SICULAR:  [00:00] Hi. My name is Patty Sicular. I’m the archivist with the Ford Model Agency. And together with Karen -- Professor Karen Cannell from Fashion Institute of Technology -- we are archiving the history of fashion, beauty, photography, and Ford models. We’re lucky enough to be able to interview the wonderful Neal Barr, photographer extraordinaire, today. We’re in Ventura, California, in his studio. And today’s date is July 19th, 2010. And we’re going to start our interview. And thank you for joining us.

BARR: Oh, you’re most welcome.

SICULAR: So Neal’s era started in New York, in 1962. And he was here through the 1990s. And I know his studio very well because he worked with my models for many years, and my models loved working with him. So how was it that you came to work in New York City? I know you started in Germany.

BARR: Well, I was a public information office-- I was a photographer there. [01:00] During my short period in the army, I was a draftee. And I was lucky enough to be able to work with P-- public information office there, who took photographs for Stars and Stripes and other newspapers for
world distribution. So I used to travel around with the football team and the basketball team and photograph war games that were going on there in Germany, and -- at the time that I was there. So it was a great experience for me. And then after that I went to Brooks Institute on the GI Bill. And there, I -- I got into the fashion world because out of all of the courses that I took at Brooks Institute, fashion struck me the most interesting. And I think mainly it was -- my interest was stimulated by having read an article about Richard Avedon. And the article described Richard [02:00] Avedon in the Sahara desert, bouncing across the desert with Dovima in the back seat, reading comic books. And I thought, “Well, you know, this sounds kind of interesting. I’d like to do that.” (laughs) And I had -- then I started picking up all of the issues of Harper’s Bazaar and Vogue and looking at the models at the time. And there were really wonderful, wonderful models at that time. And of course I had never seen any of them in real life. So I thought it would be interesting to go to New York and see a f-- to try a career in fashion. And maybe I would meet some of these wonderful faces that I’m looking at at so-- on the pages of the fashion magazines. And I got that opportunity when I got a job as an assistant to Willa Cushman at the Ladies’ Home
Journal. And also with Ray Kellman, who’s an extremely talented photographer, and very busy photographer. I th-- he’s one of the photographers that I worked with at -- that specialized in fashion. And I think it wasn’t uncommon for him to have maybe two or three bookings a day with the models. And his partner, the darkroom person that did all the enlargements for him and everything, used to book the models, and I used to listen to him charm the bookers at the time. And I thought he too had a wonderful talent. But in the process of me working for Ray Kellman, I saw for the first time all the models that were famous at that time. And I remember going to Sunny Harnett, who was the blonde, beautiful model who I had seen stepping out of a limousine in a movie called Funny Face, when I was going to Brooks. And here I was, I was taking a dress up to her to -- for a fitting. And there was Sunny Harnett, having her breakfast at a table. And her child is crying and screaming and yelling, and she’s in all kinds of chaos. And she tried on the dress while I was there, to see if it would fit. And then she offered me to stay and have coffee and any breakfast if I wanted -- if I was hungry -- which I thought was very nice. And then later on I had the opportunity to see her work in front of the camera, as I did with all of the
famous ladies of the time. Anne St. Marie, and Dovima, and Suzy Parker, and -- just top girls that worked with Ray Kellman at the time. And it was a wonderful -- just to see them work in front of the camera. Because they were incredibly inventive in wearing those clothes, [05:00] and they knew exactly what to do to make those clothes look right. And I was so impressed with that. And it has stayed with me all these years. And of course now I -- I’m not working with live models anymore. I’m working with mannequins. And so I have to try to devise methods in making these mannequins come alive. And I always think of the artistic poses that they used to give to make those clothes look well on camera. And I used -- I use a lot of those. Because the models that I used -- the live models that I used in New York -- I used to have a little choreographic thing for them to do, you know? And I used to show them what would make the clothes move. A twirl [06:00] or a sidestep or an inside pivot or an outside pivot. I would give all of these instructions to them, and make the dresses move. And it was a time when we were doing that kind of thing. And the model stances, the standard model stances, that were done at the time when I first arrived in New York, it was kind of a little different thing to do. And so that made it interesting for
me too. But now I have to think of other ways to make movement in the fashion. And I often do that by making the dress with little monofilaments attached to the dress so that I can pull it off to one side and make it look like it’s moving. Or the f-- or a little ribbon, or a fan, and put the monofilament on a co-- a piece of ribbon or something like that, to make it move. [07:00] And those are things that I have to work with now. But the nice thing about it is that, working with mannequins, is that you don’t have to order any special lunches or anything like that. (laughter) And they keep their poses for days on end, without complaint.

