, yes. Ok Mr. Obama. Yeah, ok, ok." It was Obama telling him that he was going to announce his running for Presidency next week.

DO: Wow. Phenomenal.

CR: Yep. It was a, you know, one of a...lots of calls are...I mean I won't say Michael is the only person he told 70 some people, but, but still. And so we knew before before.

DO: Have you actually met Obama?

CR: Yes. Yes. I met him several times. Um, Obama is, say what you want, he's a brilliant man. Uh, I met him first at a fundraiser when he was running for State Senator. And, no I'm sorry, a Federal Senator. And, I believe the State Rep, I'm not sure. And uh, this was at the Green Dolphin, and I walked up to him and asked him what his opinion was on...I told him I was a gay activist. He was obviously very pro-gay. We talked for a few minutes and I introduced myself. Ok, that was it. Well, I got my picture taken with him which I have in my office. And about three weeks later, I met him downtown at one of the hotels, I think it was the Char(?) Hilton, or the, the Hilton. And uh, I walked up to him to say hello and he said, "Oh yeah! You're the gay activist aren't you?" Now, you know, he didn't remember my name but I think that was pretty damn good, when this guy's going to fundraisers every single -

DO: Yes.

CR: - night to remember that. The man's brilliant. I'm glad he's going to be President.

DO: Phenomenal. But, I read that you have an FBI file. What can you tell us about that?

CR: (laughs) I'll show it to ya. (Laughter) Nothing. Absolutely nothing. You can see "the," "and," my mother's name, this name, that name. And everything else black cross, black cross, black cross.

(Laughter)

It's a sheet that thick, and I don't think there's any more than 200 words and they're all adjectives or something.

DO: Incredible?

CR: Yeah, What I should do, now under the Freedom of Information Act, I should reapply for it. This was done by Bill Kelly when I still had the paper [GayLife], and they were censoring everything. It was completely censored.

DO: Yeah.

CR: The only thing that was in there that got me mad was the fact that my mother got married after I was, just before I was born.

DO: (Laughter) Have you ever run for public office?

CR: No. Um, George Dunn asked me to run, uh, for State R -I believe it was State Representative. No, it wasn't it was the city, it was alderman. As an alderman, I forgot which ward this was so long ago, this was in the old control code(?) (?) days. And uh, he called me and uh, said, you know, they did a name recognition in the gay community and mine came up the highest. And he wanted me to run and I sat down and I said, uh, no. I will hurt the party too much. And he said, "What do you mean?" I says, I run a leather bar. They're gonna talk that into people beating each other up. I says, I run a bathhouse, they're gonna talk that into a house of prostitution. I said, none of that's true, but that's the accusations that are gonna be made, and it's gonna hurt the party more...(?). He says, "Would you run as a delegate?" (Laughter) And I said yes, and then I ran as a delegate for Ted (?).

DO: Phenomenal. In a 1991 interview, you mentioned having been married to a lesbian. Would you tell us a little bit about that?

CR: Uh, that's quite simple. We wanted a liquor license, couldn't get it in my name because we had this porno case, so I married her and put the license in her name.

DO: (laughter)

CR: Simple as that, you know. A wonderful woman, Agnes Hassett, she was great.

DO: Where is she now?

CR: I have no idea.

DO: Oh. (Laughter)

CR: I've tried to locate her and I have not been able to. I'll tell you something interesting. Um, when the FBI was in, was investigating, uh, um, Mayor Daley they called me in. And uh, Annom(?) who was quite involved and they were questioning us and they said "You're married aren't ya?" And I said yes. And they says, "Well aren't you homosexual?" And I said, yes. "How can that be?" And I says well just 'cause you like peach pie don't mean you don't like apple pie too.

(Laughter)

So then, this is the interesting part though, uh, then, uh, the FBI guy said, "Oh do you mean your marriage was consummated?" And I discuss...we're discussing fruit flies not my sex life.

(Laughter)

And, then I tell you something then my attorney objected and they cut the whole thing off.

(Laughter)

The interview and everything stopped. They called us back (mumble)

DO: (Laughter) Please tell us a little bit about your Wisconsin farm.

CR: I think David could tell ya (?), back there(?) there's my lover David, he loved the country and he loved the farm. Uh, we went driving one day and we saw this sign up for a farm that had a pond on it and acres, and whatnot. And I forgot how much it was, and we went and looked at it and David fell in love with it, and I said ok we'll buy it. It's still there. David owns it now. With his wife.

