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SPEAKERS

Vanessa Edwards Foster, Jimmy Carper, Merlin



00:00

In the world



Jimmy Carper 00:24

the following program contains language or images of a frank or sensitive nature which may be considered objectionable by some listener discretion is it five? Oh yes, you've tuned into after hours Queer radio with attitude right here on KPFT Houston 90.1 FM. The crew of after hours is ready to bring you news interviews, dialogue and music geared for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people and their friends. Hear it after hours. We may be diverse, but we have one thing in common. We are all out of the closet and urge everyone to come out of their closets. That means standing up for yourself taking responsibility for your own life and being proud of who you are. Realistically, we know not everyone can do that because of age job or frame of mind. That's okay, we're here for you too. So sit back, relax, and enjoy this week's edition of after hours. Hello, Houston in College Station and welcome to after hours Queer radio with attitude. I'm Jimmy Carper. And I have a really bad cold as you can tell. Because I've got all of a sudden I've got this, this deep voice. My usual real faggy voice says gone away for



Vanessa Edwards Foster 02:50

sounds nice and but yeah, all



Jimmy Carper 02:52

of a sudden my voice is Butch anyway. Yeah. Vanessa Edwards-Foster is with me. Yes.



Vanessa Edwards Foster 03:00

migraine. So gray. Great. You've got a weekend.

J

Jimmy Carper 03:05

So you've got a folder tonight? i Yes, I do. Okay, and I've got some community, things that I want to talk about first. So once you make that call, and I'll do this okay, then thanks. I want to say Hi, there. It's all my MBBS and that includes and does not exclude anybody I don't name but Paul Roy, that green eyed devil, Zack the tea man Randy, at the Nubian Prince. And yes, I'm halfway through your book that you sent me, Mark, and of course, Jr. And now let's see the cart report here. stuff going on? Oh, yes, indeedy. Especially tomorrow or today, depending on on what this is. Actually Sunday, but it's as long as as far as I'm concerned. It's still Saturday night. I haven't been to bed. So Sunday, Sunday, Sunday, December the 15th. The Colt 40. Fives cordially invite you to join them as they present their annual Community Service Awards and Christmas show at E Jays 2517 Ralph Street, that's at 7pm 7pm is the nominee reception at eight o'clock is the show and awards. And at this reception, they are going to be presenting the Danny V award for service to the community. The BJ summers award for I would say I've lost my place, Entertainer of the Year and the golden cult award. And the all of the nominees for those awards will be there. And I'll be one of those folks. So, performances will be by in the show will be by the space city empire and community titleholders then i Let's see. But before that before you go to that at seven o'clock, you need to go to the outpost on the five o'clock because from five eight o'clock is the Sambuca sisters annual Christmas show. And that's that that is something to see. And of course the the debris sisters will be there. Yes indeedy. And then of course, the Court held sits monthly the Royal Sovereign guard holds its monthly bingo for a cause that decades. This Tuesday, December the 17th. That's from seven to 9pm hosted by Darryl Chicago, Kiana St. John and Duke, the 18th Kenny Richardson. Hi. Hi. How you doing? I'm good. I'm about ready to lose my voice here.

M

Merlin 06:02

I noticed Bobby's here now. Sound like it? Well, because

J

Jimmy Carper 06:06

I got this cold for now. I know I know. I know. fact why don't you read these two? If you don't mind? Why don't I read these because I'm losing my voice. So that's bingo for a cause that is so much fun at decades and and come early because they've got food beforehand. And what have you got over there? Okay. Hello, everybody. Bobby is in the house, folks.

M

Merlin 06:34

Papa Merlin is in the house. And yeah.

J

Jimmy Carper 06:38

Yeah. And I'm going to help my voice out a little bit here. Yeah.

M Merlin 06:44

If I can get this thing to it. You can do it. There's a keyboard thingy up there.

J Jimmy Carper 06:50

Oh, just knock on the floor. We don't care about that. Yeah.

M Merlin 06:55

Okay, let's see. Did we do the Emperor thing? No,

J Jimmy Carper 06:59

just just the ones that aren't marked out. Okay.

M Merlin 07:02

It says

J Jimmy Carper 07:05

Go ahead. Okay.

M Merlin 07:08

Sunday, December 22 2002. At 8:30pm Yeah, BRB. At the Burb

J Jimmy Carper 07:15

as the bourbon

M Merlin 07:19

as candidate for Emperor whatever that number is 19 Thank you don't do Roman numerals.
Well, Dennis Deville prevents Oh and he is such a sweetheart presents tis the season this show
will benefit AFH camp hope and Montrose clinics women's program through coronation 19 Yeah
and camp hoped that thing for the kid that's

J Jimmy Carper 07:45

it yeah, the court is a strong supporter of Camp hope very cool. Most of their shows helps either camp hope or the Montrose Counseling Center women's facilities are both

M Merlin 08:00

very cool. Yeah. And on Saturday, December 28 2002 at 8pm at Mary's in Beaumont in

J Jimmy Carper 08:11

Beaumont. Yes Beaumont in Beaumont that Mary's okay. I didn't know there wasn't not Mary's Naturally Mary's.

M Merlin 08:22

Naturally, this series I'm looking at cookies.

V Vanessa Edwards Foster 08:27

I'm looking at my cookies.

J Jimmy Carper 08:30

boy wants to get his cookies. I can tell.

M Merlin 08:34

Both of you stop that. cat ate for M for Empress 19. So fond us? So Fonda St. John,

J Jimmy Carper 08:43

that's the one that's cool. Oh, she's a nice, she's nice.

M Merlin 08:47

I've never met this person.