SICULAR: But are they as much fun as working with the models?
BARR: No, no, no. They’re not as fun as the real-life thing. But I have to make do with whatever I have. (laughs) And it seems to be working out OK. Because I have 23 different mannequins that I can change the tor-- upper torsos with the lower torsos to make them make all the -- different leg stances that I need to make the fashion look good.

SICULAR: When did you stop assisting and going on to your studio?
BARR: Well, aft--

SICULAR: When did that come about?
BARR: -- at the time that I left the Ladies' Home Journal, where I was working with Willa Cushman, at the time -- which was [08:00] a great adventure, by the way. Because she really did introduce me to a lot of things that at the time, and often, seemed to be really not able to pull off, you know? And I went in with great hesitation, thinking that I’ll never be able to do this. And I happened to make it work, and then some occasions I didn’t.

SICULAR: Was she the fashion director, or (inaudible)...

BARR: Yeah, she was the fashion editor. She had about three or four pages. And she did her own photography. And her -- she lit -- her lighting in fashion was pretty much -- very much like the old-style fashion photographers of the '40s. Huene was one that she often spoke of, and who taught her pretty much the lighting that she used. [09:00] And she used a lot of different spotlights coming in. One light would create a shadow, and the next light she would turn on to take that shadow out, and then another light to take that shadow out, and pretty soon it was just a conglomerate of spotlights on the model. And in those days it was pretty warm, in some of -- (laughs) in some of the establishments which we had to work with -- in. And that was interesting. And of course I did the camera work for her. And she taught me how to use -- tilting the back to
stretch the model, for instance, is one thing that she taught me how to do. Because most of the photographers in -- at the time that I started - were using medium-format cameras, and 35mm, even. And so she was from the old style. Which -- and I was very comfortable with it, [10:00] because that’s what they taught us at Brooks Institute, was using the view camera and the tilts and swings and things like that. So I had my own 8x10 camera, but she had her own Deardorff, and often we would use these big heavy reflectors, these movie reflectors with the silver on them, and very very heavy things. We’d take them out on location, and when we worked inside we’d use these big heavy spots that created a lot of heat. And the models would often, you know, be very uncomfortable with it. But it worked out well for her. And she also used other photographers, like Horst, I remember. And a lot of the top models. And so it was a wonderful experience.

SICULAR: Did she get to see your great success?

BARR: Yes, she did. Actually, I took over her [11:00] studio, which she had rented, on 57th Street. 29 West 57th Street, which was just down from Bergdorf’s, on 5th Avenue. And it was in a tower. It had 14-foot windows on all four sides. And so I didn’t have any strobes, couldn’t afford them. So it was just a wonderful place to photograph.
Because I used the -- just regular sunlight to do my photography at that time, until I could afford strobes. And that was a nice experience. But actually, we didn’t communicate too much after that. I think things changed for her too. I think she left the Ladies’ Home Journal shortly after I went into business, and I lost contact with her. But there are lots of famous stories about Willa Cushman and her -- and her sittings. [12:00] And Ray Kellman was wonderful, and Irving Penn was terrific. Very low-key and very -- a nice person to work with. And very sensitive person.

SICULAR: And did you pick up a little something from each studio? Whether it’s lighting, or...

BARR: Oh, definitely. And everybody worked different.

SICULAR: And did they pick up things from you? The established photographers?