DO: What do you do, uh, with that farm? There's something very specific you do with some kids maybe, or people here from the city?

CR: Well, yes. A time when the kids were, that I knew, a friend of mine was hung up on coke or something, we were sending them up there. And David and Vicky, uh, would work with them and everything and try to rehabilitate 'em.

Most of the time I would say it worked, sometimes it didn't. I sent a friend of mine up there just a couple years ago, and uh, what he stayed three or four days, threatened to hitchhike back home. But we tried, you know.

DO: On, on a lighter note, there's a very specific question you ask bartender applicants. What do you ask them? (Pause...laughter)

CR: Um, I don't (?) to that, I don't ask specifically, I think I have a statement that I make with them. Maybe that's what you mean, and I tell them I says I don't care what you are a top or a bottom, when you're a bartender here you're a bottom!

DO: (laughter)

CR: And they says, "Yes sir!"

(Laughter and applause)

DO: So, the Eagle, um, has just moved to a new location. What's prompted the move?

CR: Well, I've been in the bar business for fifty-some years. And to be honest with you I don't want to be in the bar business anymore. Uh, ah, I own the building where the Eagle was, the back, and uh, that's also Man's Country. Man's Country needs more room. So I was gonna close the Eagle and that's it. Jimmy, who was the bartender, and the manager of the bar, said, "Chuck, can I have the name and can I move it?" So I helped him, I bought the building with him next door, and he is opening the Eagle there. I have nothing to do with it.

DO: I see.

(Coughing)

CR: I mean, I'll lend my support, I'll lend my name. But legally and technically I have nothing to do with it, nor do I want it. You know, fifty, fifty-two years, fifty-one years in the bar business is long enough. Although I enjoy it, don't get me wrong. But there's more money in Man's Country than there is in the bar.

DO: Ok. Tell us about your garden, it's quite extensive.

CR: My what?

DO: You're garden. It's very extensive.

CR: Well, I don't think it's very extensive, (laughs), I mean it's a small garden in the back of a house, uh, I work on it. I don't work on it as much as I used to, it's getting too hard to do all that damn weeding. But, uh, I try to make the

garden so there is something blooming all the time. Right now, there's chrysanthemum blooming. That'll be the last thing to bloom. And early in the spring, when there's still snow on the ground, the crocus start coming up and then the tulips, and then the roses, and then the allium, and so forth. And I always try and have something in bloom.

DO: Phenomenal. I'm told you have a keen interest and passion for sailing?

CR: For sailing? I love sailboats yes. I love sailing, I love to go on, uh, that all came about...well, I was in the Merchant Marine, that's another story, a very funny story.

DO: Feel free. (Laughter)

CR: Pardon?

DO: Feel free to share.

CR: Oh, all right. I'll share. I love to tell people about my experiences in the Merchant Marine, see, you know. And it's just one thing they never ask me. That is, how long I was in. You know how long I was in?

DO: How long were you in?

CR: Four weeks.

(Laughter)

I was seventeen; I ran away from home and joined the Merchant Marine. Went to South Hampton docks, which is interesting, I went down in a submarine there even, and came back, uh, maybe six weeks I don't know. Came back to Sheepshead Bay New York, or no, the docks at New York, and uh, as I'm walking down the gangplank there was my mother and a policeman.

(Laughter)

DO: Oh my god.

CR: There went my Merchant Marine experience.

(Laughter)

DO: How do you stay fit? I understand you have a very interesting workout routine.

CR: Yeah, I exercise; I try to watch my diet. Ah, that's really it. Watch my diet, work out. I think I worked out ever since I met Dom. Uh, we worked out

together, he used to do ballet bar, and I worked out then and I just never stopped working out. I think that's what goes, main, main, main reason for (mumble). And then part...it's interesting too because I must have some long life genes in my family. Uh, my mother died early, my dad died early, uh, but my one grandmother's sister, who I call grandma also, uh, she was 96 when she died. And she died carrying a basket of wash up the basement stairs. Tripped and fell and got a concussion.

DO: Oh my gosh.

CR: I know. So I don't know. I think it's a combination of a lot of things. And also I think it's a combination of keeping busy and attitude. You know, I try not to dwell in the past, I always try to go forward, look forward to the future.

