

INTERVIEW INTERVIEW I INTERVIEW INTERVIEW I

BARRY FARBER By Susan P. Lieberman

Don't start a debate session with Barry Farber unless you know the subject and all its possible facets to a tee; it's very likely that the phrase silver-tongued was coined on his birth certificate, 55 years ago in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Barry Farber sat across from me for an hour and a half, geeding me a bucket full of jobial Farber-stories, philosophical interpretations on Southern honor, a dose of freedom of speech commentary and a good ole home-boy recipe for barbecue (not to be confused with the Yankee version of barbecue being a cooking instrument as opposed to a type of food).



While in Mr. Farber's home, I had the feeling I was in the middle of a tornado of information. And in fact, that's precisely what it was. Being around Barry Farber is exciting and intimidating at the same time. He's like a human version of a press service library. Over and over I kept thinking "how can one person know so much?" So I asked him.

"I grew up in an era where the whole objective was to impress the people you want to impress. Where I grew up there were only two real ways to impress the girls who you wanted to meet. You either had to be a football player or have a convertible and I had none of the above. But there was an outside way. If you could be entertaining with conversation, either engrossing or informative...you might be invited to double date. Necessity is the mother and the necessity to date superior young women in North Caroline was to be entertaining..."

And that he is. Mr. Farber is a self-employed broadcast journalist. WMCA radio in New York City actually buys his programs. His format is anything from soup to nuts; the day's events, interviewing those that he feels are news- and noteworthy. I have "total freedom and flexibility...because I'm not anybody's hired hand," stated Mr. Farber.

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But it's because of his outspokenness, willingness to dig deep to fight a point and absolute command of his topic of discussion that Barry Farber has gained a great popularity as a speaker, commentator and talk show host. When asked if his journalistic integrity is compromised by his support of commercial advertisement, Barry Farber came at me, riproaring with opinion and well-thought-out comparisons. "Does it compromise your journalistic integrity that there are advertisements in your publication? Now you're going to tell me Oh, but I have nothing to do with that. Your byline's in there, that's your publication, your wrapped up in that...cocoon...If it ever became a Nuremburg War Crimes Trial, you'd be guilty of complicity in a commercial endeavor. So why the high horse?" At first I was truly sorry I asked, but in retrospect Mr. Farber taught me something.

As smart as this man is, I'm sure as anything that he doesn't advocate and commentate to hear himself talk. This man seems genuinely interested in people, really each individual, and what he or she is "up to." He also wants to bring about thought. He pushes his interviewees because he doesn't want to be part of the "congratulatory radio" of the past. Rather he strives for meaty and thought-provoking discussions.

The future for Barry Farber could be anyone's guess. After shocking New York City in 1977, by running in the Republican mayoral primary and receiving 44% of the votes, he still has great drive and a fine southern way of moving on. Be it national radio, television, writing or taking his newly established language club on the road, we are bound to see Barry Farber somewhere, sometime chewing the fat of or about a North Carolina barbecue.

Harvins
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19 Waverly Pl. tel.473-5261

The advertisement features a black and white photograph of a man and a woman in formal attire dining together. The man is leaning over the woman, and they appear to be in conversation. The text is written in a mix of elegant script and clean sans-serif fonts.