BARR: No. I wasn’t doing photography at the time. At the time that I was assisting, I couldn’t afford it, on the salary that I was earning. And so I just gave up photography for that short time. I think I was three years doing it assis-- as an assistant. But it was a wonderful experience for me. I just marveled at all of the different jobs that they had. And I -- in working for Penn, I enjoy-- I enjoyed that. The fashion part of it, as well as
learning a little something about still life. Which I [13:00] hadn't had too much experience with. But it was interesting to watch the process of doing still lives.

SICULAR: And then when did you attach yourself to Harper’s Bazaar? How did you get --

BARR: I --

SICULAR: -- to work with them?

BARR: -- well, I had -- first of all, I had an eye-opening experience with Harper’s Bazaar. At the time that I was really starting to move in my own business -- this is about 1965 and ’64 -- I had picked up some very interesting clients, all specializing in fashion. And so most of my work was commercial work. But my -- I -- when I went into business I had my own agent at the time, and he took me on early on, even before I had started a business, when I was working for Irving Penn. Often when I would work for Irving Penn I’d work for him [14:00] during the day, and then at night I would find myself testing at a studio that I would rent out to do my portfolio. So I had a portfolio when I went into business. And that portfolio grew over a period of time as I got more clients, and got a little more creative. But in working with commercial clients, you work with a layout. Whereas with editorial you can do anything that you want. And I haven’t ha-- I didn’t have that
experience yet, except with *Sports Illustrated*. And they would give me a few fashion pages. Jo Ahern Zill was the fashion editor at *Sports Illustrated* at the time, and was a wonderful person to work with. And she gave me some pages. And they were great fun. And we did them outdoors, and that experience brought me into shooting sports figures, which I was really not that much interested in, [15:00] but it seemed that they liked my work, and so I was shooting a lot of covers for *Sports Illustrated* at the time. And -- so at the time that -- Marvin Israel at the time was the art director at *Harper’s Bazaar*. And my agent decided that it would be a good idea to leave the portfolio off for Marvin Israel to have a look at. So he dropped the portfolio off at one time, and when he went to pick up the portfolio, Marvin Israel threw it on the floor and kicked it over to him and said to him, “Why do you waste my time?” (laughter) And for me, that was kind of a good message for me. (laughs) Because I realized even though my work was good, it was all commercial, I really needed to do something that was more of my own work, and not having -- working with layouts all the time. So [16:00] even though I brought my own expertise to working with layouts, I’d never really had the experience, other than with *Sports Illustrated*, to do my own thoughts that I had. And so that
got me to thinking that I better start working on a portfolio, a new one, and that’s what I did. And I -- and the next time it was presented to *Harper’s Bazaar* was when -- just after Avedon had left and they were looking for photographers. And Bea Feitler and Ruth Ansel were the art directors at the time. And the book went up to them, and suddenly I found myself with four pages with *Harper’s Bazaar*, and they assigned me for this job of four little black boring dresses for me to perform for them and to do some pages. And it was really a difficult task for me, but I -- it was a wonderful [17:00] opportunity, and I seized the moment.

SICULAR: And who -- which models did you hire?

BARR: Oh, I worked with Tilli Tizzani, who was a very good friend at the time, and also with Isa Stoppi, who was an Italian from Italy and working in New York. And very -- two very nice girls. And they pulled out all the stops for me. They were really behind me. And giving me all of the -- everything in their book that they could give me for creating in front of the lens. And I’m eternally grateful for that. Because for those little four black dresses I got more assignments from *Harper’s Bazaar*, and...
SICULAR: I know you did so many covers for them, also, in the '60s and '70s. Did Mr. Israel -- do you think he ever got to see them?

BARR: I don't know. There's no way of knowing. But Bea and Ruth were wonderful art directors to work with. And they did marvelous things and had marvelous ideas for us, you know? And they never directed us. They just gave us a theme. For instance, they would say, "The issue is children. We have children in this issue. And what do you want to do?" And sometimes there was no -- they would just send the dresses over, and they would tell you that they were evening dresses or they were day dresses or whatever, and -- or furs. And then it was all up to you. Whatever you wanted to do. Which is really a wonderful, wonderful way to do creative work for a magazine. And so from that stems many more ideas. The more ideas you perform, the more you grow in your experience. And of course the more the clients show up at your door too. (laughs) So it's always nice to have that credit.