J Jimmy Carper 08:48

...

She's great.

M Merlin 08:50

Um, presents Bippity boppity. Boo. Imagine a magical night of Disney and decorum. decorum

J Jimmy Carper 08:58

car. I don't think there's going to be much decorum going on.

M Merlin 09:02

Exactly. How does that fit into one of our shows? It does. Okay, we have now I was just wondering, we

J Jimmy Carper 09:07

don't even know what the word means. Now.

V Vanessa Edwards Foster 09:09

It's kind of a gay thing.

M Merlin 09:12

Oh, okay. Okay, this show will also benefit AFH camp open Montrose clinic women's program grey coronation. Great. Cool. Excellent. So we got all these things coming up. Oh, and also benefits and yeah, for also

J Jimmy Carper 09:31

Friday December the 20th. The Royal Sovereign and imperial guard of the single star presents. Our circle will never go unbroken. The Royal Court presents a variety show benefiting the cats and the transgendered Houston homeless shelter. That's hosted by candidate for Emperor 19 Ronnie Siebert, and he is also Mr. Gay Pride 2002 performances will be by Miss Gay Pride 2002 and Empress 18. And no so no Emperor 16 Selena St. John. Emperor 18, Woody Steiner, reigning Miss honeybee. Jackie Thorne, and the candidates for Emperor and Empress 19. Showtime is at 930. And it is that diamond gyms. Yes, good old gyms that's, that's a bar that is really, really putting out for the transgender community. It's

M Merlin 10:31

just like one of those Card Sharks from you know, sure do round turn on the shore do

J Jimmy Carper 10:36

also also on the eight teens, Wednesday the 18th You've got to read this. I'm running out of voice okay. Yeah, to read that one. Sorry. It's a thing going on at River. Oh, sir. Wonderful

M Merlin 10:50

Life Toys for Tots benefit. Yes, yes. Wednesday.

J Jimmy Carper 10:55

Oh my God. JERRY Moran just walked in. Yes. He has never been in the studio before. Whoa. Yeah, keep going. Keep going.

M Merlin 11:14

The Toys for Tots benefits screen? Wednesday, December 18. At 7:30pm. I'm probably going to be somewhere in the vicinity of Lord of the Rings. Two Towers. But yes, I

J Jimmy Carper 11:26

know. I know. I know. River.

M Merlin 11:28

Let's see. Wednesday, December 18 7:30pm. River oak theater 2009. West gray. Love that little theater. Oh, yeah. takes you back.

J Jimmy Carper 11:41

Which is still playing at midnight? How much of this? Do you want me to read? No, just just the biggest the highlight I just said you can see it's it's a It's a Wonderful Life on the big screen. And that it's a fundraiser.

M Merlin 11:53

Oh, and I love this part. It's a Wonderful Life film screening screening. Wednesday, December 18 2002 7:30pm. Why? To bring joy, the joy of Christmas to underprivileged children through the auspices of Toys for Tots? You bet sounds like a good idea to me. Yeah. Because, you know,

there's a lot of kids out of that this time of year who don't have the stuff even some of us are able to get it. So, yeah, very cool.

J Jimmy Carper 12:26

You're absolutely correct. It's

M Merlin 12:28

a Wonderful Life. You know, they made a rule that they did a thing a few years ago, they made this really bad thing happen where it's a wonderful life showed up 22 times on different no 37 times in one Christmas on different stations. The next year, there was one showing and only one. Oh my. That's not good. You know? It's a beautiful moment. It's a wonderful thing. And you know, for those people who were might have been around a lot closer to when that movie was made.

J Jimmy Carper 13:02

Shut up

M Merlin 13:07

I said a lot closer. I didn't say you were evil queen.

J Jimmy Carper 13:18

Yeah, no, I know.

M Merlin 13:21

Not a coin. No.

J Jimmy Carper 13:29

Okay, okay, I know that. Vanessa, you've got somebody on hold, but we also have special if we don't.

V Vanessa Edwards Foster 13:41

Why would he do that? Because I guess I took too long. I was thinking you were gonna go to them first. Oh, when you get it,

 Jimmy Carper 13:49
I am gonna go to them first.

 13:52
First, Jackie

 Jimmy Carper 13:55
Thorne is we

 13:56
have we have royalty here.

 Jimmy Carper 13:59
Yes we do.

 14:00
Yes. Lauren 11.

 Jimmy Carper 14:06
Loves indie Scott every piece of jewelry that I've ever you know, you can put and

 14:10
now QVC is a good channel to check into if you really want to get some stuff really cheap. On your credit card if you have one of

 Jimmy Carper 14:20
these sparkly pins like grounds and once this Emperor I think that says royalty. Yeah,

 14:25
...

but it's you know, it's junk jewelry. Hey, my crowns on the car.

J Jimmy Carper 14:32

Is a toy that needs being introduced by the reigning Miss Han EP. Yes, it's a matter of fact. Royalty. And

14:39

you know, and I want to tell everyone, Thursday and Friday night at Diamond Jim's had 13 331 Kirkendall on the north side of town. They're going to be to benefit shows Thursday night Shavon to St. John who is a Can't aspirin for the throne of Emperor's 19 We'll be having a show and then on Friday night, Ronnie Siebert, who is aspirant for throne of Emperor 19, will be having a show. So if you can ever make it out there, and is a fabulous club,

J Jimmy Carper 15:22

and the show on the 20th with Ronnie is going to benefit the the cats homeless show? Yes,

15:30

it is. Yeah, we

J Jimmy Carper 15:31

just talked about that. Okay, a little bit. But, but I want to draw attention to someone who's never been in the studio before you're absolutely

15:40

candidates who

15:44

are 11 I'm sure that there are people who've never even considered the possibility by myself that I would ever be here.