DO: Phenomenal. I have one final question before we show a video clip and then go on to some other issues, but you've seen the leather community through many generations, through a lot of challenges. What words of wisdom have you for us, so that we may carry this on in our community?

CR: I guess I would take the words of Shakespeare: "And to thine own self be true. And it must follow, as the night the day, Thou canst not then be false to any man." In other words, be yourself. If you're a leatherman, don't be ashamed of it. If you're a bottom don't be ashamed of it. And if you're a top, don't think that you're the god, by any means. Because, uh, in the final analysis, it's the bottom that controls everything.

(Laughter and applause)

DO: What I'd like to do now is show, it's about a six minute video, just a few highlights, and it might be easier if we move you slightly over here a little bit. That way you'll be able to sit and enjoy, the, the video. (Pause. Chair moving) There we go. And following the video, we'll open up the floor for some audience questions. So if we may have the video of...Chuck.

(Starts video -not sure who is talking in the video, but this is the audio)

(Banging)

-Must be Christmas be nice. No no no.

-Chuck's been crabby all day

-Fuck you

(Laughter)

(Next clip)

DO: Not everything has sound. Not everything.

(No sound in the video)

(Next clip)

(Applause in video)

(Audio in video is unintelligible)

(Next clip)

-I didn't notice that

-There you go Chuck

-He's the real Chuck Renslow (?)

(Next clip)

(Applause in video)

-Stop that

-No.

(Unintelligible)

-...Did she get sick a lot?

(Unintelligible)

- Hey Bobby, where's the cigarettes?

-No he won't

-Oh!

-Come over

-Next...?

(Unintelligible)

-Need a shoulder?

-Yep.

-Ok, shoulder.

-They helped me down...

(Next clip)

(Unintelligible)

-Robert Charles, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

-Receive the light of Christ.

(Footsteps in video)

(Prayer in video)

(Applause in video)

(Next clip)

-Smile, you're on candid camera.

(Pause)

-Mr. Renslow.

(Pause)

-Yum.

(Clapping and laughing in video)

-Come on, that's it, come on.

-C'mere you.

(Next clip)

-How was your night Mr. Renslow?

CR: Tired and exhausting but wonderful.

(End clip)

(End video)

DO: There we go.

(Applause)

Well, there we go. Well Chuck at this point would you like to invite any of your family members to join you onstage?

CR: Yeah, David, Vicky.

DO: Some of the Renslow family.

CR: Rod (or Rob?)

(Applause)

CR: Johnny? Come up here Johnny. These straight guys you know how they are.

(Laughter)

Come on Jason. Family that's now living with me, or pretty much so. How long were we going together?

David: Thirty-three years

CR: Thirty-three years (laughs) Then he left me for her but I guess that's all right.

(Laughter)

But look what they got.

David: Never leave, just come back with (?) more.

(Laughter)

(Applause)

David: I love you.

CR: I love you too, you're just too fuckin ...(Unintelligible) (Applause)

(Pause)

CR: Now what?

DO: Ok, at this point we'll open up the floor for some audience questions. So, I, I've got a mic, I'm gonna have to ask the people to come to the mic because it's...the cord is not long enough to take it out into the crowd. But if you have questions, and we're gonna ask you to keep them brief so we can accommodate as many people as possible.

Audience Question 1: I'd like to ask Mr. Renslow, that part about never turning anyone away that wanted money.

(Laughter and applause)

CR: I never said how much.

(Laughter and applause)

Audience Question 2: Chuck, Chuck how did you handle things uh, the year at IML when one of the right-wing Christian women groups tried to boycott and have a protest outside the hotel?

CR: Well, uh, there were I think six, I'm not sure, boycotters that were marching up in front of the hotel with signs, you know, "Gays go to Hell," and all this sort of thing, you know. And I went out there and I'm talking to them and I said, you guys get me really upset out here. I said, I just feel terrible. I says, yeah, you've got four, five guys here. I said if I was carrying a demonstration on you, I'd have two hundred, is that all you could get?

(Laughter)

By the way, they left.

(Laughter)

DO: Ask some more questions? Anyone? There have got to be a few questions out there.

CR: Sure, if I don't know the answer I'll lie.

(Laughter)

DO: No one? Boy, you're a hard sell, I'll tell ya. (Pause) Going once, going twice.

CR: Thank you.

DO: Thank you very much.

(Applause)

CR: Thank you. Now what do I do?

(END TAPE)