SICULAR: Whenever you would work, would you ever do something maybe simple to get the shot, and then after that do something more creative on each outfit?

BARR: When I was working commercially, you mean?

SICULAR: Both.
BARR: Oh, uh-huh. No, I knew pretty much in advance what I wanted to do. And all the surprises came through -- through the actual shoot. And some things do materialize at the beginning of a shoot that -- or during the shoot -- which you -- which give you ideas to further perform the assignment.

SICULAR: What’s one of your biggest surprises of a great shoot that you did that turned out fabulous?

BARR: Oh, gosh, I can’t think right now. I’d have to think about that.

SICULAR: Were there any, “What was I thinking?”?

BARR: I’m sorry?

SICULAR: Were there any the opposite, “What was I thinking?”

BARR: No. There are some assignments that I’ve had that I wasn’t -- I kick myself for not putting enough effort into it. But maybe it was because the fashion wasn’t as [20:00] boring. But that’s really not true. Some of the fashion that -- the assignments -- that came through the assignments -- were really quite challenging. And you really had to think of how to make that specific fashion interesting on the page. And when you saw the fashion, you -- your mind starts clicking away, you know, “What can I
do?” And you try different things at the camera. And some
work and some don’t. But you explore it.

SICULAR: Who -- did you get to choose your own models for
Harper’s Bazaar, or did they book the models? Who got to
choose?

BARR: Oh, no, they encouraged us to choose our own models.

SICULAR: Really?

BARR: Yes.

SICULAR: Did you have to run it by them?

BARR: I’m sorry?

SICULAR: Did you have to run it by them, to make sure that it
was OK with them? Or --

BARR: Oh, oh, yeah.

SICULAR: -- (inaudible)?

BARR: Go-sees were very common. And so if -- I was always
looking at models. And...

SICULAR: No, but would you get to choose -- did you make the
final decision, or did you -- say you -- there were [21:00]
four models you wanted to work with? Did you get to choose
them, or did you have to tell Harper’s Bazaar that you
wanted to choose these four models?

BARR: Oh, no.

SICULAR: Did you have to get their okay, or...
BARR: No. I di-- never had to have their okay. And they encouraged us to work with our own girls. And find new faces. And that was one of the incidences that -- I mean, I had seen illustrations of Cathee Dahmen done by a very famous artist at the time, who was doing nothing but fashion -- specialized in fashion. And that was Antonio, who -- incredible fashion illustrator at the time. And I saw these illustrations of this girl. And suddenly this girl arrived at the studio with the illustrations of herself. And I decided that this girl’s got something for photography, too. And so -- Cathee Dahmen was truly a very inventive, very nice person. And wonderful to work with. And that was one of the pleasures of finding a girl at that time. And Pat McGuire certainly was. And Pam Suthern was another one, that I had booked. I was doing a nurses’ catalog at the time. It was a catalog of nurses’ uniforms. And it was one of the first uniform catalogs that I had gotten early on. And it paid my rent. And these clients were from Philadelphia. And they were wonderful clients. And I never gave that up. Even when I worked for Bazaar, I thought, you know, “These are very nice people,” and in many ways it’s very challenging to make those (laugh) nurses’ uniforms look good. And I had booked -- at that time you could get most anybody to do a
nurse’s uniform. The top girls would come in [23:00] and do them. And there was a newcomer named Pam Suthern that I booked for a nurse’s uniform. And the next day I booked her for Harper’s Bazaar because I thought she performed so well. And she had a long career in fashion, Pam Suthern.

SICULAR: She’s very well known.

BARR: Yes. And she was very inventive. She could make that fashion sing. And she was truly a wonderful, nice person to work with.

SICULAR: Do you remember the first time you met Eileen and Jerry Ford?