15:54

Well, I



15:58

because I wouldn't want to be here. Because I, you know, never thought that it was a venue that was open to me. Of course, no.



16:05

Well, the thing about it is, you know, Jerry has been Jerry and I were counterparts in range aid and and long we had that handier, 10 years ago, and Jerry and I came to an understanding of each other. But I have loved him to death ever since then. And this is the first time I've been able to drag him out here into the and



16:33

the word is drag. Yes. Because we're both in drag, he's got his hair on and I've got my jewelry on and I don't have my hair or anything or makeup. You know, it's like, I'm not a female impersonator and never have been never has been well, you know, you know, in the moments where it was appropriate, when we did turn about things, you know, thing you know, you know, where I had to get, you know, female impersonator people to help me to do that. So, you know, and they told me that I looked good, but I looked in the mirror and I said, No, I could never do this. I don't think so. You know, it was not anything that I, you know, chose to pursue in my life as a gay man. It was, you know, it's like, Excuse me, you know, there are some guys that can some guys that can't and, you know, God bless him, you know, but you love him to death. You've



Jimmy Carper 17:23

been behind the scenes with the court for me. Naturally,



17:25

I actually Actually, yes. And I've been at very active in the gay community, ever since I, you know, since the AIDS epidemic started in us, but Jerry



17:39

was there was one of the first Mr. E. J. Oh,



17:44

I think it was number four. You know, it was like back in 19 390 9394. I think I have looked at the trophy to make sure. But it was a long time ago. And you know, things have changed so much since then. You know, and it's it's like, you know, it's it's a title that I still hold very proudly. Good. You know, I Oh, and you've come in here with us? Yes, yes. Oh, you want to ask

him the glory of you know, like, you know, you know, recently the Queen Mother died and people still best in her glory. You know, it's nice to know, there are some people that want to bask a little bit like ages ago, but you know, you know, we have our reigning monarchs, Shelby, St. John, and what Drew has been doing such a wonderful job this year, you know, through all of the very different things that we as an organization have had to do, you know, each organization has to grow and, and, and they have, like, it's amazing, you know, you sit here and you watch things, you know, and it's like, I'm getting close to being a half a century old, and I can remember back when being gay was like, Oh, my god, yeah. And I was like, you know, uh, you know, where I was treated as a gay child in school. And I didn't know really what that meant. I had to look it up in the dictionary. And I'm like, going, excuse me, and I'm, you know, like, like, Okay, I didn't even know what it meant looked it up in the dictionary is no, that's not what I am. Because, you know, I was not even having sex that bordered diamond. It's like, how could they say that I'm that way when I'm not even doing it? You know, and everything is slick. But, uh, you know, in all the years that I've had an opportunity to live, I've, I've watched and I've learned and, you know, and I think I remember one time that you ran for gay pride, okay. Yeah. I was. And I was like, Yeah, I I was sitting there going, Okay, who the hell is



20:04

sitting here? A lot of people thought that on the radio



20:06

and I'm like going on like trip there are some people like who the hell is this guy? You know, whenever this



Jimmy Carper 20:12

show was sell a couple of months ago this show celebrated 15 years on the air. I've been with the switchboard for at least that long, and been a big proponent of the cord. Since I joined the switchboard, when the very first thing that we did at the switchboard This was 1988. We went to a on a bar tour, and I picked up Yes, I picked up a newsletter from the court, and it had a full page ad for the switchboard. And no one at the switchboard knew what the court was. And I said, No, this is a group we need to find out about. And I did. And I've been very proud to promote court people. But you'll see this show is on Saturday night. And court people work Saturday night. Yes, we do. So it's pretty hard to get folks on. But it Saturday,



21:06

Sunday, you know, whenever there's a bar open that has been bought, and we can get in there and entertain the community and get money and say, Hey, this is for, you know, those of us that are less fortunate those that cannot



Jimmy Carper 21:21

and that's what this about. Yes, I'm very happy that that Bob has been nominated now that the

and that's what it's about. Yes. I'm very happy that Bob Doolon has promised me that the first Saturday in January, all four aspirants to the throne will be guests on this show, I will



21:40

make sure they're there. I have to drag their ass over here the I will make sure they're here. Now I'd



21:46

say one thing about aspirins, you know, that sounds an awful lot like s.



Jimmy Carper 21:53

And, you know, some of these folks can be



21:55

real. It can be it can be pronounced as aspirants. And you know, depends upon you know, but there's only one way you can pronounce the word candidate. Because you see they are elected by the community. People that are elected by our organization, they are elected by the community, which they support, and which they spend their time raising money to support. They don't say you know, and it is candidacy. It's kind of like running for president yes, but it's a little bit higher than that. Because, you know, a president, you know, doesn't get a crown, he doesn't get a sash and you know, bow to him. And but, you know, it is responsibility and obligation that these people serve for a year. And they do it with all of their heart and all of the power that's within them. Because they care about those that have what they don't have, and what most of us do not have. And you know, and for those of us who have served in that position as an emperor or an empress in the imperial court here usin we understand that, you know, one of these days, you know, we may be in that position. Yes. And it's very wonderful to be able to, you know, in our lives to be able to be in a position where we can encourage those of us who can to provide for those who cannot.



Jimmy Carper 23:29

Thank you. Yeah,



23:30

the thing about the court is, is that the court is one of the few organizations where you do not have to be a member of the organization to vote, apps or art co presidents right who are entitled The Emperor and Empress, the entire community, Harris County and the seven surrounding counties. Anyone who lives in that area can vote in our elections. January 11.