BARR: Well, it was probably to go to the circus or have dinner or something like that. And we always had -- there was always a big group of us, and I remember going to Madison Square Garden to see the circus with a big group of people. And also having dinner in Paris with Jerry and Eileen. And we would go to the most wonderful French restaurants and have [24:00] a wonderful dinner and great conversation. And...

SICULAR: Do you remember any advice that Eileen ever gave you?

BARR: No, I don’t think she ever did. No. Eileen and Jerry were just a very nice, wonderful, social -- there was never -- there was never shoptalk. We just always enjoyed each other’s company, and had conversation. And it was a -- I
remember once staying at her house. When I was shooting out on Long Island she called me, and she says, “Come and stay the night.” And so that’s what I did. It was a -- I didn’t have to drive back to New York at the time; I just stayed with their home and their small children, and we all went to dinner. And she seemed to have -- both Jerry and Eileen seemed to be in control. (laughs) I mean, every part of their life. They had beautiful children and a beautiful family [25:00] life and wonderful home, and she just was very -- both Jerry and Eileen were just very -- what they say, simpatico. Just terrific people.

SICULAR: True. True. Do you think models of certain eras, from the ’50s, ’60s, and ’70s, do you think that they’re a product of their times, or do you think they would have been as successful in other eras? Such as Jean Patchett and Suzy Parker; do you think they would have been as successful in the ’70s or the ’80s? Or do you think that the faces are a product of their time?

BARR: It’s something that I have never thought about before. And I think each era brings forth new trends, as it does in photography, and as it does in modeling for fashion. I noticed today that the models that -- there’s very few -- little -- hands-on hips, [26:00] stylized fashion stances from the models today. And they pretty much -- they have
attitudes. It’s a different -- it’s an attitude in a way that takes them out of the realm of being a human, sometimes. And also even the makeup and the hair, you know, is often from outer space, sometimes! (laughs) But I think it’s an interesting trend. And I think it’s something to watch. It’s intriguing, in many ways.

SICULAR: When you worked, did you like working with the same team or working with different people? Like, the same models, the same hair and makeup, the same stylist, or did you like to mix it up?

BARR: Oh, I think that we did find comfort in working with the same talent over and over again. Because you become a family, you know? It’s like with my own studio, we were a family. [27:00] My stylist and darkroom person and assistants, we were just -- and Pat [Kolesar?], who was at the desk answering the phone for me and booking the models.

SICULAR: Pat booked -- I used to book models with Pat. She was great.

BARR: Yeah, she is. And I -- I’m still in contact with her today. And we often have exchanges over the new technology. And so she’s -- she’s now happily still living in New York City. And I moved out because I wanted to come back to where I was born, California, and work on this
project which I have been working on now for 30 years.

And...

SICULAR: Why don’t you tell us about it a little?

BARR: Well, this project -- at the time that I was --

[28:00] I had a great opportunity to start acquiring fashion from the ’20s and the ’30s. Because some of the estates in the ’70s and the ’80s -- 1970s and 1980s -- were suddenly on the market. There were all these estates that needed to be settled. And in the estates were the fashion from -- clothes that had been kept in a -- in the trunks, or in the attics, of all of America, were out, being given to the dealers in flea markets. And so I had the opportunity to buy some of these things. Store stock, which was -- I have to pause for a moment, (laughs) because I got to blow my nose.

SICULAR: Do you want to just get a tissue?

CANNELL: (inaudible) No, but I have one for you to ask. [29:00]

SICULAR: Yeah, sure.

CANNELL: Follow up what you were talking about at lunch that when you had your own studio you had free time to do experimentations, and some things didn’t work --

BARR: Oh, OK, sure.
CANNELL: -- and some things did, but it took you to new levels, because you were in that -- you had that opportunity, I think that’s (inaudible).

SICULAR: Ask. You can ask.

CANNELL: Oh, OK. Neal, when you were in New York City, you had your own studio. But it was not booked 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Which meant you had some spare time in there. What would you do with your spare time?

BARR: That was one of the luxuries at the time, that I was a photographer in New York City. I had my own studio and my own staff, and we were all family. And I -- on days that I weren’t -- that I wasn’t booked -- I took the opportunity to make it an eight-hour day, to try out new lightings and new ideas that I would have. The ideas in New York City came to me just by walking down Fifth Avenue and seeing the store [30:00] windows. Or going to Canal Street and seeing all these different things that you could use for props, maybe, that bring ideas to you. And then you could try different lightings at the studio. And this was a great experimental time, a luxury that photographers don’t have today, because they don’t have their own studios. And I often wonder how they can pull that off, because they don’t have any ideas that they can try in the studio. Of course, if they’re working outdoors, it’s different. Because each
outdoor experience brings a new experience, in terms of lighting. And that pretty much dictates what you do with the camera. But in a studio, you have -- you can orchestrate whatever you want, and have power over the lighting and the camera and -- it’s a wonderful [31:00] experience. Myself, I like very clean statements in a photograph. But I work very carefully of what I put in that frame. And how I light it. And that’s all a great process, a very fun process, that I have to orchestrate that. What goes in that frame in the studio. That’s part of the fun of it. But yeah, I do -- I feel like photographers today -- I don't know how they do it, but they rent the studios, sometimes their cameras and their lighting and everything, that they’re unfamiliar with, they go in and have their assistant set it up for them, and they shoot. Which was not uncommon in my day too, but I happened to have that luxury. So I’m very blessed for having had that.

SICULAR: When did you move to Central Park South studio?

BARR: I moved there in 1970. [32:00] I outgrew my first studio at 29 West 57th Street, and moved to 56th Street, next to Harry Winston, on a third floor. And soon grew out of that. And Dorothea McGowan, who had married a photographer at the time, she had -- I remembered -- Irving Penn -- she
came in one day all excited because she had found a wonderful studio for her husband. And then ironically later on when her husband went back to France, the studio became available. And this was at the Gainsborough building on Central Park South, just across --

SICULAR: Two thirty Central Park South, wasn’t it?
BARR: What’s that?
SICULAR: Wasn’t it 230 Central Park South?
BARR: No, 220.
SICULAR: Two twenty?
BARR: Two twenty-two, I’m sorry.
SICULAR: Two twenty-two?
BARR: Yeah. And it was just, like, you know, four doors from Columbus Circle, and right across from the park, [33:00] and on the ground floor, and high ceilings, and -- old, old building, built in, I think, 1908 or 1906, as a studio -- for studios -- specifically, for studios. Although most of the apart-- well, most of the studios had been turned into apartments at the time, except for the ground floor. And it was a wonderful experience, being there. And very convenient to everything.

SICULAR: Did you live there too? Also?
BARR: No. I found that living in the studio was hard to do. I liked to leave the studio at five or six o’clock, and
just go to home. And so I lived down in the West Village, on Greenwich Street.

SICULAR: But it’s so luxurious, thinking there, about that fabulous space right across from Central Park, your own studio.

BARR: Yes.

SICULAR: I mean --

BARR: Oh...

SICULAR: -- how amazing. I’ve been in that studio.

BARR: But at the time it came available, it was a rental. And then in about three years they decided to sell the property. And so I had the opportunity to buy that property. So -- just the -- just the studio part, as a co-op. So that worked out really well for me too, later on, when I left New York and was able to sell it. And -- also, my real estate in New York (laughs) is really wonderful. It’s just a wonderful investment to make. And -- which, later on, I was able to find out when I wanted to return to Ventura here, and so I had enough resources to come and buy this wonderful studio here with 20-foot ceilings. Almost the same size -- I think it’s a little bit bigger than my New York studio. And so here -- of course, there’s not all the activity that went on in the studio at the time.