J

Jimmy Carper 23:59

It doesn't matter. January

∅

24:00

11. And January 10. And eight is at the Resource Center at 500. Love it. Cut the corner of love it and Whitney right across the street. But yeah, diagonally across street from the from the KPFT. Yep. But it on the 11th edge from 10 to two and on the 18th edge from 10 to six and we need

∅

24:24

to let them know that the 11th is is absentee voting yes, for those that cannot find

∅

24:31

the AI somebody somebody's gonna be out of town on the 18th and so forth. I got you have the opportunity to come in and vote on the 11th

J

Jimmy Carper 24:39

Okay. Got Vanessa in the in the house here. And she's got a long distance interview. So I'm gonna have to cut this a little short.

∅

24:48

That's fine. I'm

J

Jimmy Carper 24:49

glad you came by. And I'm certainly honored. Oh, you weren't the first I'm honored. You're the first time who has ever visited And

∅

25:02

I'm very honored to be here. Jerel.

J

Jimmy Carper 25:04

McNeal was here, but when he was when he was running for emperor, he never made it while he was sitting. So, thank you for being here. Yeah, yes. Okay, we're back here and put

V

Vanessa Edwards Foster 25:26

them on the radio. Well, you have to put them on the old first on hold one second.

J

Jimmy Carper 25:33

Then you have to do this. And then you have to wear headphones. Okay, you have to do air mass. And there. And there we go. Hello.

V

Vanessa Edwards Foster 25:44

Are we back on? Hello, hello. Oh, hung up. Hello. Hello, hello. I thought you hung up on me. No,

J

Jimmy Carper 25:55

no, I didn't push another button.

♂

25:59

See, I was talking. Just

V

Vanessa Edwards Foster 26:00

gonna leave you hanging in there and let you listen to this kind of ramble on. Anyway, um, I guess, just kind of getting into this. Before I do the introductions, this is kind of our follow up to the day of remembrance show in Fact of the Day of Remembrance is for the transgender community. The one day per year when we commemorate or not commemorate down memorialize the victims of murder over the course of the past year. And this year was probably a little more noteworthy than others. We actually had more names to read off in just this one year than we've ever had before. There were 28 names that we read off just in this one year, internationally, and 13 of those were here within our own borders. However, it was also one of the more successful days of remembrance, we had more cities participate than ever before. And not only in the US. This year, we took it International. I contacted some folks in Canada, Spain, Chile, and Argentina and some of the others got into the act. And we had folks in France, and Italy and in Israel. That also observed the Day of Remembrance is here. Obviously, each city is pretty much kind of given their own. I guess leeway to do it as they see fit. Some will commemorate all of the victims over the years others just the victims of this one year in still other cities only memorialize the American victims. And one of the things that really kind of stood out this year were some of the victims. Some of the cases that happened especially immediately before the day of remembrance. We had one instance in Washington in August where two teenagers 118 years old and 119 years old, were shot to death, just a half a block away from their apartment. A both of them were riddled with more than 10 bullet wounds apiece. And then a month before Day of Remembrance we had when Arapahoe out in Newark,

California, who apparently had gone to a party that night and somehow during the night, a one of the girls who was attending the party had discovered her her birth gender and notified the rest of the party goers. unformed unfortunately, the partygoers had some rather extreme reactions to this. It's still kind of a little emotion evoking just kind of discussing this but they basically beat her to death. They cut her with a knife, drugged her semi conscious body out of the garage, strangled her, then bound her hands and feet, wrapped her in a sheet and drove her 150 miles away and buried her in a shallow grave. This of course, was probably the most outrageous of the year and was probably one of the reasons why we had so much of an so much of a turnout this year. For day of remembrance, it was just so heinous of a crime. Actually, my originally scheduled guests were going to be the ghettos which is the family of Gwen Arauco, unfortunately, yesterday, when I had contacted, apparently unbeknownst to me, they had had an arraignment for the arrested suspects, and all of them pled innocent. So here we have four people that have been arrested for the murder of the 17 year old. And none of them are guilty. And you take a look at something like this. And you wonder, Where is the justice in this? What did they actually think do they do they actually believe that were going to think that in a party full of people, everyone is innocent, and somehow this girl just died of her own means and transported herself 150 miles away and buried herself in a shallow grave? It just It boggles the mind. But the family is obviously a little bit distraught over this, and I really don't blame him. And on top of this, it's the holiday season and again, is typical. Our thoughts turn to family, and in some cases, it's turning to the void in those families. One of the folks that was one of our day of remembrance organizers in Boston, Massachusetts, was Ethan St. Pierre. He's a board member on the national transgender Advocacy Coalition and is also our lobbying committee chair. Ethan, you want to say hello? Hey,



31:38

how you doing?



Vanessa Edwards Foster 31:39

Pretty good.



Jimmy Carper 31:40

Thanks for being on after hours.



31:41

A thank you for inviting me. Especially so late.



Jimmy Carper 31:45

Yes, in Boston, it's like 243 in the morning.



31:52

I just happened to be awake when, when Vanessa called me



V Vanessa Edwards Foster 31:56

watching Spider Man. See,



31:58

for the second time.



V Vanessa Edwards Foster 32:02

So good the first time somebody has cable on the DVD. Now that way, you can play it over and over again, as evidenced. But there's another reason I had Ethan on tonight. Not only is Ethan one of the Day of Remembrance organizers. But indeed one of the victims on the remembering our dead website, from which day of remembrance sprang from was from Boston, or I should say Haverhill, Massachusetts, which is up in the Boston area. And this particular victim was the aunt of Ethan St. Pierre. She was a male to female transsexual that had lived for 20 some odd years without much of a problem. And he's in do you want to give us some of the the details on this?



33:05

Yeah. Well, actually, my I transitioned the year I was born. So she worked full time for over 30 years.



V Vanessa Edwards Foster 33:18

Deborah 1440 44



33:21

days French.



33:25

When you've got French in you, yeah.



33:27

Yeah. My father. My father's a Frenchman. Okay. But no, my I was, she had met a gentleman at a at a bar and brought him home. And of course, we'll never really know what happened. Between during that time, he went to work the next day and confess to a co worker that he had murdered somebody. And the co worker went to the police and turn to man, but he had fled. He he left town for two weeks. It was a it was a very brutal murder. He had stabbed her three times, which is with a six inch blade. He strangled her and broke every bone in her neck and then beat her to the point where she was unrecognizable. And when the when the police, he turned himself in. And the police you know, they arranged him and everything the judge let him out on bail. He walked around for a year and a half a free man and he lived a town away from me.

v

Vanessa Edwards Foster 34:50

And how much was the bail? You

o

34:53

know? I believe it was set at \$200,000 but I think his parents play their house up for the bill. And so he, you know, he walked around. And that the, the fact that the crime was just so horrendous, I mean, it they, it was so violent and just horrible and they let this man walk or walk away. He was eventually he the district attorney's office contacted us, they did not believe that they could get away with charging him with first degree murder. They give a reason for them. Yeah, they didn't think that the jury would be sympathetic to my aunt's lifestyle. And so they pre bargained and he got 15 years in prison. It's unbelievable.

v

Vanessa Edwards Foster 36:04

How difficult was it for you to kind of cope with this knowing that this guy is walking around? I mean, just if it was myself, I know I would have had the urge to, to lash out myself. How difficult was it for you and the rest of your family as well. You have brothers and I guess other cousins as well.

o

36:26

What? My brother and I, first of all, this was how bad the police handled this whole situation. The police went to my mother's house, you know, we had obviously this was after, you know, we found out we knew everything that was going on. And the police came to our house. And we had to go and identify the body because that's a new staff to do. And they never told us the extent of of the beating was, and of course, my brother and I did not want my mother to go. This was my mother's sister. So my brother and I went and it was just really unbelievable. I don't even know how I knew that it was her. I had to drag my brother away. He was in shock. I literally had to drag him away. I had my arms around his waist pulling him out of the morgue. And we never told my mother how bad it was. I just couldn't do it.

v

Vanessa Edwards Foster 37:38

Vanessa Edwards Foster 37:00

And that's your mom's only sibling?

37:41

No, my mother had a brother and a sister. And she's the youngest

V Vanessa Edwards Foster 37:48

in the family was or your mom was my

37:50

mother. My mother is the youngest. Deborah was the oldest. And actually, no, I'm sorry, I never was a middle child. My uncle Danny was the oldest. And as a result of this, my grandfather who was really imperfect health when he found out he just had a heart attack. We lost him. A few months later, he just couldn't get over losing a child that way. And I really I bought a gun. I really wanted to kill this guy. I really did.

V Vanessa Edwards Foster 38:33

See, we're literally on the edge. Yeah, I really was. And your brother as well. Or,

38:40

oh yeah, my brother really wanted to what stopped us was knowing how much it would hurt my mom. And the fact that you know, I mean we'd be taken a life and that's it kind of flat rate.

V Vanessa Edwards Foster 38:59

Almost not quite, but sort of almost places him at that level. Was there anything I guess discovered as to why he did this to Deborah was there I guess any reasoning that came out of this? He said

39:16

that he didn't know. This was after the fact he was going to use that panic defense of not knowing when we know that that's not true. They had dated before. And my aunt always told the people that she dated about her or trans status. She never she never hid that. She

V Vanessa Edwards Foster 39:41

was postoperative Correct? No.



39:45

She had she had grown breasts. She didn't even have to have top surgery because she started hormones when she was so young. She She really looks very good.



V Vanessa Edwards Foster 40:01

But she notified him anyway beforehand. Oh, yeah. And they updated before but yet he still relied on the panic defense. When it came time for trial.



40:11

That's what he was going to use before he decided to just I don't know what they did to make him can even take the 15 years to be honest with you. Because looking at it was only a few months later with Chanel pick, it was murdered in Boston. And her killer got two years. They went they went they charged him with first degree murder. And unfortunately, the fears that the district attorney had had, in our case came true in theirs.



V Vanessa Edwards Foster 40:49

They didn't charge the the killer with first degree murder, obviously. Well, they



40:54

did charge him with first degree murder. He wasn't convicted of them correctly, he was convicted of assault battery. That's what he ended up being convicted of Tino pickets killer. Gary was, I think his name was Gary Palmer was convicted of assault and battery got two years. He is in jail. And just



V Vanessa Edwards Foster 41:20

a side note, Chanel, pickets murder was November 20, which is now the day that we actually commemorate the day of remembrance internationally.



41:34

Right. And my aunt was murdered on May 15. That year, I fell on Mother's Day. You know, there are just so many things. My mother's still affected. And of course, the rest of my family is as well. There's not a day that goes by that I don't think about my aunt. It really is what brought me to to activism.

V

Vanessa Edwards Foster 42:06

Indeed, then, fact I've seen you, I guess, in your previous incarnation back in 1999. And one of the lobby days and in fact, actually I commented to someone else that, oh, Who's he? And they basically it responded that, well, this is actually someone who's a lesbian, but is actually a family member of Deborah 40. I said, alright, this. And that, I guess it was explained to me that, well, there's no gender issues, but maybe there is

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no reason. So

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Vanessa Edwards Foster 42:53

I was thinking at the time, man, there's got to be something to this. And now all of a sudden, well, hey,

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that's it wasn't denial.