[35:00] Because you can’t have a conversation with your
mannequins -- and I work here all by myself. So I often worried about that. Because I thought, “Oh, well” -- I piped in all sorts of music and everything so that I would have some sounds coming in the studio. But I never use it. I’ve found that working alone in the studio is just hyper, all day. Everything I do here is just so -- every -- having to convert to the new technology, digital, has been a real different thing for me. And I’ve had lots of help from people who’ve volunteered to help me through this. And it’s worked out really very well. And I -- the new technology is just -- (laughs) if I would’ve had that in the ’60s and ’70s and the ’80s, it would’ve been [36:00] really marvelous. But of course then it was still very, very new, and even in the ’80s I knew a lot of people who had converted to digital were having a lot of trouble with it. So I came in at the right time, where digital now has pretty been worked out as to all of the bugs that were in it in the beginning were...

SICULAR: Do you ever use your old cameras? Or is everything digital for you now?

BARR: Everything’s digital. The old cameras are sitting in -- the old strobes and the old cameras are just sitting in boxes somewhere. I’ve been able to sell a few of them, but there’s no market for them, even, now. Because the market
is flooded with cameras from -- professional photographers, even, you know? That have -- I had state-of-the-art equipment, with the best lenses and the best cameras and everything. And you can -- you can’t give them away today.

SICULAR: So what would you think -- we’re [37:00] going to end this soon, but what would you think is the high point of your career?

BARR: High point. My career was my high point. (laughs)

The fact that I was even embraced by the New York commercial people and editorial people, the fact that they gave me work and believed in me, and -- that was the high point, to be accepted in New York. I know that when I went to Brooks Institute, there were eight of us who came to New York to find a career here. And I seemed to be the only one who survived that. And the other ones left or got jobs with labs or did work that was not photography. And so I really just think that that was the most marvelous thing.

SICULAR: Why do you think you were chosen? Why -- do you think it’s luck, or do you think it’s hard work, or a combination?

BARR: I think timing’s very important. And the fact that -- the main factor was that -- I say to myself -- [38:00] is I was -- I was the only person that I had to worry about. I was unmarried. I had no children. I could -- I could earn
$65 or $70 a week and pay my rent and enough subway tokens to get me home. So I had hot dogs a lot, and peanut butter sandwiches. (laughs) But I liked that. And that was the process of living in New York, of -- just the experience of working with wonderful people, and seeing the models, you know.

SICULAR: All my models loved working with you.

BARR: Oh, really?

SICULAR: Mm-hmm.

BARR: Yeah, well, I liked to think that they -- it was a joy working with most everybody in the business. Yeah. They were just wonderful. Real down-home people, actually. We would exchange recipes, the best chili or things like that. You know. We’re very -- a very -- [39:00] camaraderie amongst...

SICULAR: That’s what [Jack Foley?] said earlier too, that people hung around together and socialized and they cheered each other on.

BARR: Right. And even though during the day the process of doing the work with the models was a pleasant experience, I liked the fact that I left the studio and went home. And -- or I went to the theater, or I had a nice dinner somewhere. But I didn’t socialize all that much. I liked putting my feet up (laughs) and sitting in front of the TV,
and then going to work the next day. We had very hard days. And I can remember that -- very intense days.

SICULAR: Did you prefer working in studio or working on location?

BARR: Oh, the studio.

SICULAR: Did you? More control?

BARR: Because I was absolutely in control. And if you worked on location -- we had an account with Zyloware Glassware -- Glasses -- Eyewear. And [40:00] we did -- Sophia Loren did the endorsement for that line of sunglasses. And so I worked with her for, oh, 10 years, and we often went on location. And I was often very nervous having -- going to a strange studio and having to work with equipment that I was not accustomed to. And also shooting outdoors, in Mexico we did. And the jobs were always surprisingly very good. (laughs) But I must say, I was a bit uncomfortable. And back in the studio, I was really in a friendly atmosphere, at that time.

SICULAR: Any last thoughts that you’d like to add?

BARR: No, actually, I’ve just been very fortunate, blessed in my life, to -- being able to earn a living [41:00] with something that I love to do the most. That -- to go to the studio and be excited about every day, and the people that
I met, was just wonderful to have had that experience. So that’s what I would like to end with.

SICULAR: Thank you for taking the time to meet with us. It’s been an honor and a pleasure.

BARR: Oh, you’re... [41:24]

[off-topic conversation] [45:39]

END OF AUDIO FILE