V

Vanessa Edwards Foster 43:05

Well, probably still in shock as well. I did that, I guess, kind of affect your decision. As far as coming out. Was there any concerns about transitioning or even considering this knowing what your aunt had gone through?

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43:24

Yes, I was. It really did stall. My transition. I was, I was very much afraid. I, after seeing what had happened to her, and she was very she was very much a homebody, she didn't go out all the time. You know, and I seen her live a very decent life. And here, you know, this incredibly wonderful person. And this horrible thing happened to her. And I was just, I was very, I was very afraid. My family was afraid for me. My mom to this day, she still she won't even talk about it. She's like,

V

Vanessa Edwards Foster 44:14

she won't talk about your transition or about them. She

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44:18

won't talk about my transition. And she only will speak about Debbie, very briefly, because it really upsets her so much. It's robbed her of her memories, you know, of being able to sit around and when we, you know, when we at Holiday functions or whatever. We generally sit around and we'll talk about things that have happened and you know, the funny times we've had with other family members and I'd really love to be able to talk about Debbie and some of the funny things that you know she had done and just to remember her and it's very difficult because As it really, it upsets and upsets my mother so much, because it always brings back the horrible way that she died. And

v

Vanessa Edwards Foster 45:10

even just beyond that, just the void that there was once and not there in the family that all of a sudden is I'm sure that the holidays are probably especially difficult at the time when family gets back together and, and thoughts turned to family and the festivities. But unfortunately, it's also a time that can bring up the memories of those who aren't there as well.

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45:38

Yes, it does. It. It has it has left a void in every day living. But holidays are especially difficult. And, you know, my heart really goes out to Bwin Glenn's mom and her family.

v

Vanessa Edwards Foster 46:01

I can imagine what they're going to this is their first, really their first Christmas, I shouldn't say first holiday, they went to Thanksgiving. But to go through Christmas, and have this constant reminder of the void and the family has got to be just especially brutal. And then on top of that to have to go through the problems with the trial and just the the emotional wrenching of having to deal with that. And then especially what the police were the other day, I'm sure they were

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46:41

that's unbelievable that they pled not guilty. That's I just can't I don't know. Well,

v

Vanessa Edwards Foster 46:47

I mean, it really kind of concerns me, I've got a just from every indication, I've got a fear that they're going to attempt the panic defense, or Yeah, again, and I mean, it's giving every indication of that. And I just, I hope and pray that whoever it is that is out there who is prosecuting this case, takes every due diligent course to seek out every aspect of this and make sure and dot every I and cross every T and to not allow them an opportunity to skate away with this with relative impunity. I mean, what this was, was the most heinous of act, it was sending a message not only to go in, but to her family and to the community, to everyone around the country that is transgendered. They take a look at something like this, and it sends

a message to them that yes, that kind of viciousness, that kind of just absolute I guess just bereft Oh conscience of other individuals lives. People just really have no clue as to how that can affect someone. Just the inhumanity of it all.



48:19

In our lives matter. You know, that it was it was so difficult going through this whole that whole trial was my mind. The idea that I mean, everybody in my family has really I mean, you know, we pay taxes, we work we do the right things. And, you know, here they were saying that this person's life that we loved and cared about this person's life didn't matter. As much as somebody that was non trans. That's what they were telling us. Exactly.



V Vanessa Edwards Foster 48:56

Um I guess at this point, we need to do the station identification.



J Jimmy Carper 49:04

Yes, we do. I need to jump in here and let people know that they are listening to after hours, Queer radio with attitude on KPFT Houston and ke o s College Station. They're really calm. Sorry.



V Vanessa Edwards Foster 49:22

I didn't want to forget about this, because we're kind of getting into a heavier part of this. The fact is that a lot of people really just take a look at the transgender community and they don't see the humanity of it. And they don't actually understand that it's not just the individuals that are affected by this either. It's also their families and their friends. It's something that I think a lot of folks tend to forget is that there are indeed, family members regardless of whether or not they may accept The transition or may have some problems with it. Nobody wants to see their child or their loved one come to this kind of an untimely demise, this very unseemly way of ending one's life. It's just so remarkable how someone can just totally dismiss that, and not even have consideration for the family members or for the friends or for the loved ones, much less of the victims themselves. It really speaks to the level of civility and in what I guess we consider a civilized country, when people can take another human being and just literally rip the humanity away from them, and treat them. In fact, sometimes even worse than animals. I mean, I think Baca often to the the case of Amanda Milan, on the streets of New York. True, she was a street worker, but still to have someone run up and back of her slit her throat and then to have cabbies standing around witnessing the entire incident. And then cheering and laughing as she bleeds to death. On a New York sidewalk test it really, it really just drives home, the inhumanity that people, I guess a fix to being transgendered, or for that matter, gay, lesbian or bisexual, anything that is considered outside of the norm is just suddenly perceived as being less than human or inhuman. It's



51:42

just a total disregard for human life. It doesn't matter what somebody does for a living. It doesn't mean, it's a human life. It's

J Jimmy Carper 51:51

Yes, that's right. And sometimes we forget that, that many transgenders are not out on the street working because they want to, it's the only choice they have.

V Vanessa Edwards Foster 52:05

Exactly. And unfortunately, that's something that we try and address with a lot of our advocacy. But once again, it's a situation where people have to survive.

52:17

I almost lost my job on Friday. Oh, my God, we're having layoffs. And all of a sudden, time, seniority mattered. somebody's job was being cut. And we went to a meeting. And I, they were, I said, I know I have value in this company. And I laid out everything that I've done. And there was this one other supervisor who really doesn't have a, he could he could be transferred, this was the thing he was, he could be transferred to a job closer to where he lived. And just, he just wanted to stay there. And, and I looked right at him, and I said, he doesn't do or have even the same background that I have, in this type of work. There was no way I'm getting laid off and he's staying either you want to fight with him for unemployment, or you want to fight me for discrimination, what is it going to be? Wow. And I say that

53:29

as an NDA is so important that the gender conflict be included in an end, because there are so many people who have a skill, but because of the fact that they can be fired for no reason whatsoever. That is why employment non discrimination is very, very, very important. And

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the thing is, I know that they were gonna they were going out to me because I am transitioning on the job. I came out at work. And I've been looked over for promotions. I used I was an account manager and now I'm the supervisor for another company. And they've had account manager positions come up with 21 year old kid with no experience got the job over me.

V Vanessa Edwards Foster 54:23

I guess it's the same thing myself. Had it immediately changed as soon as they found out my transgender status. Yep. And I have literally had them bring in no less than six people sitting down right next to me saying, Well, I'm here to learn your job. It's, that's about as blatant as it

gets. But that's the reality of the situation. My only saving grace is that it's it's a pretty intense job and unfortunately, it's not something anyone can just kind of pop in off the street and do if it was one of the more generic positions for any One can pick this up with no problem. I've been out of there a long, long time ago. And in fact, even during my transition, I went to about 21 and a half months with no employment. And so I very easily could have been one of those people that was indeed out there on the street. And that was one of the things that really just absolutely petrified me, is having to face that having to face the fact of not only being out on the street, but being homeless and out on the street and being so open being so vulnerable to these, this type of violence. In fact, unfortunately, and it's not just within the transgender community, but anyone who works as traits, unfortunately, to the predators, they are viewed as being, I guess dispensable people. There. There, in essence, throwaway lives. And unfortunately, what happens is, the police oftentimes don't, I guess, take a conscientious approach to this, they may tend to opt out for an easy ranter. And in fact, it almost kind of happened in one URL whose case, at first, when she turned up missing, the family had cold. And police basically gave them the response, something along the lines of Well, chances are she probably ran away. And it's very easy to kind of just fall back on that it's almost kind of a knee jerk type reaction.

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I'm actually working on the statistics now. But I know for a fact in many states, the ones that I've gotten to know nobody that has been convicted of murdering a trans person has, has been caught by the police they've turned themselves in. And that that's true in the state of Massachusetts. And it's true, and a number of other states have gotten going through all the states. And it's it's not due to police. They're not there. They're not out there searching for the murder of a trans person, believe me, at the case of Rita has their murder was never found, the police aren't looking.

v Vanessa Edwards Foster 57:37

In fact, really. That was I guess another unique aspect of going rojos case is that police were actually diligent in this particular instance, it was something where rumors had started coming out. And so police took a very, very conscientious approach to those. And were just very thorough with the investigative process. They were diligent from maybe not day one, but certainly from the beginning of the investigation process. And they actually did a wonderful job, in fact, a laudable job, especially given that this was a trained standard victim. Oftentimes, a lot of transgender victims do not see a lot of diligence done in their cases. Police are very overtaxed as it is. And oftentimes, I guess a lot of the more high profile cases will kind of take precedent or I guess, maybe have a little more priority than others. And usually, in transgender cases, we tend to be I guess, prioritized near the bottom. And I think some of it kind of goes to the perception that well, maybe they're street workers or they're throwaway kids, they're just, you know, folks with a family that really don't care. And that was obviously not the case here. And in fact, really, if you'll notice a lot of the cases where there were indeed arrests made, and especially were the media actually seized on to this. It always seems to come whenever there is supportive family who is willing to stand up and say, Hey, wait a minute, you know, this is my child. I want this investigated. I want you all to find out what happened here and they they're the ones who really push from behind the scenes to in essence kind of keep the heat on of the police investigators and then of course, you know, once police actually start making the arrest,

it's once again the family Who stands up and speaks to the media and says, No, this was my child, and I loved my child. And I don't care what anyone thinks about their lifestyle. That's irrelevant. What happened here was wrong. And, again, this is another case where this occurred, the reader has her case would have been, I guess one of those, in fact, Rita's mom was very supportive of her.

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In fact, his whole family was very supportive. I got, I had the privilege of meeting her brother, at our day of remembrance in Boston. And he also was very supportive of Rita and her life. The other thing that's really disturbing to me, is if you go to the remembering our dead website, and you see how many of the trans victim, trans gender victims were actual are actually unknown. Their names aren't even known. And that's horrible. And I'm sure there are families out there that have missing children, or whatever it needs just don't know what happened to their child. Indeed,

v Vanessa Edwards Foster 1:01:16

in fact that, um, Hang on one second, I think I need to turn up the microphone, Jackie, I don't know where the the volume is.

1:01:30

Okay. Okay, I'm sorry, sorry. Brandy Houston, who was an entertainer and a fundraiser here in Houston was murdered. And the problem was that the police handled this as an aggravated robbery rather than a murder. And the thing that brought the killer to justice was the fact that the killer had stolen the the vehicle that belonged to brandy Houston, and was found by I think, a cousin or somebody like that of the murderer, who said, Oh, well, you know, my cousin gave this this car to me. But it was not, you know, the murder itself was not investigated. It was the robbery that was investigated. And

v Vanessa Edwards Foster 1:02:27

indeed, a lot of them, of the murders really don't get investigated. Again, because of the the perception of many of the victims, and a lot of the victims. In fact, that's one thing that I'm very concerned with, here in Houston, we've got a large population that come up here from Latin America. And many of them basically come up here, because there is no way that they can survive in their home countries. I've talked with folks from Guatemala and from El Salvador. And it's just, it's unbelievable, of what's going on down there with not only just the girls themselves, but anyone who's gay or lesbian, have their targets. And unfortunately, the police not only don't investigate, they're usually the ones that are doing the targeting down there. So they actually come up here in an effort to save their lives, their lives depend on it. And of course, once they come up here, their only option, since they don't have documentation, they can't find work. Their only options are working the streets. And it amazes me, how many of these girls that I speak with? And I will ask them, my God, you know, I mean, how can you actually, you know, live like this? And you know, isn't this very difficult for you? And a lot of

them will say, Well, it's a lot better than where I was, you know, where I was living before. At least here I can survive. And yet these are some of the most gritty, brutal neighborhoods here in Houston. And in fact, over the past four years, Houston has six of those people on the Day of Remembrance, in fact, a foreign way much more than any of the other cities during the, the same period of time. In fact, I think I got to looking I think Miami has three, during that same four year stretch Houston is actually doubled that. And Texas, of course, has 11 victims over the course of the past four years. And I don't know how much of this is due to an increase or how much of this is actually just due to the fact that we're noticing this and are actually reporting it. And that's the frightening part. This may have been going on for a good number of years. And we just really don't know since we haven't had the information had no way to confirm this? Well,

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Vanessa, you know, we need to understand that the day of remembrance is an outgrowth of when Smith and California is trying to remember the people who have been killed. And it has, it has grown from that. And and Mmm, it's just absolutely incredible, unbelievable. And the way this has grown, and internationally, really not only here in the United States and Canada, but throughout the world, they're there, you know, the last year or so, there have been a number of places where there have been the Day of Remembrance, because there have been transgendered who have been killed in those countries for just being transgendered.

v Vanessa Edwards Foster 1:05:58

And that's one of the reasons I was very keen on trying to get in contact with a lot of the folks in Latin America to get them involved in this. Originally, I was just kind of surfing around on the websites looking for information from some of the victims. And I contacted some of the transgender activists down there. And in some of the countries like in Chile. We already knew about what Amala and also have a daughter and Honduras, the it's, it's a virtual killing field down there. And we get very, very little reporting coming from those countries. But in Chile, for instance, they've had 24 murders over a certain period of time, I'm not exactly sure how many years that is. But of those 2423 are unsolved. Well, Argentina and Venezuela, Venezuela, the police in Kedah, Bobo state have been just absolutely atrocious. There have been numerous transgendered individuals, and also the activists who have tried to bring attention to those that have been targeted by the police, and have actually become victims themselves. And it's just, it's going on unabated. And it's showing no signs of stopping whatsoever.

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Well, I think I think we also need to realize or not to realize, but to acknowledge, where there has been a correction, if you will, of the thing, for instance, in Brazil, it's my understanding in Brazil, and also in Argentina, that, you know, over the last several years, there have been a number of transgender murders that that were not solved. But the authorities have taken, you know, taking this to task and they have said, Hey, we're not going to put up with this anymore. And they have they have put the invested investigative powers into the thing, and tried to solve some of these things and and try to eliminate this type of thing. And I know, particularly in Brazil, you know, we're just always a god awful thing in Brazil. And they have they have, they

have turned that around. And it's my understanding in Brazil the last couple times that this has happened. The people who have been involved in it or who have been the murderers and stuff have been indicted and are being tried.

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Vanessa Edwards Foster 1:08:42

Oh, go ahead, Ethan. Oh, no, I

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was just gonna say I remember my dad telling me stories about what it was like for her when she was young, in this country, and how it's, it's almost like it's like, what it was like, what it's like now in other countries, the police would just we're just brutal around here to transgendered people. Stories of them, dragging them out of their car, or out of clubs and just beating them and even killing people. That

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was that was true in Brazil, and and it isn't, it isn't that way anymore. Thank God.

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You know, it's just the horror. I'm thinking that even she had to face in the early 60s Here. What it was like, and she told me this one story, it's almost funny, but we used to laugh about it, but I mean, it's not funny now. And when you just think about it, she she was gone. She was getting ready to pick up a few of her friends. She was She said she was in her early, early 20s and She had her hair was all up in curlers. And somebody called her they needed something really bad she got in a car drove, was driving to the friend's house and sauce. The police were behind her. She had to she said she got out of her car and drove under the car pulling the Carla's out of her hair. Because if the police had found her that way, she would have been beaten.

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Vanessa Edwards Foster 1:10:27

It's one of the reasons why I live in Houston instead of Corpus Christi. I knew I could not transition. Well, the police were dangerous. But,

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you know, we've we have come you know, we've we have come a long way since then. But it's still pretty bad.

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You got to realize that the the cultural attitude in the Hispanic community is totally different from that that is in here in the United States. There's a different perspective on you know, there's a different perspective on transgenders.



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I know I was a police officer in a Hispanic community, Lawrence, Massachusetts, which is it's all Puerto Rican people. And they really, really are into being Macho. The men are very, very macho and anybody that deviates outside of that a transgendered woman is just totally ostracized again,



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well the other the other thing too in the in the Hispanic culture is, is that the top is not considered to be homosexual. It's only the bottom that's considered be homosexual.



J Jimmy Carper 1:11:55

No, go figure.



1:11:56

Can a man say something? Yes, I would. You know, can a gay man say something? Sure. Well, you know, I've been sitting here listening to all of this and you know, I